

Globe Lesson 1 Some Early American Cultures

Skills used Latitude & Longitude
 Using scale to measure distance
 Using directions
 Critical thinking
 Using Map legends

Vocabulary civilizations, culture

Materials Needed Globe in Horizon Ring Mounting

Lesson

Find and circle Mexico City, Mexico at 20°N/99°W on your globe. Mexico City occupies the former site of the Aztec capital Tenochtitlán. Mexico City lies at the southern end of the central Valley of Mexico. What is the land elevation of Mexico City? (1.) _____ How far is the city from the equator? (2.) _____

Now place a small "X" on your globe at 39°N/90°W. This is the location of the city of St. Louis, Missouri. St. Louis is near a Mound Builders culture site that was called Cahokia. What is the land elevation of this area? (3.) _____ How far is the area from the equator? (4.) _____

The average July temperature in Mexico City is 63 degrees Fahrenheit while the average July temperature in St. Louis is 79 degrees Fahrenheit. Why do you think the summers are cooler in Mexico City than in St. Louis even though St. Louis is twice as far from the equator? (5.) _____

In addition to the temperature differences, the area in and around Tenochtitlán was much drier, and it had fewer trees and forest than the area around Cahokia. Discuss with your classmates how these differences would have influenced the types of **civilizations** that developed at these two North American sites. Consider such things as homes, clothing, foods, farming techniques, and other everyday activities.

Now circle the Four Corners location on your globe. This location is found at 37°N/109°W and it is the only place in the United States where a person can stand in one spot and touch four different states at the same time. Near Four Corners are the sites of the ancient Anasazi cities of Pueblo Bonito and Mesa Verde. What is the land elevation in this area? (6.) _____

_____ Do you think the Anasazi **culture** would have been more like the Aztec culture or the culture of the Mound Builders? (7.) _____ Why? (8.) _____

Descendants of the Anasazi, the Mayas, the Aztecs, the Incas, and the Mound Builders, made up just a few of the many culture groups that occupied the western hemisphere at the beginning of the 15th century (1400 A.D.). Though there were millions of people living in the Americas, their existence was totally unknown to most of the inhabitants in the Eastern Hemisphere