

# Welcome!

## Grade 1, Unit 3

### Early American Civilizations: Aztecs, Maya, Incas

Dear Family Member,

In this unit, students will learn about the Maya, Aztec, and Inca civilizations.

#### What's the story?

Students will learn about the **fundamental features** of the **Maya, Aztec, and Inca** civilizations, including farming, traditions, and the establishment of cities and government.

#### What will my student learn?

Students will explore cities in each of these civilizations. They will also compare and contrast each **society and its important elements**. They will learn about the **impact archaeologists** have had on what we know about the Maya, the Aztec, and the Inca today. Students will read about the daily lives, traditions, and customs of the Maya, the Aztec, and the Inca people. They will learn that all three civilizations told stories to help explain the natural world around them, including the ancient Inca legend of Viracocha. Students will read the legend of this mythical being, whom the Inca people believed was the creator of the earth and all creatures that inhabit it.

Throughout the unit, students will learn to **identify important facts** and **information** from the Read-Alouds and will use that information to **take notes**. They will also **collaborate with their classmates** to create written responses about what they have learned.

#### Conversation starters

Ask your student questions about the unit to promote discussion and continued learning:

1. What have you learned about the Mayan civilization?  
**Follow up:** What have you learned about the importance of farming to them? What have you learned about the leaders of the Maya? What were some important things about their cities?
2. Tell me what you learned about the Festival of the First Star.
3. What happened in "The Aztec: The Legend of the Eagle and the Serpent"?  
**Follow up:** Why is it called a legend? What did this legend explain? Do you remember the name of the lake they ended up living on? (Lake Texcoco)
4. What did you learn about Aztec farming?  
**Follow up:** How was it similar to Mayan farming? How was it different?
5. Who were the Inca?  
**Follow up:** What can you tell me about their rulers?
6. What is an archaeologist?  
**Follow up:** What was Hiram Bingham's amazing discovery? Can you describe Machu Picchu to me?