Beliefs in Place

Religious practices and cultural life in the Inca Empire

SS24.8.6c "Explain how religious beliefs and practices shaped culture in Indigenous societies."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two beliefs in the passage and circle one practice linked to each belief. Write matching numbers beside the ways those practices shaped buildings, gatherings, or community life.

Sacred Places, Shared Life

1 In the 1400s, the Inca Empire stretched across much of the Andes in South America. Its people did not all follow one identical set of customs. Inca rulers honored Inti, the Sun, and claimed a special connection to him. In Cusco, the empire's capital, builders raised the Coricancha, a temple dedicated to Inti. Its walls held sheets of gold, a metal the Inca linked with the Sun. The temple made a religious belief visible in the heart of the city, where rulers gathered people for ceremonies.

2 The Sun also helped organize time. Near the June solstice, Inca leaders held a major festival for Inti in Cusco. People gathered for prayers, offerings, and feasts. This public event connected religious worship with the state's calendar and brought people together in the capital. Inca farmers watched the changing seasons when deciding when to plant and harvest, but growing food depended on local weather and water, not a festival date alone. Honoring Inti gave seasonal change a shared religious meaning, even as communities made practical decisions about their fields.

3 Across the Andes, many communities also treated particular mountains, springs, or stones as sacred places, often called *huacas*. People left offerings at some of these places and returned to them for ceremonies. Such visits tied families and neighbors to landmarks in their own region, rather than only to temples in Cusco. Andean people also honored ancestors, sometimes keeping the preserved remains of important dead people and bringing them into ceremonies. These practices shaped where people gathered and how they remembered their communities. Customs varied from place to place.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did honoring Inti shape the appearance and purpose of a building in Cusco?

2. How did worship of Inti shape a public event and its role in the empire?

3. How did belief in huacas affect where neighbors gathered and their ties to a place?

4. How did honoring ancestors affect ceremonies and community memory?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Design an imagined gathering for an Inca community in the 1400s. In 4 to 5 sentences, choose a place and two activities rooted in different beliefs from the passage, and explain how those choices could shape community life.

ANSWER KEY

Beliefs in Place

GRADE 8 · SS24.8.6c

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two beliefs in the passage and circle one practice linked to each belief. Write matching numbers beside the ways those practices shaped buildings, gatherings, or community life. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did honoring Inti shape the appearance and purpose of a building in Cusco?	**Builders made the Coricancha a temple to Inti and covered its walls with gold, which the Inca linked with the Sun. Rulers gathered people there for ceremonies.**
2	How did worship of Inti shape a public event and its role in the empire?	**Leaders held a festival for Inti near the June solstice. Its prayers, offerings, and feasts linked worship to the state's calendar and brought people together in Cusco.**
3	How did belief in huacas affect where neighbors gathered and their ties to a place?	**People visited sacred local landmarks to leave offerings and hold ceremonies. These visits connected families and neighbors to their own region.**
4	How did honoring ancestors affect ceremonies and community memory?	**Some Andean people brought the preserved remains of important ancestors into ceremonies, helping communities remember those people.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would plan an imagined gathering near a spring that local people regard as sacred. Neighbors could leave offerings there to show respect for that place. They could also share a feast during a season when they honor Inti, the Sun. Gathering at the spring could strengthen ties to a local landmark. Sharing the feast could give families a way to mark the season together.

Accept other passage-supported links between a belief, a practice, and its cultural effect. For the imagined gathering, look for two distinct beliefs and plausible choices without treating one community's customs as universal.