

Latin America Significant People and Vocabulary → Answers

1. **Aztecs** - The Aztecs were a nomadic tribe who settled on an island in Lake Texcoco in present-day Mexico. The Aztecs were very advanced. They had an irrigation system, mathematics, and two calendar systems. The Aztecs were known for their human sacrifices.
2. **Montezuma II** - Montezuma II was the leader of the Aztecs during the Spanish conquest. He thought Cortes was a god; therefore he welcomed him onto Tenochtitlan.
3. **Hernán Cortes** - Hernán Cortes was the Spanish conquistador (soldier/conqueror) who conquered the Aztec Empire from 1519-1521. Cortes was able to defeat the Aztecs by not only having weapons, but diseases wiped out most of the native population.
4. **Incas** - The Incas settled in Western South America in present-day Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela, Chile, and Bolivia. The Incas had a large network of roads that all led to their capital city of Cuzco. This is what helped the conquistadors finally defeat the Incas in 1532.
5. **Atahualpa** - Atahualpa was the last Sapa Inca. He was taken hostage by Pizarro, and then later killed by the Spaniards.
6. **Francisco Pizarro** - Francisco Pizarro conquered the Inca Empire in 1532. Pizarro was able to defeat this large civilization because diseases had nearly wiped out the native population, he had taken their leader hostage and killed him, and the large network of roads led him directly to their capital city.
7. **Columbian Exchange** - The Columbian Exchange was a large trade of food, animals, plants, people, and diseases from the Old World to the New World and from the New World to the Old World. Because of this large trade network, Latin American countries soon relied heavily on the exports of raw materials (cotton, sugar, tobacco, molasses, and rum).
8. **African Slave Trade** - The trading of slaves and goods between the Americas, Europe, and Africa was known as the Triangular Trade. The Americas sent tobacco, sugar, rum, molasses, and cotton to Europe, Europe brought manufactured goods to Africa, and Africa took slaves to the Americas. The passage from Africa to the Americas was known as the Middle Passage. This was all part of the Columbian Exchange.
9. **Toussaint L'Ouverture** - Toussaint L'Ouverture wanted independence for Saint Domingue (present-day Haiti). He led slave revolts against the French to gain their independence. He died in a prison located in France before Haiti got their freedom from French rule in 1804.

10. **Simon Bolivar** - Simon Bolivar wanted independence for Venezuela. He got independence for Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia as well. It took him 14 years. He was known as "the liberator" and the "George Washington of South America."
11. **Miguel Hidalgo** - Miguel Hidalgo is known as the father of independence for Mexico. Miguel Hidalgo gave his famous "Cry of Delores" in 1810 and he wanted a change and declared independence from Spain because of their bad government. Miguel Hidalgo died in 1811. Mexico gained its independence in 1821.
12. **Cuban Revolution** - The Cuban Revolution was when Fidel Castro overthrew Batista and made Cuba communist.
13. **Fidel Castro** - He was the communist dictator of Cuba after the Cuban Revolution. Once in power, he took over all American owned businesses and made them property of Cuba. USA then placed an embargo on Cuba.
14. **Cuban Missile Crisis** - The Cuban Missile Crisis occurred in 1962 when the USSR placed nuclear missiles in Cuba that could reach New York City in 15 minutes. The USA threatened to invade Cuba unless the missiles were removed. COLD WAR time period!
15. **Zapatistas** - The Zapatistas are a group of Mexicans who support improved rights and living conditions for Mexico's indigenous people. They named themselves after Emilio Zapata who had the same beliefs. The Zapatistas took charge and started their violent protests on January 1, 1994, the day that NAFTA took effect. The Zapatistas believed that NAFTA would lead to greater competition, cheaper prices for their crops, and a loss of land would mean they could grow fewer crops. The Zapatistas think that NAFTA leads to greater poverty among the indigenous people. The Mexican government has made very few changes to help the native people. The Zapatistas have now become peaceful protestors.