

GALLERY 1

Searching for Glory - The Aztecs searched the nearby ruined city of Teotihuacan, 'the cradle of creation', for signs of a godlike people whose powers they could borrow.



Find number 13 and draw it in the space above. It is a funeral mask, placed over the face of a dead person. Perhaps the lifelike eyes helped you see your way in the afterlife...?

GALLERY 2

Painted People - Sculptures were painted in bright colours and sometimes wore real clothes.



Look at number 38 and draw her clothes. You can colour them in at home.

GALLERY 3

Mexican Meals - All the vegetables you see in this Aztec market came originally from Mexico. The man is bargaining with the woman, using cocoa beans to swap for vegetables.



Find ME! In the space, draw some of the foodstuffs that you see in this gallery.

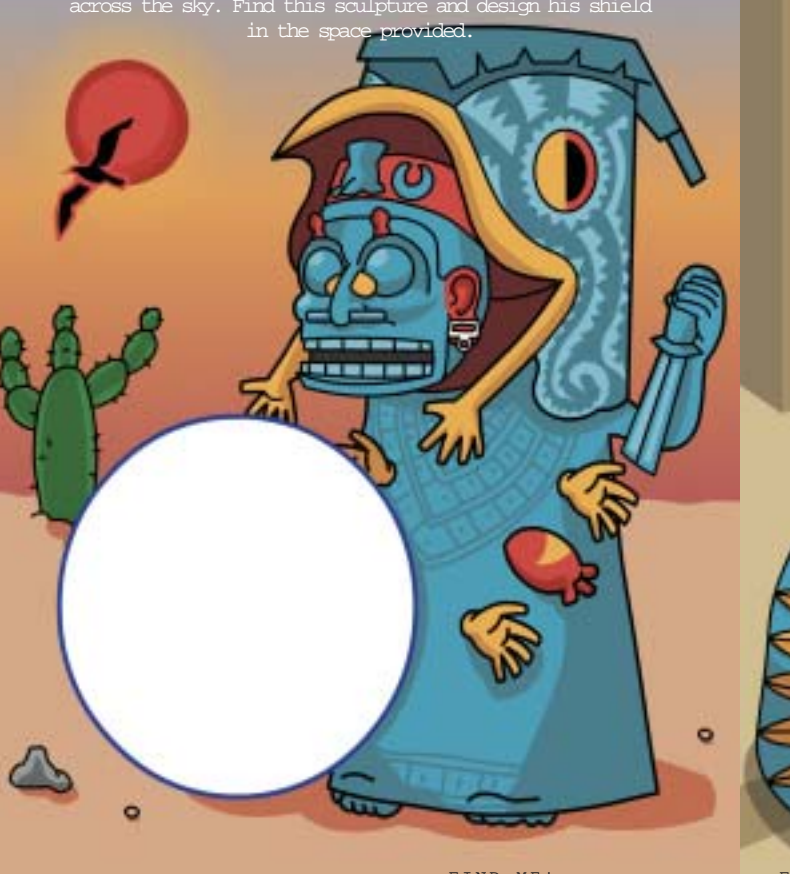
GALLERY 4

The Plumed Serpent - The snake-bird god, Quetzalcoatl, helped the Aztecs found their civilisation. Invent your own god that is a combination of two different animals. Draw it and give it a name.



GALLERY 5

Dead Warriors - Warriors killed in battle or sacrificed to the sun god were allowed to travel with the sun, like an eagle, across the sky. Find this sculpture and design his shield in the space provided.



Find ME!

GALLERY 6

Greedy gods - To prevent the sun from going out, the Aztecs fed the sun god continuously with the blood and hearts of thousands of enemies captured by the Aztec warriors. Find this sculpture in the gallery. Draw your own sacrifice in the space provided.



Find ME!

GALLERY 7

Important People - Important Aztecs wore rich clothes and lots of ornaments. The more captives an Aztec warrior took, the richer his clothes and jewellery became. Draw the ornaments that fit the shapes on this important person.



GALLERY 8

The Great Temple - The Great Temple rose up in the centre of the city like two sacred mountains. In each 'mountain' lived a god: the rain god Tlaloc (blue) and the sun and war god Huitzilopochtli (red and black). Write a poem about the two gods and their powerful reign over the Aztec people.



GALLERY 9

Codes in the codices - A 'codex' is a book (plural: codices). Most of the Aztec codices were folded in a concertina form like the booklet you are holding. They were written in 'glyphs' (picture words). Draw your favourite Aztec story in the space provided. You might like to invent your own glyphs to tell the story.



GALLERY 10

Meeting Motecuhzoma - In 1521, the Aztec ruler, Motecuhzoma, met the Spanish commander, Hernán Cortés. The Aztecs had never seen people like the Spanish (with their white skin and beards), nor had they ever seen horses or guns. They thought Cortés was the god, Quetzalcoatl, returning to Mexico. For their part, the Spanish were amazed at the beauty of the huge Aztec city, its markets and religious ceremonies with their terrifying sacrifices.



Now and then - Although the Spanish destroyed the Aztec city and built a Christian cathedral on the site of the Great Temple, the Aztec culture did not disappear. Even today, over a million people still speak the Aztec language, eat Aztec food and wear Aztec clothes made in the Aztec way. But there are no more sacrifices.

The Aztec Story - A thousand years ago, the Aztecs set out from their island home in Aztlan, 'place of the white herons', to find their promised land. They took their hummingbird god Huitzilopochtli to show them the way. He said: 'You will know when you get there. There will be an eagle perched on a nopal cactus with a snake in its beak.'

One day they settled on an island in a lake, only to discover that it was the wrong place, so on they went. And then a strange thing happened. Huitzilopochtli was born, even though he was already with them.

Huitzilopochtli's birth - The god's mother was sweeping the floor when a ball of fluff sprang up and lodged in her chest. She became pregnant with Huitzilopochtli. But her daughter, the moon, was jealous and came with her 400 brothers, the stars, to kill Huitzilopochtli. He heard them coming, jumped out of his mother and killed the lot of them, just as the sun puts out the moon and stars in the morning.

After 200 years, the Aztecs arrived at the land of their dreams: Tenochtitlan - 'place of the prickly pear growing on a stone.' There they built an enormous, beautiful city in the middle of the lake. In 1520, it was the biggest city in the whole world (even London was much smaller). And you can still see the eagle sitting on a cactus with a snake in its beak on the Mexican flag!



AZTECS

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