**Objectives**

- Identify how the Maya and Aztec people used cacao
- Compare how chocolate was consumed by the Maya and Aztecs to the way it is consumed today

**Materials**

- Pictures of Maya hieroglyphs (appendix)
- Map of regions where cacao grows (appendix)
- Map of area inhabited by Maya and Aztec (appendix)
- Drawing paper
- Large Styrofoam cups
- Assorted permanent markers
- Ingredients for Aztec chocolate
- Utensils for making Aztec chocolate

**Lesson Plans**

### Background Activities:

1. Provide students with a general background of the Maya (when, where, and how they lived).

2. Show students a picture of a hieroglyphs taken from Maya drinking vessels.
   - What do they see depicted?
   - Based on the decoration, how do they think the Maya used the vessel?

3. Tell the students that the vessel was used for drinking chocolate.
   - Who do they think got to drink chocolate?
   - On which occasions do they think the Maya drank chocolate?

### Instructional Activities:

1. Tell students about the Maya’s use of chocolate, its consumption, and its value.

2. Show students the map of where cacao grows and compare it to the map of where the Maya and Aztecs lived. Discuss the accessibility of cacao to the Maya and the Aztecs. Discuss the following questions:
   - Why was chocolate consumed by many of the Maya people, regardless of their socio-economic status?
   - Why was chocolate consumed by primarily the wealthy and powerful Aztecs?
   - How did cacao influence the relationship between the Maya and Aztecs?
   - Is there a place in the modern world that has a similar relationship to chocolate as the Maya and Aztecs did (haves vs. have nots, environmental limitations, etc.)?

3. Have students generate a list of the ways and occasions the Maya and Aztecs used chocolate.

4. Have students choose one of the ways the Maya and/or Aztecs used chocolate and illustrate it.

5. Have students use permanent markers to transfer their illustrations to a large Styrofoam cup. Encourage students to create their illustrations in the Maya style. (Refer students back to the Maya hieroglyphic for stylistic detail.)

6. Using the attached recipe, cook up a pot of your own Aztec chocolate. (You might want to prepare the drink yourself, ask for assistance from a few students, or let the whole class participate in the preparation.) Tell students that this recipe is similar to the one the Aztecs used. When the chocolate drink is done, students may use their decorated drinking vessels (Styrofoam cups) to sample some of the brew.
Lesson Plans (continued)

7 Ask them to think about how Aztec chocolate is similar to/different from the hot chocolate we commonly drink today.
8 Ask students to list the steps the Maya and Aztecs performed to create their chocolate drink.

Things to Consider:
You might want students to generate a list of the ways we use chocolate today, and compare it to the ways the Maya and Aztecs used it. Then, instead of illustrating Maya and Aztec uses, students could create a “modern” drinking vessel by depicting modern uses of chocolate on their cups.
Recipe for Aztec Chocolate

Activity

**Ingredients:**
- 1 ounce unsweetened baking chocolate
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2/3 cup boiling water
- ground pepper or chilies to taste

Grate the unsweetened chocolate into a bowl and cover it with a little of the boiling water. Mash the mixture into a paste. Add the rest of the water and vanilla and beat with an electric mixer until frothy. You could also use a molinillo or blender (on high speed) to beat the mixture as well. Add the pepper or chilies to give the drink a little kick.

The chocolate does not totally dissolve in the water using this technique. Tiny particles of chocolate will float in the water, and you will be able to taste the grittiness in the drink. For a more authentic drink, allow the chocolate to cool and beat it into a froth just before you drink it.

**Use the grid below to illustrate the process of making Aztec chocolate.**
Receta para el Chocolate Azteca

**Ingredientes:**
1 onza de chocolate amargo (sin azucar)
1 cucharadita de vainilla
2/3 de taza de agua hirviendo
chile molido al gusto

Ralla el chocolate amargo y viértelo en una vasija. Cúbrelo con un poco del agua hirviendo. Machaca la mezcla hasta que tenga la textura de pasta. Agrega el resto del agua y la vainilla y mézclala con una batidora eléctrica hasta que haga espuma. También puedes usar un molinillo o una licuadora (a velocidad alta) para batir la mezcla. Agrega chile entero o en polvo para darle un sabor más fuerte.

Si usas esta técnica, el chocolate no se disolverá totalmente en el agua. Algunas pequeñas partículas de chocolate flotarán en el agua, y podrás saborear la textura áspera de la bebida. Para que la bebida sea más auténtica, deja que el chocolate se enfríe, bátelo hasta que haga espuma y después bébelo.

**Usa los cuadros que están enseguida para ilustrar el proceso para hacer el chocolate Azteca.**