Mexico City, the capital city of Mexico, has a rich history. Before the President's Palace was built, there was the Palace of Montezuma. Montezuma was a great emperor of warrior Indians called the Aztecs. Before a Catholic cathedral was built for Spaniards to worship, a huge Aztec temple stood in its place. Before it was the capital of Mexico, Mexico City was Tenochtitlan, the center of the Aztec Empire.

To picture Tenochtitlan at its greatest, imagine an intricate system of canals that served as roads for boats. The Aztecs’ land was partly underwater, so the people built little islands. They could channel water in between these islands. These channels of water, or canals, made the land dry enough to be the foundation of the city. Sidewalks made of stone lined the canals to give pedestrians a way to travel. There were neighborhoods throughout the city. Each had its own temple, school, land, and council for government.

More than 200,000 people walked about Tenochtitlan every day. Some lived in the city's neighborhoods. Others came from the countryside to the bustling marketplace to trade their goods. When the Spanish first saw Tenochtitlan in 1519, it may have been the biggest city in the world. Though most Mexicans speak Spanish today, more than one million still speak the
native Aztec language, Nahuatl, as their primary language. In fact, even the word "Mexico" comes from the Aztec word "Mexica." The Aztecs called themselves "Mexica" people.

At the heart of the Aztec civilization were nature and natural forces. This was the Aztecs' religion. Gods were very important to the Aztecs because they represented things like the sun and rain, which is what made the crops grow. As part of their religion, Aztecs were fierce warriors. During battle they would capture natives from other tribes. Often, these captives would be sacrificed at temples. The Aztecs thought that the gods needed human sacrifices to remain happy.
**capital**  cap · i · tal

**Definition**

**noun**

1. the city where the government of a country or state is located.

   *The capital of the United States is Washington, D.C.*

   *The capital of Texas is Austin.*

2. money or other wealth owned by a business.

   *The company invested a lot of capital in new equipment.*

**adjective**

1. being the larger form of a letter of the alphabet. "T"; is a capital letter, but "t" is not.

   *Write the first letter of your name as a capital letter.*

2. able to be punished by death.

   *Murder is a capital crime in some states.*

**Advanced Definition**

**noun**

1. the city where the central government of a nation or state is located.

   *The capital of France is Paris.*

2. an upper-case letter.

   *Names of months begin with capitals in English just like names of people.*

3. money or other wealth owned or used by a business.

   *We will be expanding our business as soon as we get enough capital.*

4. money or other wealth used to produce further wealth, as by investment.

   *They invested all their capital in the stock market hoping to make a large profit.*

**adjective**

1. relating to financial capital.
The plant will have to close despite recent capital investment.

2. of primary importance.

3. being of high quality; first rate.

That's capital advice!

4. pertaining to the official location of a state or national government.

They live in the suburbs of the capital city.

5. upper-case.

The first letter of your name must be written as a capital letter.

6. referring to the death penalty.

Capital punishment is also called the death penalty.

Murder is a capital crime in some states.

Spanish cognate

capital: The Spanish word capital means capital.

These are some examples of how the word or forms of the word are used:

1. The map above shows that the capital city of China is Beijing. This is where the Chinese government is located. Beijing is a huge city. More than 20 million people live in Beijing’s metropolitan area.

2. Maeve Wilson was in fourth grade the first time she went to the Lotus Lantern Festival in Seoul, the capital of South Korea. The festival celebrates the birthday of Buddha, the founder of the Buddhist religion.

3. While in Paris, Jefferson wrote, "I am savage enough to prefer the woods, the wilds, and the independence of Monticello, to all the brilliant pleasures of this gay capital...for tho' there is less wealth there, there is more freedom, more ease, and less misery" (September 6, 1785).

4. "I heard you're going to Argentina for the summer," Señora Perez told her student. Maya nodded her head and smiled, excited for her upcoming vacation. She was going to visit her cousins living in the capital of Argentina, Buenos Aires. "I thought I could offer you some advice!" the señora said.

5. About a year after their arrival, the brothers tell me they are happy in Seoul, the busy capital city of South Korea. I visited Young Hoon and Young Jun at the Hannuri School, an after-school program for teens who have left North Korea and come to South Korea to start new lives.
civilization  civ·i·li·za·tion

Advanced Definition

noun
1. an advanced state of development of a society as judged by such things as having a complex system of government and laws, use of a written language, and the keeping of written records.

   Fertile land and an abundant water supply were what made civilization possible in the region.

2. the culture and achievements characteristic of a society that has reached such a level of development.

   We studied the ancient civilizations of China.

3. any society and its culture at a particular time or over a span of time.

   American civilization changed immensely as a result of these technological innovations.

4. the process of civilizing or becoming civilized.

   Civilization was a slow process in the colder climates.

5. a place offering human society and modern convenience, as opposed to the wilderness.

   After spending months in the Arctic, they were ready to return to civilization.

6. refinement in intellectual and cultural matters.

   She was now moving in high social circles and considered herself a woman of civilization.

Spanish cognate

civilización: The Spanish word civilización means civilization.

These are some examples of how the word or forms of the word are used:

1. At the heart of the Aztec civilization were nature and natural forces.

2. Archaeologists (the folks who study the past by recovering fossil remains, monuments, etc.) have found buttons from many ancient civilizations.
3. When the colonists were trying to gain independence from Britain, they compared themselves to the citizens of Greek and Rome. They identified with the ideals of these old civilizations where men voted on many public issues.

4. In the beginning of the Middle Ages, most people were very poor. However, between the 1000s and 1200s the economy began to get stronger. Things began to improve. Medieval civilization was at its peak during this time, which is often referred to as the High Middle Ages.

5. Rivers are known to be fundamental for civilizations. They provide a resource of utmost importance: water! The Penobscot Indians built their lives around the river and all that it supported. The river was a source of food, for example, as it provided fish for the Penobscot Indians to eat.

6. The lasting influence of ancient Rome is apparent in many areas of our contemporary society. Sophisticated elements of law, engineering, literature, philosophy, architecture, and art can all be traced back to the Roman Empire. But perhaps one of the most lasting contributions from Roman civilization is something we see nearly every day: the Roman arch.

7. The murals are about 1,350 years old. So far, experts have excavated, or dug up, about 30 of them in Calakmul, Mexico. They depict, or show, scenes from everyday Mayan life. It's a side of the Mayas that has rarely been seen before, even though researchers have studied the civilization for about a century, says expert Michael Coe.

8. The science of astronomy has more to say about this riddle than any time travel theorist. That's because astronomers have spent centuries charting the stars and tracking the movements of planets across space and time. Hundreds of years of research and observation have given our civilization the very idea of time, in the form of years and days.

9. The Egyptians used it to create funeral masks for their pharaohs. The Incas called it the "sweat of the sun." It is used to make medals for the best athletes in the world. It symbolizes wealth and riches. Over the centuries, gold has become important to humans. The heavy metal has cultural and economic meaning for human civilizations around the world. But this wasn't always the case.
empire  em · pire

Definition
noun
1. a group of nations under one ruler.

_The queen sent soldiers to expand her empire._

Advanced Definition
noun
1. a single political unit, with one supreme ruler, composed of an aggregate of nations or peoples.

_The tsar expanded the Russian empire to the east._

2. the government of such a unit, or the historical period in which it existed.

_These lands were under control of the Ottoman Empire._

_Many were enslaved during the Roman Empire._

3. an extensive range of enterprises or activities under the authority of one person or a central organization.

_He founded a publishing empire and became extremely wealthy._

adjective
1. (cap.) of or pertaining to styles in architecture, clothing, and home furnishings prevalent in France during the first empire under Napoleon I.

_I'm not fond of these dresses with a high Empire waistline._

Spanish cognate

imperio n.: The Spanish word _imperio n._ means empire.

These are some examples of how the word or forms of the word are used:

1. The western part of the Roman Empire was defeated.
2. The Byzantine Empire's rulers made it a Christian empire.
3. In 1453 A.D., the Byzantine Empire fell to the Turks.
4. This was centered in Constantinople and became known as the Byzantine Empire.

5. Latin and Greek were the two most important languages of the Byzantine Empire.

6. Most of all, Dulce was drawn to the mystery of the Mayan empire.

7. In 330 A.D., the Emperor Constantine moved the capital of the Roman Empire from Rome.

8. Everyone else, it seemed, was starting with the "Mexica" section, about the fearsome Aztec empire, so Dulce decided to begin in the Maya building.

9. In 476 A.D., the city of Rome was conquered. The western part of the Roman Empire was defeated. After that, only the eastern part of the empire was left.

10. The only thing the experts agreed on was that in the year 800 A.D., the Maya empire had constituted one of the strongest empires on the planet, with enormous cities and an intricate culture.
1. Which was built first: the Palace of Montezuma or the President’s Palace?
   A. There was no Palace of Montezuma.
   B. the Palace of Montezuma
   C. the President's Palace
   D. They were both built at the same time.

2. According to the passage, how was transportation made possible in Tenochtitlan?
   A. People swam between the little islands that were built.
   B. Sidewalks were built, and boats passed through the canals.
   C. Most of the Aztecs traveled on horseback.
   D. An intricate road system was created along the canals.

3. Which conclusion is correct based on the information in the passage?
   A. The city now known as Mexico City has changed over time.
   B. Tenochtitlan has endured intact over hundreds of years.
   C. Nahuatl is a language spoken throughout the world.
   D. The Spanish came to Tenochtitlan to help the Aztecs.

4. What was important to the Aztec civilization?
   A. Spain
   B. a Catholic cathedral
   C. nature and natural forces
   D. the President's Palace

5. What is the purpose of this passage?
   A. to explain how the Spanish invaded the Aztec Empire
   B. to show the historical transformation of Tenochtitlan
   C. to describe the religious practices of the Aztecs
   D. to provide a glimpse into the Aztec Empire
6. Describe the religious practices of the Aztecs.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

7. Reread the first paragraph and explain what may have been the author's purpose in writing that paragraph.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

_____________________ of the canal construction, the land was dry enough to create sidewalks of stone so that pedestrians could travel.

A. Unlike  
B. Likewise  
C. As a result  
D. Therefore
9. **Vocabulary Word**: intricate: having many parts; complicated.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________