Document A: Depiction of Tenochtitlan, capital city of the Aztec Empire

![Depiction of Tenochtitlan, capital city of the Aztec Empire](image)

Document B:

“With a core population recently estimated at 5 to 6 million people, the Aztec Empire was a loosely structured and unstable conquest state that witnessed frequent rebellions by its subject peoples. Conquered peoples and cities were required to regularly deliver to their Aztec rulers impressive quantities of textiles and clothing, military supplies, jewelry, and other luxuries, various foodstuffs, animal products, building materials, rubber balls, paper, and more. The process was overseen by local imperial tribute collectors, who sent the required goods on to Tenochtitlan, a metropolis of 150,000 to 200,000 people, where they were meticulously recorded.”


Document C: The meeting of Cortes and Motecuhzoma

[Upon meeting Cortes, Motecuhzoma explained], "This was foretold by the kings who governed your city, and now it has taken place. You have come back to us; you have come down from the sky. Rest now, and take possession of your royal houses. Welcome to your land, my lords!"

When Motecuhzoma had finished, La Malinche translated his address into Spanish so that the Captain could understand it. Cortés replied in his strange and savage tongue, speaking first to La Malinche: "Tell Motecuhzoma that we are his friends. There is nothing to fear. We have wanted to see him for a long time, and now we have seen his face and heard his words. Tell him that we love him well and that our hearts are contented."

Then he said to Motecuhzoma: "We have come to your house in Mexico as friends. There is nothing to fear." La Malinche translated this speech and the Spaniards grasped Motecuhzoma’s hands and patted his back to show their affection for him....

Source: Excerpt from *The Broken Spears*, an Aztec account of the meeting of Cortes and Motecuhzoma, 1519.
Document D: Human sacrifice to honor the sun, *Aztec codex*, 16th century.

Document E: “Divide and conquer: Cortes and Malinche negotiate with leaders on route to Tenochtitlan”
**Document F:** Spanish "gunboats" fire on Tenochtitlan

![Image of Spanish gunboats firing on Tenochtitlan](image)

**Document G:**

When the dance was loveliest and when song was linked to song, the Spaniards were seized with an urge to kill the celebrants. They all ran forward, armed as if for battle. They closed the entrances and passageways...then [they] rushed into the Sacred Patio to slaughter the inhabitants...they attacked the man who was drumming and cut off his arms. Then they cut off his head, and it rolled across the floor. They attacked all the celebrants stabbing them, spearing them, striking them with swords...others they beheaded...or split their heads to pieces...The blood of the warriors flowed like water and gathered into pools...They invaded every room, hunting and killing...

Primary Source: Aztec account of the massacre at the temple in May 1520; *Florentine codex*
**Document H:** “The Massacre of the Nobles”

**Document I:** Image of a Mesoamerican infected with smallpox; illustrated panel from the Florentine Codex, a compendium of information on Aztec people and history by Bernardino de Sahagún, a 16th-century Spanish Franciscan missionary