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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative

2005 Volume II: Art and Identity in Mexico, from Olmec Times to the Present

An Approach to Biology, Population Dynamics, and Disease via the Analysis of Mexican Art, History, and Texts

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This curriculum unit delves into the history of Mesoamerica in order to relate population dynamics and disease to the Aztec Empire. Students will investigate the types of disease that came to the New World and how these diseases impacted the native people and directly affected their populations. The Spanish conquest also disrupted the Mesoamerican ecosystem by the flora and fauna that were introduced.

By using the Mesoamerican people as an example of population dynamics the students can see how density dependant factors such as disease, competition, and food availability directly affected these people. Density-dependent and density-independent factors affect a population and also help determine the carrying capacity of the environment. The stability of an ecosystem also plays a role in determining the population and carrying capacity.

(Developed for Biology, grades 9-11; recommended for Biology, grades 9-11)

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