

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.”
care giver	shoes	
Friar Sahagún	mats	
	pillows	

**Central Ideas.** A central idea is the overall topic of the entire piece.

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

**Reading for Understanding.** Answer the questions about the article.

6. How did smallpox affect the Aztec population?
- E. Many people died from the disease.
  - H. Some Aztecs could not move about.
  - O. Many Aztecs became so weak they starved to death.
  - Y. All of the choices.

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

people went blind	people wrapped in blankets	starvation killed people
pustules covered people		

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