

Example

**(be creative—such as—
Montezuma II: Doomed to Destruction)**

Your Title



Your Name



Mrs. Ingles

World History Period ____

Date it is Due

Example

Creative title

Montezuma II: Doomed to Destruction

2-4 sentences background info./intro. Your topic

The Aztecs were the most powerful people in Central America during the early 16th century. Their last emperor was a cunning and sometime cruel ruler known as Montezuma II. He ruled the people with absolute control until the arrival of the Spanish. Montezuma II had a detrimental effect on the Aztec Empire beginning with his cruel rule of the Aztecs. His interaction with the Spanish was also harmful beginning with the belief that Cortes was the god Quetzalcoatl, and then hosting Cortes as his guest for several months in the capital. In the end, Montezuma ended up unsuccessfully fighting the Spanish who were trying to conquer them, ultimately causing the Aztecs fall from power.

Thesis—in completes sentences!

The Aztecs (called the Mexica locally) were the most powerful people in Central America. Their armies controlled a large empire that stretched thousands of miles (Johnson 5). They were infamous for attacking their neighboring tribes and forcing them into submission. Yet, the Aztecs did not establish governing bodies over their conquered territories, but instead they allowed them to keep their own leaders and customs as long as they submitted to the Aztecs (Johnson 22). Theirs was a kingdom of great riches and power.

The Spanish heard of the great treasures of the Americans and sent exploration voyages to the Americas to claim the land for Spain. One of these men was Hernando Cortes. When Cortes arrived in the Caribbean he expected to find the land of opportunity but was disappointed (Johnson 39). After spending several years in the islands, Cortes was appointed to lead the expedition into the mainland to discover if the rumors about the Aztecs' supply of gold was true and conquer the land (Johnson 44).

Montezuma's cruel rule of Aztecs Empire had a negative impact on the people. Throughout his

Topic sentences: 1st point in thesis

reign, Montezuma was in a constant state of war in order to expand their territory and have more prisoners of war to human sacrifice to the gods ("Moctezuma II"). This warfare led to a depletion of his resources and caused bitterness to rise among the conquered people. One example of this warfare was in 1502, two of the provinces, Nopallan and Icpatepec, rebelled against him. He used this as an opportunity to show his power by suppressing the people and also by collecting a massive amount of captives to be sacrificed to the gods. This earned him the reputation throughout the empire as a harsh ruler. Those who were not killed were forced to pay large sums in tribute ("Montezuma II." *World History*). At his coronation alone, 12,000 prisoners of war were sacrificed to the gods. Throughout all of this, he expanded the empire to its height and created a more centralized government over independent city-states (Wagner 52).

1st word on works cited

Topic sentence →

The Aztec religious beliefs were a key aspect that governed how they lived. As a result, they assumed that Cortes was a god come to rule over them. In 1510, the Aztecs began to hear rumors from other American peoples that strangers had been sighted in Mesoamerica ("Montezuma"). These rumors were passed on that "men whose skin was white and whose ships were as large as palaces" were coming. Many Aztecs began to talk of gods that were returning to reclaim their lands in America (Wagner 53). The Aztecs had always been superstitious people. A series of events that the Aztecs viewed as bad omens began occurring. Religious leaders were afraid because of bad signs such as falling stars were occurring. The priests told Montezuma that Quetzalcoatl would return in 1519, which is also the same year that Cortez landed on the Mexican coast ("Montezuma," *World History*). Other bad omens such as a partial eclipse of the sun and lightning striking a temple in the capital, Tenochtitlan, also occurred (Becker 458).

Page # (if there is one)

Montezuma's personal religious affiliation had an effect on his initial view and belief about the Spanish. Before Montezuma was the emperor, he served as an Aztec priest. Once he became

emperor, his religion remained to be an important aspect of his life (Wagner 52). As the rumors of the strangers reached Montezuma, he began to seek answers from his priests frequently to discover the purpose of the strangers visit to their land. He was so desperate for answers that he even killed some of his priests and magicians that could not give an explanation (“The Conquest”).

Topic sentence →

When Cortez and his men arrived, Montezuma II hosted the men as his guest in the capital.

The Spanish officially arrived on November 8, 1519. When they entered Tenochtitlán,

Montezuma and the Aztecs treated the Spanish as the guests of honor. He welcomed them with

open arms saying, "Oh, Lord of ours, be welcome: you have arrived in your land, among your

people, and in your house Mexico. . . . This is, indeed, what had been told us by the bygone

No quotes more than 4 lines ←

Kings: that you would return to rule these lands, and that you would sit on your throne and chair”

(qtd. in “Moctezuma II”). As apparent from Montezuma’s speech above, he clearly believes that

Cortez is the god Quetzalcoatl who has returned to rule his people in peace.

Primary Source Quote ↓

- **You will continue using your outline and your sources as you write your paper.**
- **Remember, the actual essay MUST be at least 6-8 pages!!! (that is NOT including the cover and works cited)**
- **Don’t forget your conclusion section is your analysis! Do this part well!**

Remember:
All sources on your Works
Cited MUST be used!

Works Cited

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