

**Anna Howell**  
**Aztec Human Sacrifices**  
**50 minutes**

**Background:**

This lesson plan was designed for 9<sup>th</sup> grade World History, modified for intermediate language learners in a mainstream World History class. The class is very diverse with many different native languages and cultures. This lesson is in one of the first units taught in the school year, focusing on reading skills, content vocabulary and summarizing skills. All of the students will be working on their summary writing skills in their Social Studies and Language Arts classes. This lesson will modify the reading and summary portion of the lesson for the ELL, Special Education and struggling students. This lesson is designed to continue to incorporate cultural differences into the students understanding of culture. Students will be analyzing images, content vocabulary and historical accuracy.

The objectives of this lesson are appropriate for all levels of learners in the class. The objective for each student is the same; it has just been modified for the different learners in the class. The plan will meet the objectives of the students, however there is always room in the unit for re-teaching and reassessing depending on how the students perform with this lesson. Through the assessment of the storyboard and formative assessments throughout the class period, I will be able to see how the lesson is going and how each student is working through the objectives. This activity is a whole language lesson, it is teaching language through content and context. Students will be learning reading skills while still learning the same content with their peers.

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**Content Objective:**

Students will be able to summarize the Aztec Ritual of Human Sacrificing.

**Language Objective:**

Students will use content specific academic vocabulary correctly (sacrifice, bloodletting, ritual, captives and temples) while discussing and summarizing Aztec Sacrifice.

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**Warm Up:** Think Pair Share (5 minutes)

Students will analyze the image on human sacrifices, making notes 5 interesting things they see. They will then turn to their partner and discuss 5 things that are important in understanding the image. Share out with the class.

**Pre-Reading Activity:** (10 minutes)

Vocabulary: Students will be given a copy of the chart below and as a class we will read the excerpts from the reading they are going to get. Using the pictures and the context clues, each student will create their own definition of the new vocabulary word. They will then share with their seat partner what they came up with, modifying their answers as needed. Class will go over the vocabulary using the picture from the Warm Up to make connections to the topic of Human Sacrifice

**Reading Activity:** (15 minutes)

Teacher will pass out and read aloud the reading on Human Sacrifice, having students follow along. As the teacher reads she constantly checks for understanding through guiding questions. After the read aloud the teacher will collect the readings and students then complete a Cloze reading activity with the reading. Students will complete the activity then share their reading with their seat partner.

**Assessment:** (20 minutes finish for homework if needed)

Students will complete 5 frame story board summarizing the text on Aztec sacrificing. Each frame should have picture, sentence and one vocabulary word used correctly summarizing the historical content on sacrifices. The storyboard should be in chronological order and be historically accurate. Grading will be based on correct use of content vocabulary and accurately summarizing the information.

**9<sup>th</sup> Grade Level Expectations (GLE's)**





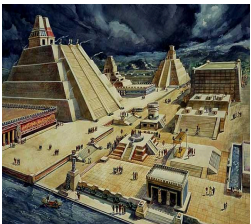
**World History:**

3.1.2 Identifies major world regions and understands their cultural roots.

**Reading:**

1.2.2 Apply strategies to comprehend words and ideas

1.3.2 Understand and apply content/academic vocabulary critical to the meaning of text, including vocabularies relevant to different contexts, cultures and communities

Word	Example from Reading	Personal Definition:
<p>Sacrificed</p> 	<p>At other times, hundreds or even thousands of captives were sacrificed at a time.</p>	
<p>Bloodletting</p> 	<p>A part of the Aztec religion, therefore, was to participate in bloodletting, which is intentionally harming and drawing blood from the body.</p>	
<p>Ritual</p> 	<p>At the root of these Aztec rituals was the belief that the gods needed to be nourished by human beings.</p>	
<p>Captives</p> 	<p>As a result, widespread warring took place as the Aztec people sought to bring captives back to the Aztec temples for sacrifice.</p>	
<p>Temples</p> 	<p>As a result, widespread warring took place as the Aztec people sought to bring captives back to the Aztec temples for sacrifice.</p>	

## **Aztec Sacrifices**

Aztec sacrifices were an important aspect of the Aztec religion. At the root of these Aztec rituals was the belief that the gods needed to be nourished by human beings. This was accomplished through human blood. A part of the Aztec religion, therefore, was to participate in bloodletting, which is intentionally harming and drawing blood from the body. Those who were higher in status within the Aztec religion were expected to give the most blood during these Aztec rituals.

The Aztec gods and goddesses also required the living hearts of humans for nourishment. All hearts were good, but the bravest captives were considered to be particularly nourishing to the Aztec gods. As a result, widespread warring took place as the Aztec people sought to bring captives back to the Aztec temples for sacrifice.

Sometimes, those practicing the Aztec religion sacrificed just one person. At other times, hundreds or even thousands of captives were sacrificed at a time. Each Aztec sacrifice, however, took place the same way. The captive or captives were taken to a pyramid or temple and placed on an altar. The Aztec priest then made an incision in the ribcage of the captive and removed the living heart. The heart was then burned and the corpse was pushed down the steps of the Aztec pyramid or temple. If the captive was particularly noble or brave, however, he was carried down instead.

Aztec human sacrifices and bloodletting were important aspects of the Aztec religion, as they believed it brought balance and peace to the world around them.

### Aztec Sacrifices

**Directions:** Using the vocabulary words in the Word Box below, complete the paragraph on Aztec Sacrifices. You may use the words more than once.

Sacrifice	Bloodletting	Ritual	Captives	Temples	Blood	War
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Aztec sacrifices were an important aspect of the Aztec religion. At the root of these Aztec rituals was the belief that the gods needed to be nourished by human beings. This was accomplished through human blood. A part of the Aztec \_\_\_\_\_, therefore, was to participate in \_\_\_\_\_, which is intentionally harming and drawing \_\_\_\_\_ from the body. Those who were higher in status within the Aztec religion were expected to give the most blood during these Aztec \_\_\_\_\_.

The Aztec gods and goddesses also required the living hearts of humans for nourishment. All hearts were good, but the bravest \_\_\_\_\_ were considered to be particularly nourishing to the Aztec gods. As a result, widespread \_\_\_\_\_ took place as the Aztec people sought to bring captives back to the Aztec \_\_\_\_\_ for sacrifice.

Sometimes, those practicing the Aztec religion \_\_\_\_\_ just one person. At other times, hundreds or even thousands of captives were \_\_\_\_\_ at a time. Each Aztec sacrifice, however, took place the same way. The \_\_\_\_\_ were taken to a \_\_\_\_\_ and placed on an altar. The Aztec priest then made an incision in the ribcage of the \_\_\_\_\_ and removed the living heart. The heart was then burned and the corpse was pushed down the steps of the Aztec \_\_\_\_\_. If the \_\_\_\_\_ was particularly noble or brave, however, he was carried



down instead.

Aztec human sacrifices and bloodletting were important aspects of the Aztec religion, as they believed it brought balance and peace to the world around them.



