

# Guns, Germs & Steel: Understanding the Demise of the Inca Empire

OVERVIEW & OBJECTIVES	GRADES
<p>This lesson is intended to introduce students to the era of Spanish expansion into the Americas. The big idea of this lesson is to have students pursue the question: “Why were the Europeans able to conquer the Americas?” Students will analyze how geography influences warfare, read a selection of Jared Diamond’s <u>Guns, Germs &amp; Steel</u>, participate in a carousel brainstorming activity, and complete a writing assignment.</p> <p><i>Students will be able to...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify how militaries and societies are influenced by geography.</li> <li>• Describe geography’s role in the conquest of the Inca Empire.</li> <li>• Describe the theory of geographic determinism.</li> <li>• Construct a response to the conquest of the Inca from another perspective.</li> <li>• Analyze Pizarro’s conquest of the Inca.</li> </ul>	8 <sup>th</sup>
	TIME
	3 Block Periods/5-6 Regular Periods
	REQUIRED MATERIALS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Copies of pages 68-74 and page 177 of Jared Diamond’s <u>Guns, Germs &amp; Steel</u></li> <li>✓ Maps of South America and Peru</li> <li>✓ Highlighters</li> <li>✓ Markers and masking tape</li> <li>✓ Poster paper or butcher paper</li> <li>✓ Handouts: “Battle Cards”; “Guns, Germs, and Steel Vocabulary”; “Jared Diamond’s Idea of Geographic Luck”</li> <li>✓ Teacher Handouts: “RAFT Writing Assignment”; “Highlight, Underline, Gloss (HUG)”; “Carousel Brainstorming”</li> </ul>

## MINNESOTA SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS & BENCHMARKS

**Standard 2.** Geographic inquiry is a process in which people ask geographic questions and gather, organize and analyze information to solve problems and plan for the future.

**8.3.1.2.1** Formulate questions about topics in geography; pose possible answers; use geospatial technology to analyze problems and make decisions within a spatial context.

**Standard 3.** Places have physical characteristics (such as climate, topography and vegetation) and human characteristics (such as culture, population, political and economic systems).

**8.3.2.3.1** Use appropriate geographic tools to analyze and explain the distribution of physical and human characteristics of places.

**Standard 5.** The characteristics, distribution and migration of human populations on the earth’s surface influence human systems (cultural, economic and political systems).

**8.3.3.5.2** Describe the locations of human populations and the cultural characteristics of Latin America, including how the contemporary pattern of cities resulted from a combination of pre-European contact, colonial, and industrial urban societies.

**Standard 2.** Historical inquiry is a process in which multiple sources and different kinds of historical evidence are analyzed to draw conclusions about how and why things happened in the past.

**8.4.1.2.1** Pose questions about a topic in world history; gather and organize a variety of primary and secondary sources related to the questions; analyze sources for credibility and bias; suggest possible answers and write a thesis statement; use sources to draw conclusions and support the thesis; and present supported findings and cite sources.

## SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

### **Suggested Procedure:**

[Note: The teacher should read Chapter 3: Collision at Cajamarca from Guns, Germs, and Steel before teaching this lesson. In addition, the teacher may want to refer to the chart that summarizes Diamond's thesis on page 87 as well as charts on pages 160, 162, and 207 that list domesticated animals and associated diseases as an overview for this lesson.]

### **Day 1**

1. Write the following question on the board: "Why were the Europeans able to conquer the Native Americans?" Have the students record their response to this question on a sheet of paper. The class can share their responses using a "Think-Pair-Share" format. The students' responses will be used as a pre-assessment.
2. Divide the class into heterogeneous groups of 3-4 students. Each group should receive a copy of the handout, "Battle Cards." Students work together to decide which team (A or B) would win in each situation given the provided information. Each group should have a recorder who will write the group's decision and explanation of why they chose a particular winner. After 10 minutes, have each group reporter describe to the entire class their decisions and reasoning.

Provide the answers to the Battle Cards and emphasize that the size of the army does not always predict the winner, but other conditions may dominate the outcome. Discuss what happened in each case.

Emphasize the role that Geography and Resources played in each conflict.

- Scenario #1: Revolutionary War, Team A (America) wins
- Scenario #2: Napoleon invades Russia, Team B (Russia) wins
- Scenario #3: Pizarro conquers the Inca, Team B (Pizarro) wins

3. Distribute the handout, "Vocabulary", which is a list of vocabulary words found in the excerpt they will read on Day #2. Students can use dictionaries and work in small groups during this activity. Students should become acquainted with the vocabulary because the excerpt is a primary source with challenging words explaining the conquest of the Inca from the Spanish perspective.
4. Present a map of South America as well as an inset map of Peru. Show students where the Inca Empire was located and highlight the physical features. A brief overview of the Inca Empire may also be provided. (See Additional Resources)

### **Day 2**

5. Read the selection, pages 68-74, from Guns, Germs, & Steel. Reading can take place in a large group, small groups, or individually. Nonreaders and lower-level readers should be paired with an experienced reader. The experienced reader should read out-loud while the lower level reader listens and follows along. Students should use the "Highlight, Underline, Gloss" strategy while they read. The instructor should model this strategy for the first page of the reading.

6. After the reading, students will engage in a Carousel Brainstorming activity. The directions are detailed on the Teacher Handout, “Carousel Brainstorming”. Six sheets of poster paper with one of the questions on each sheet should be mounted around the room. Students will be placed in small groups with a different colored marker for each group. Students travel from one question to another in a group, spending 2 minutes answering each question. The poster questions to consider are:

- What title would you give to the excerpt you read?
- Which of Pizarro’s advantages do you think was most important? Explain why.
- What parts of the account do you think are accurate?
- What parts of the account do you think are inaccurate?
- How should we remember Pizarro today?
- Why were the Europeans able to conquer the Native Americans with such ease?

7. When students return to the original question, ask them to summarize the responses at the bottom. Then ask students to record their answer to the question: If you could describe the conflict in 3 words, what would they be? After the Carousel Brainstorming, the class will review each question in a large group discussion. The role of Geography and Resources can be re-emphasized by posing the following questions to the entire class:

- How do you think an Inca would describe the incident?
- Why did Europeans conquer the Americas rather than Native Americans conquer Europe?

### **Day 3**

8. Briefly review the Carousel Brainstorming questions from the previous day. Review the big question from the Pre-Assessment: Why were the Europeans able to conquer the Native Americans? Ask students for additional reasons.

9. Introduce Jared Diamond’s concept of “Geographic Luck” by showing students the chart from page 87 of Guns, Germs & Steel. Present the theory of geographic determinism using the handout, “Jared Diamond’s Idea of Geographic Luck”. Discuss the influence of geography, including location, climate, resources, and movement, on the success of militaries and societies.

Students may learn about the role of geography by referring to the PBS website and reading about “Latitude and Climate”, “Shape of the Continents”, and “Cities and Civilization” located under the heading, “Variables”. Students may instead read selections from the book on these topics. [Note: The teacher may refer to “Episode 1: Geographic Luck” at the website for additional assistance.]

10. Ask students the question: “Why were the Europeans able to conquer the Native Americans?” Discuss students’ responses further by asking: What reason would you select as most important? Were all the reasons important? What would have happened if the Inca had defeated the Spaniards at Cajamarca? Assign the RAFT writing assignment using the handout, “RAFT Writing Assignment”. The RAFT will be graded using the 6 Traits Writing Rubric.

### **Extensions**

1. Use the PBS website to investigate the topic of “Guns, Germs, and Steel” further. Students may read the transcript of Episode Two for an overview of how guns, germs, and steel aided the Spaniards’ conquest of the Inca. Students may also watch one or more episodes of the televised version of the book and complete one or more of the viewing guides.
2. Jared Diamond proposes the importance of geographic determinism in the development of societies. Students will write a brief essay supporting or refuting geographic determinism.

3. Review the valuable interview with Jared Diamond. This link provides clear and easily understood answers to questions that clarify Diamond's thesis.  
[http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2005/07/0706\\_050706\\_diamond.html](http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2005/07/0706_050706_diamond.html).
4. Students critically evaluate the variables of Guns, Germs, and Steel by referring to Jared Diamond's website, which provides additional explanations to recent criticisms of his thesis.  
[http://www.jareddiamond.org/Jared\\_Diamond/Guns\\_Germs\\_and\\_Steel.html](http://www.jareddiamond.org/Jared_Diamond/Guns_Germs_and_Steel.html)
5. Students describe cultural features of Inca and compare them with cultural features of Peru today. Cuzco, the Inca capital, may be specifically examined. Students use several websites listed under Additional Resources.

### **Assessment**

- Class discussions
- RAFT writing assignment

### **Website Resources**

Guns, Germs & Steel by Jared Diamond (1999) W.W. Norton & Company

"Guns Germs & Steel" at PBS

<http://www.pbs.org/gunsgermssteel/>

"6+1 Trait Writing at National Education Association

<http://www.nea.org/tools/lessons/59760.htm>

### **Additional Resources**

"The Inca Empire: Children of the Sun" from ushistory.org at Independence Hall Association

<http://www.ushistory.org/civ/11c.asp>

This website provides a brief overview of the Inca Empire

"Inca" at History Channel

<http://www.history.com/topics/inca>

This link provides a brief overview of the Inca Empire with a short video (3:35) and timeline

"Inca Empire" at National Geographic

<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2011/04/inca-empire/pringle-text>

This link gives an explanation of the Inca Empire

"The Lost Inca Empire" from NOVA at PBS.org

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/ancient/lost-inca-empire.html>

This link provides a brief overview of the Inca Empire

"The Inca—Culture and Civilization of South America" at English On-line

<http://www.english-online.at/history/inca/inca-civilization.htm>

This website provides an overview of Inca culture

"Descendants of the Inca" at Center for Traditional Textiles of Cusco

<http://www.incas.org/>

This link provides information about Inca today

“The Incas” from Global Trek at Scholastic

[http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/globaltrek/destinations/popups/peru\\_history.htm](http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/globaltrek/destinations/popups/peru_history.htm)

This site summarizes Inca culture in the past and provides a look at Inca culture today

“Inca Empire: Cuzco City” from Ducksters

<http://www.ducksters.com/history/inca/cuzco.php>

This site summarizes features of Cuzco that have existed for hundreds of years

“Cusco” from Trip Advisor

[http://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/LocationPhotoDirectLink-g294314-i20884712-Cusco\\_Cusco\\_Region.html#20884707](http://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/LocationPhotoDirectLink-g294314-i20884712-Cusco_Cusco_Region.html#20884707)

This link has contemporary photos of Cusco

Pizarro and the Incas by Nicholas Saunders (2006) Carson-Dellosa Publishing Company, Inc.

This picture book describes the Inca Empire

Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed by Jared Diamond (2011) Penguin Books

This sequel by Diamond explains the success and failure of societies

Lies My Teacher Told Me by James Loewen (2007) Touchstone

This book includes a summary of the conquest of the Inca Empire

# Battle Cards

## Who do you think will win?

<p><b>Team A</b> Regular Army: 20,000 Ships: 30-40</p> <p>Has a key Ally: Troops: 15,000 Ships: 50-60</p> <p>Fighting on Home Turf Fighting takes place in a variety of landscapes (mountainous areas, along coasts)</p> <p>Are in a position to defend their homeland; do not necessarily need an all-out victory</p>	<p><b>Team B</b> Regular Army: 12,000 Ships: 100 ships</p> <p>Has hired extra troops: 29,000 Has many supporters in the land they are fighting</p> <p>Fighting thousands of miles from home Fighting takes place in unfamiliar landscapes</p> <p>Need to force opposing army to surrender Can continue to fight as long as home country supports fighting with money</p>
<p><b>Team A</b> Regular Army: 600,000 Most powerful military in the world</p> <p>Army has the ability to move quickly and forage for food</p> <p>Fighting thousands of miles from home in a very cold winter weather</p>	<p><b>Team B</b> Regular Army: 250,000</p> <p>Fighting on Home Turf</p> <p>Army retreats quickly and attempts to destroy crops so opposing army can't forage</p>
<p><b>Team A</b> Size of Army: 80,000</p> <p>Largest and Most Advanced Civilization in the area</p> <p>Fighting on Home Turf Fighting takes place in mountainous terrain</p>	<p><b>Team B</b> Size of Army: 170</p> <p>Have Superior Weapons Technology</p> <p>Fighting thousands of miles away from home in unfamiliar mountainous territory</p>

## Guns, Germs, and Steel Vocabulary

### Directions

Record a definition and example for each of the words listed. The example could be either a picture or a sentence using the word. The words are found in the text you'll be reading.

Word	Definition	Example
Prudence		
Fortitude		
Perilous		
Vassals		
Apprehension		
Litter		
Servile		

Predict what you think the text will be about: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Jared Diamond's Idea of Geographic Luck

“Geographic Luck” can be described as having the benefits of geography. A country would be lucky if it had a moderate climate, abundant resources, and a good location. For example, a country such as the United States has the benefit of good geography. It has a good location being centrally located with few neighbors who could become rivals. It has abundant natural resources including rich soils, valuable minerals, and numerous diverse plant and animal species. The U.S. also has a mild temperate climate to foster agricultural activities, transportation, and the development of cities. The U.S. is lucky because its isolated geographic location gave the country time to develop its resources.

Other countries are lucky because of geography. In fact, entire continents are lucky. Europe and Asia lie on an East-to-West Axis. Draw a single line going East-to-West across Europe and Asia on the map below. Climate is similar in areas of similar latitude (running East-to-West). Animals, Plants, People, and Ideas can move and spread easier between areas of similar climate. This creates the possibility of exchanges and migrations.

Climate significantly changes when you move North to South. Draw a single line across North America to South America on the map below. Animals, Plants, People, and Ideas cannot move and spread very well between areas of different climates. Thus, the possibility of exchanges and migrations are reduced.

Therefore, similar Climates allowed Europe to jump ahead of the Americas. Because things could move on an East-to-West Axis they could also develop quicker—allowing the Europeans to have the technology, organization, and weaponry it needed to defeat the Native Americans.



<http://www.outline-world-map.com/blank-thick-white-world-map-b3c>



## Raft Writing Assignment

### Directions

Your task is to explain the reasons for the conquest of the Inca by the Spanish. Select one of the roles from the following list and complete a writing using the audience/format/topic provided. Use the Guns, Germs, and Steel reading as a foundation to build your story. If you would like to create a role or format that is not on the list, please consult with me. Your writing should be at least half a page long.

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
Atahualpa	Himself	Journal	What is the future of the Inca civilization?
Francisco Pizarro	King of Spain	Report	What happened and what does this conquest mean for Spain?
Inca Citizen	Children	Speech/Drawing	How can this defeat be explained to Inca children?
Spanish Warrior	Wife	Letter	Why were the Spanish so successful in defeating the Inca?

## Highlight, Underline, Gloss (HUG)

HUG is a during-reading strategy that enhances students' comprehension of a text. Students use a highlighter and pen or pencil to interact with the text in order to increase their comprehension of the text. Students begin by highlighting the main ideas of the text following the guidelines listed below. Next, students underline important details. Last, students record their reactions and understanding of the text using one or more techniques including summarizing the text, making a graphic organizer, starring important ideas, or giving their opinion.

**H: Highlight** the main ideas of the reading

- Maximum 20% of text or 8 lines average on a page
- Key concepts only
- This information is determined to be worth re-reading

**U: Underline** important details

- Key words
- Steps in a process
- Definitions
- Names/Dates

**G: Give or Gloss** by responding in your own words

- List important points
- Create a chart
- Star important ideas
- Summarize text in margin
- Provide opinion of statements or the text

## Carousel Brainstorming

Carousel Brainstorming is a Best Practice strategy to enhance your learning. As a group, select a colored marker, go to any posted newsprint, read the question, and record responses as you brainstorm answers. After 2-3 minutes rotate clockwise to the next posted question and, after reading previous responses, brainstorm additional answers. Continue rotating clockwise until you have been at each posted question. When you return to the original question, categorize the responses and write a summary at the bottom to answer the question. Be prepared to present the summary to the entire group. The following summary of Carousel Brainstorming provides further details of this valuable activity.

### Carousel Brainstorming

Carousel brainstorming is a strategy to actively engage students in addressing major concepts or questions in groups by identifying their prior knowledge or reviewing and/or evaluating their learning. There are several steps for this activity.

1. Post newsprint paper (3-8 sheets depending on the task and size of the class) around the room, each with a different question related to the topic.
2. Students are placed in groups of 3-5 persons with each group having a different colored marker to record their responses.
3. Roles may be assigned including recorder, timekeeper, facilitator, and encourager
4. Each group goes to a posted paper and brainstorms responses to the question or topic and records their responses using their colored marker.
5. After two to five minutes a signal is given and each group rotates to the next posted newsprint to brainstorm responses to the question or topic using their original colored marker. The colored marker shows the group's progress and assists accountability.
6. As each group rotates, they read previous responses and add their own responses. (They may also "star" previous statements with which they agree.) Each group continues to rotate until it has responded to each posted question.
7. When the groups return to their original question or topic, they should review the posted responses. Next, each group categorizes the responses in order to summarize them to the entire group. Alternatively, the original group may be asked to:
  - Write a summary in exactly 5 words
  - Write a one-sentence summary
  - Identify the potential impact of the responses to the question or topic
  - Identify resources that may be helpful to investigate the question or topic further
  - Share personal experiences or reaction to the question or topic