

Civilizations and Choices

Compare how ancient American peoples used land, resources, and traditions.

SS.5.A.2.1 "Compare cultural aspects of ancient American civilizations (e.g., Aztecs, Mayas, Mound Builders, Anasazi, Inuit)."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details that show how a civilization used its environment, and circle details about farming, building, or ceremonies. Write the same number beside two details that show a similarity or difference between two civilizations.

Land Shapes Community Life

- ① Across ancient North America, people shaped their lives around local land and climate. The Inuit lived in Arctic regions, where they hunted seals, whales, and other animals. They used animal skins for warm clothing and built seasonal homes from snow, sod, or other materials. Farther south, the Mound Builders often lived near rivers, where they farmed crops such as corn and built large earthen mounds.
- ② The Maya and Aztecs both grew corn, beans, and squash, but they organized cities in different places. Maya city-states rose in the forests of Mesoamerica, and rulers led ceremonies at tall stone temples. The Aztecs built their capital, Tenochtitlan, on islands in a lake. They expanded their empire through warfare and trade, and farmers used chinampas, or raised fields, to grow food.
- ③ Although these civilizations differed, each used skills and resources to support community life. Inuit knowledge of ice, animals, and seasonal travel helped families live in a cold climate. Mound Builders showed shared effort by moving soil to create mounds for ceremonies, burials, or important places. Maya, Aztec, and Ancestral Pueblo communities also built structures that served religious or public purposes, but their building materials and settings were not the same.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How did the Inuit's way of getting food differ from the Mound Builders'?

2 Give one farming similarity between the Maya and Aztecs. Then tell one difference in where their cities were built.

3 What cultural purpose did Mound Builder mounds and Maya temples have in common?

4 Compare how the Inuit and Aztecs adapted to their environments. Give one example for each civilization.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose the Aztecs and Mound Builders. Write three sentences comparing how they changed land or used local resources to support their communities. Include one similarity and one difference.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline details that show how a civilization used its environment, and circle details about farming, building, or ceremonies. Write the same number beside two details that show a similarity or difference between two civilizations. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the Inuit's way of getting food differ from the Mound Builders'?	The Inuit hunted animals such as seals and whales, while the Mound Builders farmed crops such as corn.
2	Give one farming similarity between the Maya and Aztecs. Then tell one difference in where their cities were built.	Both grew corn, beans, and squash. Maya city-states were in the forests of Mesoamerica, while the Aztec capital was on islands in a lake.
3	What cultural purpose did Mound Builder mounds and Maya temples have in common?	Both could be used for ceremonies or religious purposes.
4	Compare how the Inuit and Aztecs adapted to their environments. Give one example for each civilization.	The Inuit used animal skins for warm clothing and built seasonal homes for Arctic conditions. The Aztecs used chinampas, or raised fields, in their lake setting to grow food.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Aztecs and Mound Builders both changed land to support their communities. Aztec farmers built chinampas in a lake to grow food, while Mound Builders moved soil to make earthen mounds near rivers. Both groups used their local settings, but they created different kinds of structures.

Accept accurate comparisons supported by the passage. For the open response, accept any clear similarity and difference about Aztec and Mound Builder use of land or resources.