

Inca, Mountain Empire The **Inca** lived in the Andes Mountains in what is now Peru. They controlled a large empire from the early 1400s until 1533. The empire centered around Cuzco (KOOZ•koh), the Inca's mountain capital city. By 1500, the empire extended about 2,500 miles along the west coast of South America. The Inca built complex cities such as Machu Picchu. To farm the steep land, they cut terraces into the mountainsides, where they grew corn and potatoes. They built aqueducts, or canals, to irrigate the land. On higher areas, the Inca grazed llamas.

The Inca adapted to difficult conditions. They built 14,000 miles of roads on which runners carried messages. To keep records, they used *quipus* (KEE•poos), counting tools of knotted cords. Today's descendants of the Inca, the Quechua (KEHCH•wuh), make up about 45 percent of Peru's population. They still use terraces and aqueducts, raise corn and potatoes, and graze llamas.



Machu Picchu Flowers grow on the slopes of Machu Picchu today.

SYNTHESIZE Describe how the Inca changed their environment to develop an empire.

Section 3 Assessment



ONLINE QUIZ

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TERMS & NAMES

1. Explain the importance of

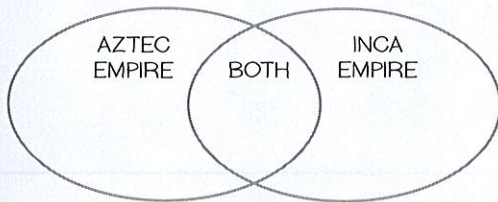
- Olmec
- Maya
- Aztec
- Inca

USE YOUR READING NOTES

2. Compare and Contrast

Use your completed Venn diagram to answer the following question:

How were the ways the Aztec and Inca modified their environments similar?



KEY IDEAS

3. What are the earliest known civilizations in what is now southern Mexico?
4. How did the Aztec build their large empire?
5. How were the Inca able to communicate throughout their large empire?

CRITICAL THINKING

6. **Compare and Contrast** How was the decline of the Mayan and Olmec civilizations different from the decline of the Aztec and Inca civilizations?
7. **Identify Problems and Solutions** What problems might an empire have in ruling millions of people?
8. **CONNECT to Today** Each year, around 300,000 people visit Machu Picchu. What problems do you think this presents for this archaeological site? Explain.
9. **WRITING Write a Newspaper Article** Imagine that you are a reporter visiting a city in one of the early Latin American civilizations. Write a short article that describes the city's architecture.