

# Sample Performance Assessment Stimulus Material

**Content Area:** Social Studies

**Grade Level:** Six (6)

**Instructional Unit Sample:** What Did They Leave Behind?

**Colorado Academic Standard(s):**

SS09-GR.6-S.1-GLE.1

Analyze and interpret historical sources to ask and research historical questions

SS09-GR.6-S.1-GLE.2

The historical eras, individuals, groups, ideas and themes in regions of the Western Hemisphere and their relationships with one another

SS09-GR.6-S.2-GLE.2

Human and physical systems vary and interact

**Concepts and skills students' master:**

Artifact, culture, cultural beliefs and ideals, adaptation, primary and secondary sources, historical contexts, perspectives, historical interpretation, civilizations, archaeologist, historian, archeological site, archaeologist dig, archive, research, excavate; interpret, formulate, identify, analyze, describe, critique

## Unit Description

In this unit, [What Did They Leave Behind?](#), students explore how aspects of ancient cultural life are interpreted through artifacts left behind. Students will focus on material cultural artifacts as the physical evidence of the human experience. In addition, students will be introduced to how archaeologists and historians assess and evaluate primary and secondary sources to learn more about the lives of people in the past. This unit focuses on the early civilizations in the Americas, including the Maya, Inca, Aztec and Inuit. The unit culminates with students creating a website illustrating an analysis of artifacts found at an archaeological site and the significance of those artifacts.

This unit focuses on the history of the people in the Americas. Specifically, the Maya, Inca, Aztec, and Inuit. The learning experiences are organized by cultures. There are two learning experiences per culture, the first serves as an introduction to the culture, the second looks at the culture in more depth. Native American tribes may be covered in the unit entitled "*Movin' Movin'.*"

## Stimulus Material

An archaeologist studies past cultures through artifacts. They work at historical sites to "uncover" the stories of the past through the discovery and analysis of the artifacts they discover. You are an adventure archaeologist who is working on the *Codex Archaeology Project* and you have to prepare a report for your investors on the progress of historical sites that are part of this project. You will work with your colleagues to create a website that describes the stories behind the artifacts you've discovered on the sites and their connection to the people of



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the past. Your investors want to know about the archaeological site you've excavated, and about the artifacts and beliefs of the ancient cultures that you've studied.

Website Requirements:

In cooperative groups of 4 to 5, you will create a website that provides the historical context and insight into the lives of people in the Americas. You will have access to primary and secondary sources as well as previous unit learning materials to help you gather information. Your website will be scored using the provided rubric.

Your website should be divided into regions:

- Central America (sites such as: Chichen Itza, Caracol, etc.; <http://mayaruins.com/>),
- South America (sites such as: Sacsahuaman, Machu Picchu, etc.; <http://tinyurl.com/l3y22xv>),
- and Mexico (sites such as: Monte Albán, Tenochtitlan, etc.; <http://tinyurl.com/m7vppom>)

Your website needs to include *written information* and *images* of artifacts that give insight into the ancient cultures. You should select the artifacts that best represent the people who inhabited the site.

You must include information that explains about:

- the people who inhabited the location,
- the environment,
- the architecture,
- agriculture,
- language,
- and their beliefs.

