

# THE AZTECS



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LIVING

STREETS

LET'S  
WALK TO  
SCHOOL

Did  
you  
know?



The Aztec people lived in modern day Mexico and there are about one million descendants still living there.

Their capital city Tenochtitlan (Teh-notch-tee-tlan) is where Mexico City now stands. Ruins of the ancient city remain including a pyramid decorated with stone skulls.

The Aztec people used cocoa beans as a form of money.

## AIM

To create an Aztec style codex.

## OBJECTIVES

- To learn more about the Aztec Empire and where they lived.
- To look at some Aztec codices and talk about how they were used to communicate ideas, stories and history.
- To create a modern day codex and explain how it works.

**TIMING** 45 mins

## RESOURCES

Map or globe, pictures of Aztec codices, pencils and coloured pens, paper.

## CURRICULUM LINKS

England **ART AND DESIGN, HISTORY**

Wales **ART AND DESIGN, HISTORY**

Scotland **EXPRESSIVE ARTS, HISTORY**

We are Living Streets, the UK charity for everyday walking. These learning resources support participation in WOW, the year-round walk to school challenge.

For further information on WOW and the full set of learning resources, visit [www.livingstreets.org.uk/walktoschool](http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/walktoschool)

Get in touch: [walktoschool@livingstreets.org.uk](mailto:walktoschool@livingstreets.org.uk) 020 7377 4900

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## LESSON PLAN



### INTRODUCTION

Explain to the class that the Aztec people created codices which were pictorial representations of daily life, stories or history that could also be read. Sometimes actual pictures were used and sometimes symbols were used. Identify where Mexico and Mexico City are on a globe or map and talk about where Central America is situated. Look at some pictures of Aztec life and some examples of codices. Talk about what the pictures show and how they might be read or interpreted.

### DEVELOPMENT

Explain that the children will have a chance to create their own codex story. They might want to represent a story or part of their family history or make up a treasure map. Codices were often created on folded paper so the children could fold their paper into a fan/concertina shape or fold it into squares. They can use pencils or coloured pens to create their codices.

### PLENARY

In pairs swap codices and try and 'read' them. Who was right? Swap them back and explain what each symbol and picture means. Ask a selection of children to explain their codices to the class and create a class display.

### EXTENSION

Encourage the children on the walk to school or the next time they visit the shops to try and spot some modern codices. Look at their signage to see how they tell people what they are selling. Barber shops traditionally have a red and white pole outside and chemists have a green cross. If shops and buildings didn't use any words would you still know what they sold or were for?

If you require these learning resources in Welsh please email [wales@livingstreets.org.uk](mailto:wales@livingstreets.org.uk)