



THE MOCHE OF PERU

Explore the ancient culture of the Moche by investigating artifacts they left behind and determining what the Moche can tell modern historians about how they lived.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

How do physical artifacts help historians learn about the past?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about the ancient Moche.
- Students will summarize how different kinds of historical sources are used to explain events in the past.
- Students will explain how environmental characteristics affect the movement of people.
- Students will summarize the central claim in a secondary work of history.
- Students will use details from a text to write historical fiction.
- Students will present research.
- Students will write a myth.



In addition to supplemental materials focused on core Social Studies skills, this flexible teaching tool offers vocabulary-building activities, questions for discussion, and cross-curricular activities.

SELECTIONS

- **Stories in Clay** Expository Nonfiction, ~950L
- **Boats, Gods, and Sharks** Expository Nonfiction, ~1050L
- **A Hero's Journey** Expository Nonfiction, ~950L

Stories in Clay

pp. 4–8, Expository Nonfiction

Discover how historians used clay fragments to piece together a picture of daily life in Moche culture.



OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a nonfiction article.
- Students will learn about the ancient Moche.
- Students will summarize how different kinds of historical sources are used to explain events in the past.
- Students will use details from a text to write historical fiction.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **excavation (p. 6)** a site that has been revealed by digging into the ground
- **vessel (p. 4)** a hollow container sometimes used to hold liquids

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: How do physical artifacts help historians learn about the past?

Ask students to imagine they are living 500 years from now. Tell them to imagine they are visiting a remote forest in North America and discover fragments of things that people today own. Ask them to share an example of what they might find and what conclusion they might draw about American culture from those objects.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Together, review the vocabulary words and read them aloud. Then ask students to make predictions about the topic of the text using the vocabulary words. If necessary, help students predict the topic by revealing the title of the article.

READ & DISCUSS

Have students read the article with a partner. Then use these prompts for discussion:

- What kinds of things can historians infer from fine wares?
- Why do historians think stirrup-spout vessels were more valued for their form than for their usefulness in carrying liquids?
- What kinds of images were shown on Moche ceramics?

SKILL FOCUS: Summarize Sources

INSTRUCT: Explain to students that when investigating the past, historians can rely on both written and nonwritten evidence. Nonwritten evidence is typically referred to as artifacts and can include pottery, bones, and other physical objects.

ASSESS: Have students work in pairs. Ask each pair to write a one-paragraph summary of the conclusions historians have drawn about Moche culture based on the physical objects left behind by the Moche.

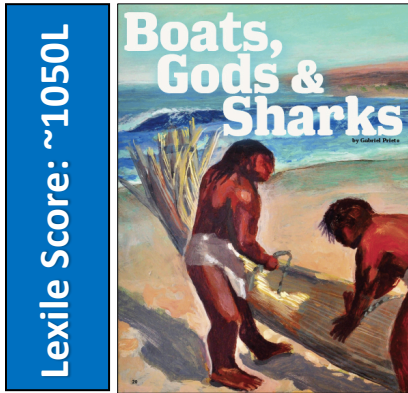
EXTEND

English Language Arts Explain that historical fiction stories dramatize real people and events from the past by creating made-up, yet realistic, stories about them. Ask students to write a one-page historical fiction story about an aspect of Moche life from the article.

Boats, Gods, and Sharks

pp. 20–23, Expository Nonfiction

Discover how historians used fragments of shark remains and reeds to conclude that the Moche were avid shark hunters.



OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a nonfiction article.
- Students will learn about the ancient Moche.
- Students will explain how environmental characteristics affect the movement of people.
- Students will present research.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **fragment** (p. 22) broken part or piece of something
- **vessels** (p. 22) hollow containers sometimes used to hold liquids

ENAGE

Conversation Question: How do physical artifacts help historians learn about the past?

Ask students to think about the types of food people ate in ancient times. What factors determined what types of food they ate? Guide them to understand that the environment not only determined what resources were available to them, but also what natural resources (e.g., waterways) they could use to travel to obtain food.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Write the sentences below on the board. Then ask students to decide which words from the vocabulary list should be used to complete each sentence.

- The _____ led to the historians' observation that the Moche must have hunted shark.
- Because the _____ displayed images of people using different types of reed boats, historians conclude that the Moche were knowledgeable boat builders.

READ & DISCUSS

Have students read the article with a partner. Then use these prompts for discussion:

- What environmental resources enabled the Moche to become shark hunters?
- How do Moche ceramics support the conclusion that their environment enabled them to shark hunt?
- Why does the author believe that the Moche lived along the coast for up to 2,000 years?

SKILL FOCUS: Explain Movement

INSTRUCT: Explain to students that human movement refers to both small movement (e.g., across local territories) and large-scale movement (e.g., across regions). Guide students to understand that the resources available in the environment are sometimes used by humans to assist in moving.

ASSESS: Have students work in pairs. Ask pairs to identify at least three environmental characteristics that affected how the Moche people moved within their local territory. Tell students they may have to infer some of these characteristics from the details in the text.

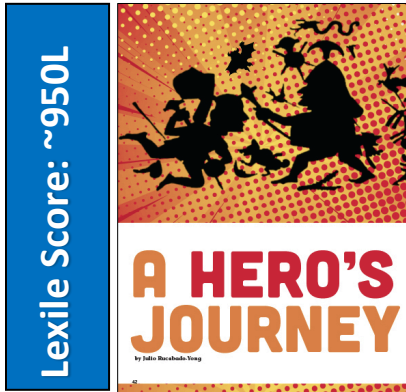
EXTEND

English Language Arts Have students conduct research using print and digital sources to identify one other indigenous culture that used reed boats to fish. Then have pairs present what they learn to the class.

A Hero's Journey

pp. 42–45, Expository Nonfiction

Explore how historians learned that the Moche hero-myth changed over time to explain the Moche's evolving relationships with their neighbors.



RESOURCES

- Summarizing Claims

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a nonfiction article.
- Students will learn about the ancient Moche.
- Students will summarize the central claim in a secondary work of history.
- Students will write a myth.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **myth (p. 43)** a traditional story, especially one explaining the origin of a group of people
- **personified (p. 44)** having attributed a personal nature or human characteristic to something nonhuman
- **scenes (p. 45)** a series of actions, often depicted as drawings on an object

ENAGE

Conversation Question: How do physical artifacts help historians learn about the past?

Ask students to think about a myth they are familiar with. Have some students share the basic details of the myth. Then ask them if it is possible the myth has changed over time to become what it is today. Finally, have students hypothesize why myths might change over time.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Write the sentences below on the board. Then ask students to use words from the vocabulary list to complete them.

- The _____ on the pottery helped historians determine the central elements of the _____.
- Moche leaders _____ mythical heroes by acting as if they were humans with the heroes' qualities.

READ & DISCUSS

Have students read the article with a partner. Then use these prompts for discussion:

- What are some of the characteristics of Moche hero-myths?
- Why did Moche hero-myths change over time?
- What kinds of physical artifacts did historians use to conclude that Moche hero-myths changed over time?

SKILL FOCUS: Summarize Claims

INSTRUCT: Explain to students that a secondary work of history is any writing that attempts to explain a historical development, event, or period whose author wasn't present to witness it firsthand. Make sure students understand that secondary works of history rely heavily on primary sources (e.g., evidence) that can come in the form of objects or writings.

ASSESS: Distribute the *Summarizing Claims* organizer. Have students work in pairs to identify at least three main ideas in the article. Then have them analyze these main ideas to determine the article's central claim. Finally, have them write a one-sentence summary of the claim.

EXTEND

English Language Arts Have students create their own hero-myths based on the characteristics of hero-myths discussed in the article. Invite students to share their hero-myths and explain their central characters as well as what the myth reveals about them.

Summarizing Claims

In the organizer below, record three main ideas from the article and the details that support them. Then analyze these main ideas to determine the central claim of the entire article. Finally, write a one-sentence summary of the central claim.

Main Ideas	Supporting Details

Analyze and Summarize

Before you write, think about the three main ideas you selected and what they have in common—what central point or claim do they all support? Then write a one-sentence summary to describe what you believe is the article's central claim about the Moche.
