

## Module 9: Empires of Africa and the Americas

### Topic 2 Content: The Incan Civilization

#### Introduction



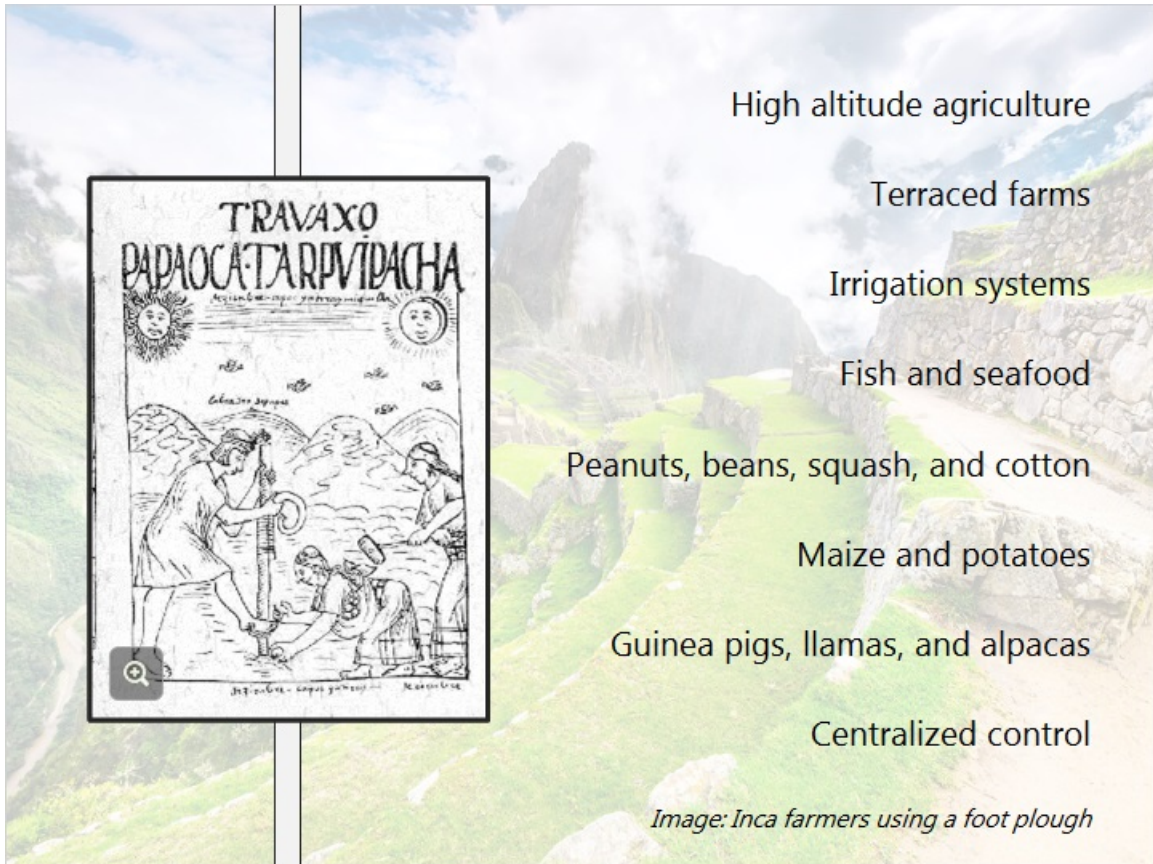
The Incan Civilization.

Click NEXT to continue.

## Module 9: Empires of Africa and the Americas

### Topic 2 Content: The Incan Civilization

#### Economy



High altitude agriculture

Terraced farms

Irrigation systems

Fish and seafood

Peanuts, beans, squash, and cotton

Maize and potatoes

Guinea pigs, llamas, and alpacas

Centralized control

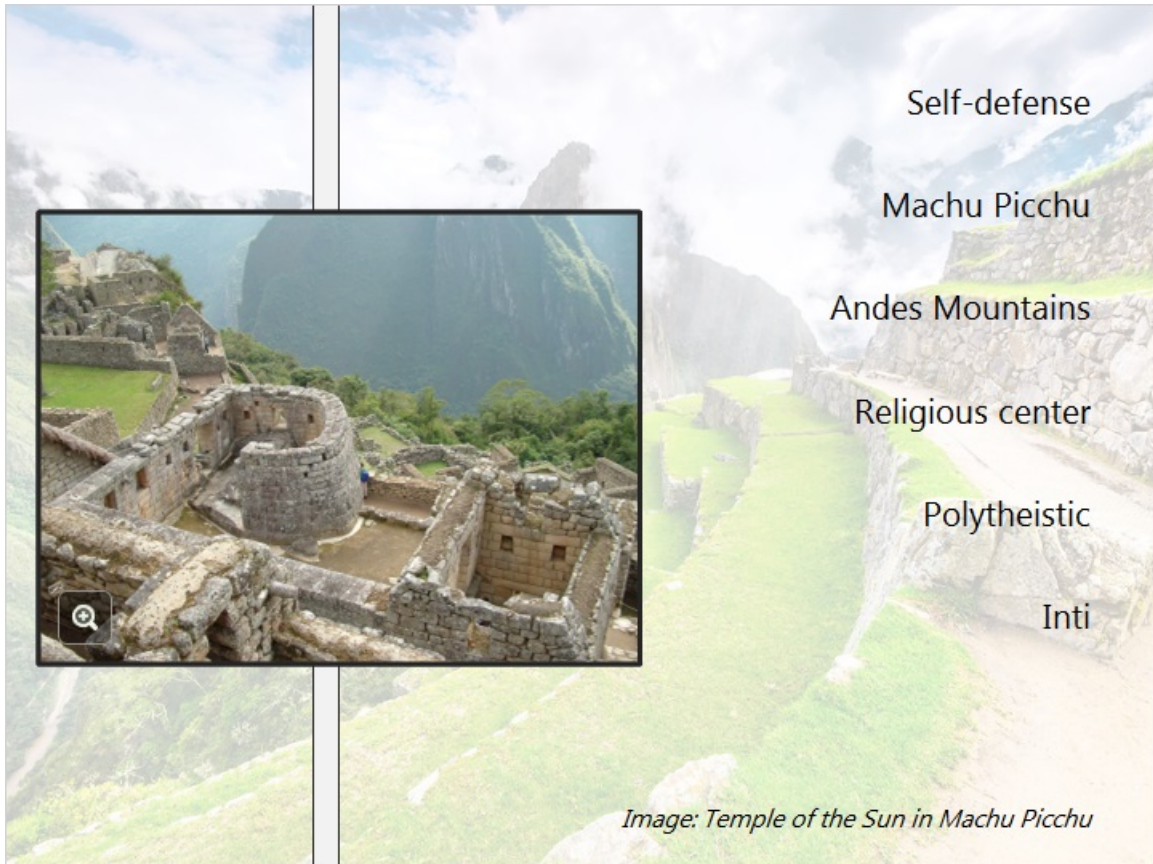
*Image: Inca farmers using a foot plough*

The Incan economy was based on high altitude agriculture. In the mountains, people developed terraced farms, which were watered by irrigation systems that brought specific amounts of water into the fields. Common products included fish and seafood from the coast; peanuts, beans, squash, and cotton from river valleys; maize and potatoes from the foothills; and guinea pigs, llamas, and alpacas for wool and meat from the highlands. Although the Incas did not use a barter system like many other civilizations during this time, they were able to thrive due to centralized control of the empire.

## Module 9: Empires of Africa and the Americas

### Topic 2 Content: The Incan Civilization

#### Religion and Self-Defense

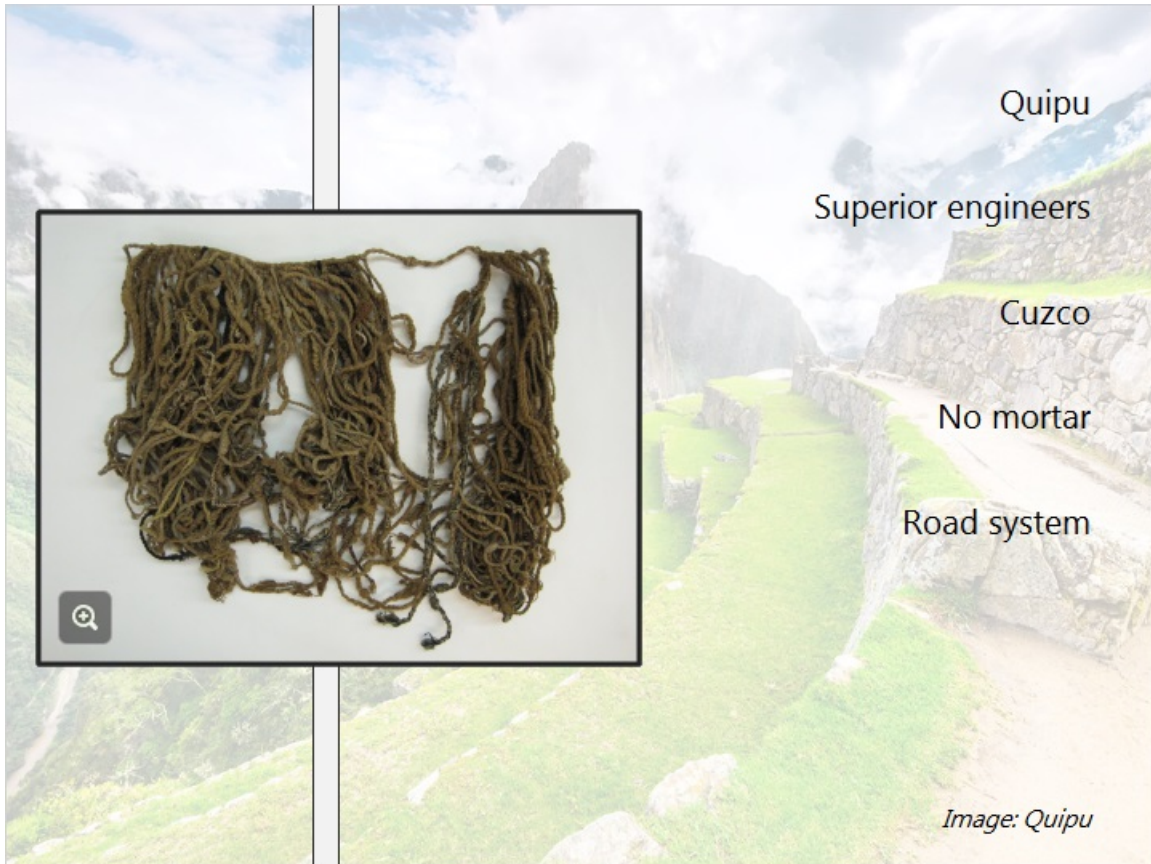


Altitude was advantageous for the Incan agriculture and for self-defense. For example, ruins of the city of Machu Picchu seem inaccessible, as they are perched high in the Andes Mountains. Using altitude for protection was a common building strategy. Machu Picchu likely served as a religious center, where the Incas, who were polytheistic, prayed to their god of the sun, Inti. The Incas believed the emperor descended from Inti. The small city contained a special stone carved from the mountains that possibly served as a solar observatory. It was there that the people of Machu Picchu chanted prayers to Inti during the sun festivals in June and December.

## Module 9: Empires of Africa and the Americas

### Topic 2 Content: The Incan Civilization

#### Achievements

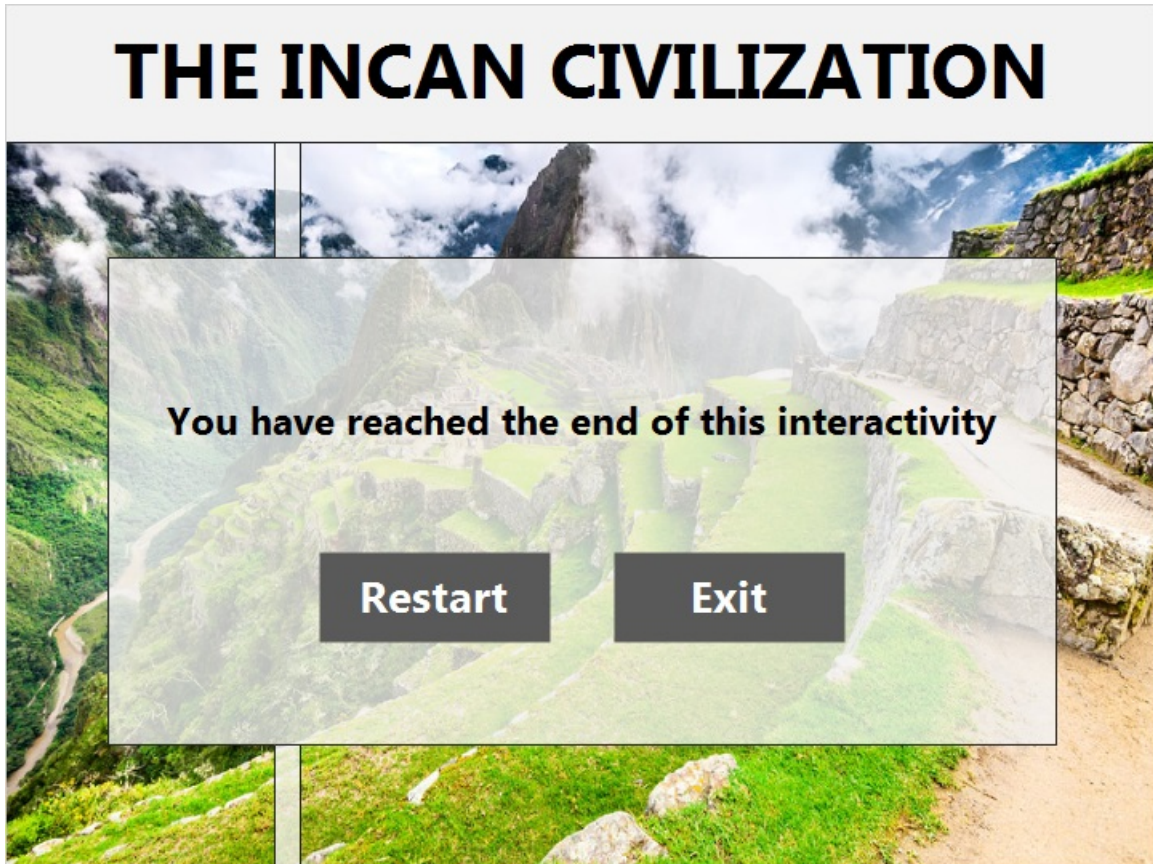


Although the Inca did not have a writing system, they developed a record-keeping system, known as quipu, which was unique to their civilization. Quipu consisted of sequences of knots on strings that formed a kind of binary code similar to today's computer language. The Inca were also superior engineers whose projects were built durable enough to last hundreds of years, and which can still be seen today. For example, the capital city of the Incas, Cuzco, was built using close-fitting stones with no mortar. This enabled structures to endure the frequent earthquakes of the area. In addition, the Incas constructed an extensive system of roads that totaled 24,800 miles. These roads, many of which are still traveled today, connected parts of the empire that reached extremes in altitude and slope. Some of these roads approached more than sixty-five degrees horizontally. That is a difficult feat for road building even in modern times!

## Module 9: Empires of Africa and the Americas

### Topic 2 Content: The Incan Civilization

#### Conclusion



You have reached the end of this interactivity.