

# Keep

## WHAT DID THE AZTEC BELIEVE?

Like the Maya, the Aztec worshipped many different gods. In fact, they had about 200 gods! They believed that the gods controlled everything in their lives and everything that grew on the earth. Therefore, it was important to keep the gods happy. The Aztec kept the gods happy by having religious ceremonies for almost everything that happened in their lives.

### The Aztec Gods

The most important god was called Huitzilopochtli. He was the Sun God and God of War. The Aztec believed that if they didn't keep Huitzilopochtli happy, the sun would no longer shine and the world would be darkness. This is why they had to worship him. They did this by sacrificing people and offering their blood of the sun. The Aztec believed that the sun needed human blood to give it strength and to keep it moving across the sky.

Another important Aztec god was called Quetzalcoatl, which means "feathered serpent." He looked after learning and schools and was also the God of Wind who made new life. Quetzalcoatl was pictured as a snake with feathers or as a white man with a beard.

### Life After Death

The Aztec believed that people lived on when their life on Earth was over. For example, a brave soldier who died would return to the earth as a hummingbird, and a woman who died giving birth to her baby would return to the earth as a goddess.

When someone died, their family dressed them in their best clothes. The family danced and sang funeral prayers for 4 days. Then, they burned the body. The ashes were buried with the person's belongings and enough food for the long journey to the underworld.

# WHAT DID THE AZTEC BELIEVE? QUESTIONS

Gods controlled everything  
in their lives

Huit.

Sun would not shine.

4. Why did the Aztec believe the sun needed human blood?

Give it strength &  
it moving across  
sky.

5. Who was Quetzalcoatl?

God of Wind & Learning  
Snake with Feathers or a  
\* White man with a beard.

6. What did the Aztecs do to their dead?

Dressed them in their best  
clothes and burnt them  
with lots of food so  
they could make the trip  
to the underworld.