

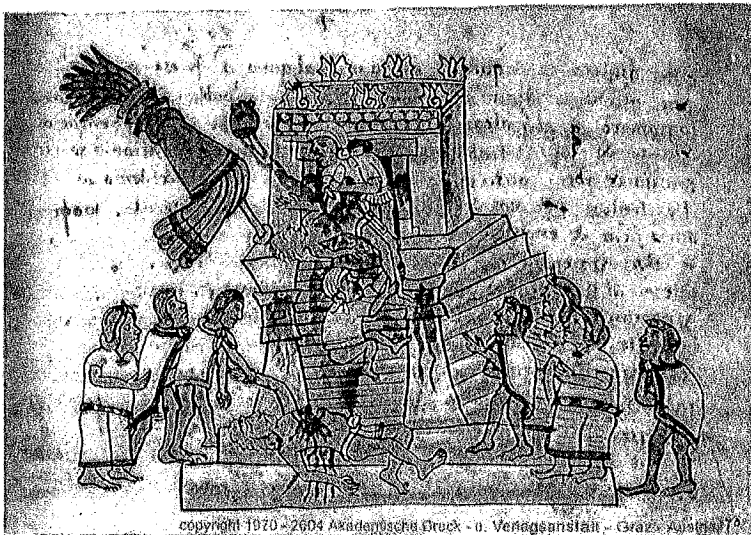
How did Native American's adapt to their environment?

1. The Aztecs

The Aztecs were farmers who dug vast canals to supply water to their fields. In the swampy regions along Lake Xochimilco, the Aztecs implemented yet another method of crop cultivation. They built what are called *chinampas*. Chinampas are areas of raised land, created from alternating layers of mud from the bottom of the lake. These "raised beds" were separated by narrow canals, which allowed farmers to move between them by canoe. The chinampas were extremely fertile pieces of land, and yielded, on average, seven crops annually.



The Aztec war god Huitzilopochtli



The Aztecs worshipped a war god called Huitzilopochtli, who took on the likeness of the sun over time. It was thought that in order to insure the sun's arrival each day, a steady supply of live human hearts had to be offered in holy sacrifice. Without the sun raising their crops would not grow. The Aztecs depended on Huitzilopochtli and the other gods and sacrificed humans to keep them happy.

The Aztecs wrote down much of their history and culture in a series of books called codices. The early codices are mostly picture books but later ones are written in Nahuatl or Spanish. The drawing of the human sacrifice appears in the Codex Magliabechiano.

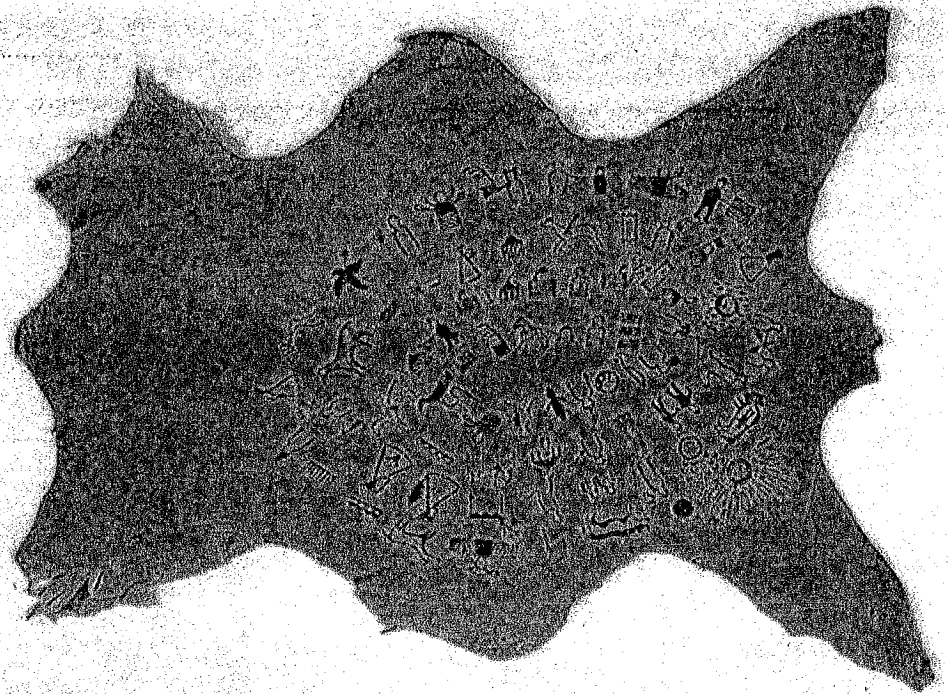
Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

- 1) In what ways did the Aztecs change the environment to suit their needs?
- 2) How do historians know so many things about the Aztecs?
- 3) Explain how the Aztecs used human sacrifice to adapt to their environment.

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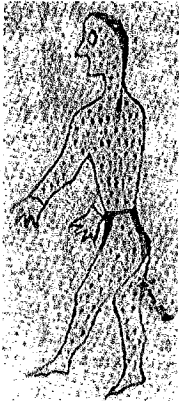
3. The Sioux (including the Lakota, Nakota & Dakota)

The Sioux live on the Great Plains. Rain in this area is often scanty and unpredictable. The climate is usually dry year-round, with hot temperatures in the summer and bitter cold weather in the winter. Much of the area is a grassland, which supported huge herds of bison, or buffalo as they are usually called. The Sioux were dependent on the buffalo and utilized every aspect of the beast, nothing went to waste.



The Sioux were nomadic, following the herds of buffalo for food. They

spent summers on the open plains hunting buffalo. When the weather grew colder, family groups would seek protection from the frigid winds, moving their camps to wooded areas. It is here that the Sioux would create Winter Counts. Winter Counts are histories or calendars in which events are recorded by pictures, with one picture for each year. They used bison hides as a surface to record the Winter Count



Winter counts were mnemonic devices that triggered extensive oral histories. Each year was named for an event and the pictures, referring to the year names served as a reference source that could be consulted regarding the order of the years. People knew the name of the year in which other important events occurred, and could place these in time by referring to the winter count.

1837-38

Small pox year.

Answer the following questions in complete sentences

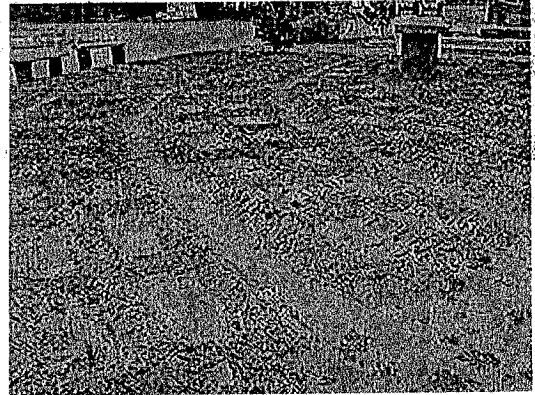
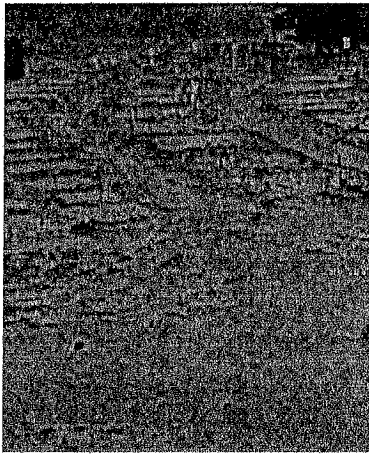
1. What natural resources did the Sioux dependent on?
2. How did this resource influence the way the Sioux recorded their history?
3. Why do you think the Sioux used pictographs to record their history?

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5. The A:Shiwi (The Zuni)

Hayes Lewis, of the A:shiwi Nation, lives just 20 miles from the Arizona border in Zuni, New Mexico. Here, he shares his knowledge about the spiritual connection among the land, his people, and the crops that sustain their lives.

"Agriculture has been an important and constant practice among the A:shiwi people for centuries. We either farm out in the fields or create gardens. Many started [to farm] as children, helping our parents create small gardens. The primary method we use is a waffle garden. If one looks at the garden from an elevated view, its layout resembles a waffle."



"The purpose of the waffle garden is to provide the kind of produce that normally will not grow on a large scale. These plants require more water and constant tending. Waffle gardens are fairly small, and they are usually enclosed. Fences or other forms of protection are usually built around the gardens to protect the plants from rabbits, prairie dogs, or rodents. The fence also provides protection from the wind."

"The elevation at Zuni is approximately 6,800 feet above sea level. Since it is semi-arid, there is not much rainfall. Whenever there is rain, it needs to be captured, which is why berms—raised mounds of earth—are built up around each plant."

"Seeds are significant in all our cultural practices throughout the year. Two of the most important religious/cultural ceremonies occur during the summer and winter solstices. During the winter, the clans honor the seeds. Representative samplings of seeds are taken to family gatherings and honored along with our ancestors with an offering of sacred cornmeal, songs, and prayer. There is a direct, reciprocal connection between the corn and the spiritual practice of the A:shiwi people. Corn is used in the preparation of the sacred cornmeal used by the A:shiwi people for daily prayer and as spiritual offerings to sustain the deities and ancestors. The corn is ground and prepared with special prayers for daily use and for each ceremonial/religious event held throughout the year. Each household maintains a supply of sacred cornmeal for such purposes. During the winter Sha'lako Ceremony, solstice fasting period, and other ceremonies held during the winter period, the seeds are blessed and honored as part of these ceremonies."

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

- 1) How does the Zuni use of a waffle garden show an adaptation to their environment?
- 2) What is the purpose of a berm?
- 3) What significance do seeds and cornmeal play in Zuni culture?