

Chavín
textile
Nazca
aquifer
Moche

Ancient Andean Civilizations

Build on What You Know You have learned about the rugged landscape and harsh climate of the Andes Mountains. Now find out about the people who created civilizations in this tough environment.

The Chavín Civilization

1 ESSENTIAL QUESTION What was the Chavín civilization?

The ruins of a huge U-shaped temple stand high in the Andes of Peru in a place called Chavín de Huantar (chah•VEEN deh WAHN•tahr). The temple was built by a culture known as the **Chavín**. This culture flourished between about 900 and 200 B.C. Our understanding of the Chavín may increase as more discoveries are made. But for right now, the little we know is based on the ruins of the structures they built.

The Chavín Ruins Archaeologists believe that the Chavín civilization was united mainly by religion. Little is known about their political or economic organization. However, the religious images found at Chavín de Huantar tell us about their culture.

Chavín de Huantar
Heads like this one decorated the outer walls of the temple of Chavín de Huantar. The heads may have been designed to frighten away evil spirits. ▼



Religion and Art Some archaeologists believe that Chavín de Huantar was a holy city. The culture's ruler-priests may have called on farmers, who made up most of the society, to build the religious center. The farmers probably worked at Chavín de Huantar to fulfill their religious duty. Followers of the Chavín religion probably traveled to the center for special festivals.

The Chavín culture spread across much of northern and central Peru. Archaeologists know this because they have found the Chavín art style in religious images throughout the northern coast of Peru. This style is seen in stone carvings and in beautiful black and red pottery. The Chavín also embroidered images into woven cloth called **textiles**.

REVIEW How did the Chavín influence other cultures?

The Nazca Civilization

2 ESSENTIAL QUESTION How did the Nazca adapt to their harsh environment?

After the decline of the Chavín, other cultures arose in Peru. One of these was the **Nazca** (NAHZ•kuh) culture, which arose along the southern coast of present-day Peru. The Nazca prospered from around 200 B.C. to A.D. 600.

Irrigation and Agriculture Much about the Nazca remains a mystery. Like the Chavín, little is known about the political and economic structures of the Nazca. One of the things we do know about the Nazca is that they developed an extensive irrigation system. Their economy was based on farming, but the Nazca lived in an area that received less than an inch of rainfall a year. So to water their crops, the Nazca built a network of underground canals.



Art The Nazca civilization is also known for its beautiful pottery and textiles. Potters crafted bowls and double-spouted pitchers and decorated them with vividly painted people, birds, fish, fruits, and mythical creatures. Textile artists wove the wool of the alpaca, a camel-like animal, into ponchos, shirts, and headbands. They decorated these fine textiles with religious images and animals.

The Nazca Lines Probably the most striking legacy left behind by the Nazca are the Nazca Lines, which are shown below. To this day, no one knows the purpose of the Nazca Lines. Some people believe that the Nazca worshiped mountain or sky gods and created the drawings to please them. Other people believe the lines showed where surface water entered the plain. Still others say that the lines form a giant astronomical calendar and map. The latest theory is that some of them show the routes of **aquifers**, or underground water sources.

REVIEW What is the Nazca culture known for?

Geography

The Nazca Lines

Between 200 B.C. and A.D. 600, the Nazca made more than 1,000 pictures of birds, plants, animals, humans, and geometric shapes on the plains of southeastern Peru. The dry climate and winds in the region preserved the designs.

Most of the drawings are so big that you can't recognize them from the ground. The hummingbird (top) and parrot shown here, for example, are over 100 feet long. Some designs are more than 2,500 feet long. It's no wonder the Nazca Lines remained undiscovered until people saw them from airplanes in the 1920s.



GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER INTERPRETING VISUALS

Human-Environment Interaction What do the lines suggest about the Nazca?

The Moche Civilization

3 ESSENTIAL QUESTION What does Moche art tell us about their civilization?

While the Nazca rose on the southern coast of Peru, the **Moche** (MOH•chay) culture dominated Peru's hot, dry northern coast between about A.D. 100 and 700. The culture is named for the city of Moche, which may have been the capital of the Moche civilization.

Agriculture Like the Nazca, the Moche used advanced farming techniques to make the most of their environment. The Moche channeled the rivers that flowed from the Andes Mountains into impressive irrigation systems. They used this water to grow corn, beans, squash, avocados, chile peppers, and peanuts. In fact, the Moche enjoyed a wide variety of foods. They hunted and fished, gathered snails and wild plants, and ate domesticated ducks and llamas.

City Structures In addition to being good engineers, the Moche were also skilled architects. Two large structures still stand in the city of Moche. The Temple of the Sun is a gigantic step pyramid, which you learned about in Chapter 5. The Temple of the Moon is a raised platform topped with big rooms and courtyards.

Some archaeologists believe that the temples may have served as centers of political power for the Moche. They think that nobles ruled over the people. The lower classes, made up of farmers and laborers, probably paid taxes for the repair of the temples and other city structures.

Art Recent discoveries of Moche tombs have increased our understanding of the Moche civilization. Archaeologists have found beautiful jewelry made of gold, silver, and turquoise. Leaders and the wealthy wore this jewelry. They also wore textiles covered with pictures of people, plants, and animals.



▲ **Moche Pottery** Archaeologists believe that this jug pictures an actual person. Some experts consider the Moche the most skilled artists of ancient America.

In addition, archaeologists have found pottery that tells us about Moche daily life. The pots show doctors with their patients, women weaving cloth, and musicians playing instruments. But we still don't know very much about Moche religious beliefs or why the civilization fell. One day, further archaeological discoveries may answer these questions.

REVIEW How have archaeologists learned about the Moche civilization?

Lesson Summary

- Chavín religion spread to a large area along Peru's coast.
- The Nazca developed irrigation systems and etched mysterious lines on the ground.
- The Moche civilization built large cities where artists crafted beautiful jewelry and pottery.



▲ **Nazca Textile** This colorful poncho was made around A.D. 600. Nazca textiles were sometimes used to show the owner's standing in the society.

Why It Matters Now . . .

The farming methods used by the ancient Andean civilizations can help people today bring water to their dry fields and develop crops that grow well there.

2 Lesson Review

Terms & Names

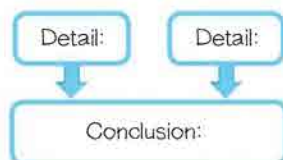
1. Explain the importance of

Chavín	Nazca	Moche
textile	aquifer	

Using Your Notes

Drawing Conclusions Use your diagram to answer the following question:

2. What conclusions can you draw about the Chavín culture?



Main Ideas

3. How do archaeologists know that the Chavín influenced other cultures?
4. What are the Nazca Lines?
5. How have recent discoveries increased understanding of the Moche?

Critical Thinking

6. **Comparing and Contrasting** Compare and contrast characteristics of the Chavín, Nazca, and Moche civilizations.
7. **Identifying Issues and Problems** Why is it difficult to know more about the Chavín, Nazca, and Moche cultures?

Activity

Making a Nazca Line Drawing Sketch a plan for a Nazca Line drawing that would be 100 feet long. Be sure to indicate the scale you use in your drawing.

