

Amazing Aztecs

Play an Aztec Ball Game

To study a non-European society that provides a contrast with British History.

To explore Aztec society and invent a game based on the Aztec game, ullamaliztli.

A ball game known as ullamaliztli was very important in Aztec society. It was so important that a ball court was one of the first things to be built and it was often near a temple or shrine.

Players of the sport had to be very skilled as one important rule was that the ball should not touch the ground. This was made more difficult due to the fact that players were not allowed to touch the ball with their hands!

You will need:

- an outside space
- cones or chalk to mark out the playing area
- two hoops or baskets
- a ball
- some friends to play with



What to do:

1. Organise two teams with between two and seven players on each side.
2. Mark out a suitable playing area. In ullamaliztli, the players had to keep the ball from touching the ground. Make your playing area big enough to move around in and pass the ball without dropping it.
3. Place a basket or hoop in the middle of each side. The Aztecs also had other markers where players could score. Can you add these?
4. The Aztec rules for ullamaliztli were:
 - the ball was not allowed to touch the ground;
 - players could not touch the ball with their hands;
 - since the game represented the movement of the sun across the sky, the ball had to be kept moving at all times;
 - the hard rubber ball had to get through a stone hoop to score.
5. You might like to adapt your rules! Perhaps allow the use of hands but try to keep the ball off the ground.
6. Why not write down your rules for someone else to follow? You could try teaching another group or class. Try holding an ullamaliztli tournament - which team will be crowned champion?