

Documents: Smallpox

Name: _____

Time: _____

Date: _____

Directions: Analyze the document. Spelling and grammar are a part of the grade.

Background: Between 1545 and 1590, Friar Bernardino de Sahagún studied and wrote about Aztec culture with the help of Native peoples. He believed that knowing more about the Aztecs would allow Spain to more easily convert the Aztecs to Christianity. This collection of writings and pictures is known as the Florentine Codex.



“[The disease] brought great desolation: a great many died of it. They could no longer walk about, but lay in their dwellings and sleeping places, no longer able to move or stir. They were unable to change position, to stretch out on their sides or face down, or raise their heads. And when they made a motion, they called out loudly. The pustules that covered people caused great desolation; very many people died of them, and many just starved to death; starvation reigned, and no one took care of others any longer. On some people, the pustules appeared only far apart, and they did not suffer greatly, nor did many of them die of it. But many people’s faces were spoiled by it, their faces were made rough. Some lost an eye or were blinded.”

Observation. Circle the descriptions below that can be verified true in the picture above.

1. People	2. Objects	3. Captions
smallpox victims	blankets	“Friar Sahagún helps Aztecs.”
dead people	shoes	
care giver	mats	
Friar Sahagún	pillows	

Central Ideas. A central idea is the overall topic of the entire piece. Main ideas are important topics that support the central idea.

4. What is the central idea that Friar Bernardino de Sahagún writes about in this section of the codex?
- E. Smallpox destroyed the complexion of the people it infected.
 - H. Doctors had no power to stop the disease as it spread throughout the Aztec empire.
 - O. Smallpox caused great devastation among the Aztec people.
 - Y. Many people died from smallpox.

Words in Context. Define words based upon how they are used in the writing.

“The pustules that covered people caused great desolation; very many people died of them....”

5. What does the word “desolation” mean as it is used in the quote above?
- D. embarrassment
 - I. death
 - L. suffering
 - Q. loneliness

Facts vs. Opinions vs. Reasoned Judgment.

Fact: A conclusion that can be proven true and/or is absolutely accurate to all people involved.

Opinion: belief or preference about something that cannot be proven or accepted by all people.

Reasoned Judgment: a conclusion based upon facts and evidence that may not be entirely accurate.

For many people, it seems that when the pustules were spread far apart, they did not suffer a greatly as those that had more pustules.

6. Identify the statement above as fact, opinion, or reasoned judgment.
- A. fact
 - N. opinion
 - Z. reasoned judgment

Textual Evidence. Place the descriptions in the word bank into the proper categories.

people went blind	people wrapped in blankets	the sick could not walk
pustules covered people	starvation killed people	

Picture	Picture/Text	Text
7. found only in the picture	8. found in both picture and text	9. found only in the text