

The Inca: A lost society

Worksheet A

Cut these out and give one to each person in the group.

How is it that a people who had no written language and didn't even know of the **existence** of the wheel could within the space of a hundred years build an **empire** that **spanned** some 2, 500 miles across South America?

The people I'm referring to are of course the Inca. The Inca were a small **ethnic** group who came to rule an empire of more than 12 million people. They ruled their empire from Cuzco in Peru and were not the **brutal** conquerors that many think them to be. They took control of other cultures through a mixture **arms** and gifts

They were skilled **craftsmen** who were able to produce beautiful jewelry and **textiles**. Many villagers were so impressed by them that they thought of them as gods. The Inca were in many ways very tolerant and **assimilated** new peoples, their cultures and even their religions into their own, but not so the Spanish conquistadors who arrived in 1532.

With an army of less than 400 men they were able to defeat the 40,000 strong Inca army and they soon **set about looting and plundering** the riches of the Inca culture. Most of the amazing architecture and complex building they had worked to build up was **torn down** and made into palaces and fortresses for the conquering Spanish.

Amazingly one Inca **site** remained undiscovered until 1911. It was the amazing Machu Picchu, the Inca **temple** to the sun, but by this time of course the Inca were long gone, either killed off by conquistadors or the diseases that they brought with them. Today it still stands, at the top a mountain beside the Urubamba River in Peru, a **memorial** to the greatness of a people that we can now only read about in books.

Worksheet B

Cut these into strips and give a set to each group.

the state of being

a group of countries controlled by a single power

to cover an area

of a racial group

cruel and violent

weapons (i.e. knives, guns etc.)

people who make things with their hands

clothes or other articles made of cloth

**to allow one group of people to become part of
another**

to begin

to steal articles during time of war or disorder

to destroy

a position or place

a religious building

something that reminds people of a person or event

Text

How is it that a people who had no written language and didn't even know of the existence of the wheel could within the space of a hundred years build an empire that spanned some 2,500 miles across South America?

The people I'm referring to are of course the Inca. The Inca were a small ethnic group who came to rule an empire of more than 12 million people. They ruled their empire from Cuzco in Peru and were not the brutal conquerors that many think them to be. They took control of other cultures through a mixture arms and gifts. They were skilled craftsmen who were able to produce beautiful jewelry and textiles. Many villagers were so impressed by them that they thought of them as gods. The Inca were in many ways very tolerant and assimilated new peoples, their cultures and even their religions into their own, but not so the Spanish conquistadors who arrived in 1532.

With an army of less than 400 men they were able to defeat the 40,000 strong Inca army and they soon set about looting and plundering the riches of the Inca culture. Most of the amazing architecture and complex building they had worked to build up was torn down and made into palaces and fortresses for the conquering Spanish.

Amazingly, one Inca site remained undiscovered until 1911. It was the amazing Machu Picchu, the Inca temple to the sun, but by this time of course the Inca were long gone, either killed off by conquistadors or the diseases that they brought with them. Today it still stands, at the top a mountain beside the Urubamba River in Peru, a memorial to the greatness of a people that we can now only read about in books.

Worksheet C

Read the text and put the facts below under the heading that they refer to.

The Inca Empire	Inca Society	The Conquistadors	Machu Picchu

- a. 12 million people
- b. a religious place
- c. a small ethnic group
- d. an army of 40,000 men
- e. an army of less than 400 men
- f. arrived in 1532
- g. brought many diseases
- h. brutal conquerors
- i. capital city Cuzco in Peru
- j. close to the Urubamba River in Peru
- k. covered an area of 2,500 miles
- l. didn't know about the wheel
- m. discovered in 1911
- n. had no written language
- o. very good at making things
- p. very tolerant

Worksheet D

Complete the sentences so that they are true for you

- The part of the text that most surprised me was...
- I think the conquistadors were able to defeat the Inca army because...
- I think the descendants of the Inca are / aren't entitled to compensation because...
- I think the conquistadors tore down the Inca buildings and build their own because...
- I think Machu Picchu wasn't discovered by the conquistadors because....
- I think the best thing about the Inca was....
- I think the worst thing about the conquistadors was...
- I would / wouldn't like to go to Machu Picchu because...