PRE-READING
A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

1. Have you heard of the Nazca Lines? If yes, what are they? If no, what do you think they are, based on the picture?

2. Where are the Nazca Lines located? If you don’t know, guess!

3. What types of instruments and equipment did people use to make art 2,000 years ago?

B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW
Match the words on the left with the correct meanings on the right.

____ 1. wonder  a. a large drawing on the ground
____ 2. geoglyph  b. impractical, unlikely
____ 3. gravel  c. a person who studies people and culture
____ 4. expose  d. to cut or carve into a surface
____ 5. depict  e. able to be seen
____ 6. far-fetched  f. a pattern of stars
____ 7. visible  g. to keep in a protected form
____ 8. anthropologist  h. to represent in the form of a drawing or description
____ 9. etch  i. to reveal something that is usually covered
____ 10. constellation  j. something mysterious and amazing
____ 11. preserve  k. small rocks or pebbles
____ 12. erosion  l. the gradual wearing away of the earth’s surface

QUICK FACTS
Wonder of the World: _______________________
Location: _______________________
Created by: _______________________
Age: _______________________

Nazca Lines

The Nazca Lines are a mysterious wonder of geoglyphs in the Nazca desert in Peru. They are believed to be the artwork of the Nazca Indians who lived in the area between 200 BC and AD 600. The Nazca Lines extend for about 311 square miles (500 square kilometers).

To create their massive line drawings, the Nazcas made shallow trenches in the desert. They removed the top surface of red gravel and exposed the white earth below to create a color contrast. The Nazcas likely used poles, ropes, and lots of manpower to create the geoglyphs.

There are 70 creatures depicted in the Nazca Lines, including a spider, a monkey, a dog, and a hummingbird. The largest creature is a giant pelican that stretches about 919 feet (280 meters) long. There are also humans, plants, and countless straight lines that crisscross the desert. Similar designs can also be found in ancient Nazca pottery.

One of the great mysteries surrounding the Nazca Lines is that they are only truly visible from the air. While some lines can be seen from nearby foothills and a nearby watchtower, you have to go much higher up to see what the lines form. The Nazca artists most likely never saw their finished designs.

There are several theories about the purpose of the Nazca Lines. Some are far-fetched theories, while others makes sense. Anthropologists, spiritual leaders, and even mathematicians have come up with ideas over the years. Some people think the lines were sacred walking paths with messages to God. Others think they were etched by gods or even aliens. Many believe the lines were giant calendars or maps based on constellations and seasons. The lines may also have been used to indicate water supplies.

The Nazca Lines have been preserved for thousands of years because the area gets almost no wind or rain. This type of weather results in a lack of erosion. In 1995, the Nazca Lines were named a World Heritage Site.

COMPREHENSION

A. True or False. Read the statements below. If the statement is true, write T beside the sentence. If it is false, write F. If it is false, correct the information.

1. The same people who built the pyramids built the Nazca Lines.

2. All of the Nazca Lines are animals, such as insects and birds.

3. Other Nazca artifacts have similar designs to those found in the Nazca Lines.

4. The best way to see the Nazca Lines is to take a flight over Peru.

5. Nobody knows for sure how or why the Nazca Indians made these lines.

6. The weather in the Nazca desert is dry and windy.
B. Practice asking and answering the following questions with your partner. Then write the answers in complete sentences.

1. What is a geoglyph?

2. According to the reading, what was probably used to make the Nazca Lines?

3. Why can’t you properly see the Nazca Lines from the ground?

4. What types of images are depicted in the Nazca Lines?

5. What do some people think the Nazca Lines were for? Describe a few theories.

6. How have the Nazca Lines been preserved so well for so long?

**VOCABULARY REVIEW**

Choose the word(s) with the closest meaning to the underlined words in the following sentences.

1. The lines **depict** several animals, including birds and fish.
   - a) follow
   - b) find
   - c) show

2. The homeless man was **exposed** to the severe cold and wind.
   - a) killed
   - b) upset
   - c) unprotected

3. The stars are not **visible** to the naked eye.
   - a) microscopic
   - b) twinkling
   - c) viewable

4. They boy fell on the **gravel** and hurt his knee.
   - a) hilltop
   - b) pebbles
   - c) ground

5. Ancient people used the **constellations** to form their beliefs.
   - a) star patterns
   - b) religions
   - c) pathways

6. You can **preserve** the apple’s color by squirting lemon on it.
   - a) detect
   - b) maintain
   - c) change

7. The extreme weather is causing the surface of the earth to **erode**.
   - a) wear away
   - b) melt
   - c) disappear

8. I want to be an **anthropologist** when I’m older.
   - a) professor
   - b) social scientist
   - c) mathematician

**Group Assignment**

**OUR NAZCA LINE THEORY**

Work together in small groups to come up with your own Nazca Line theory. The theory doesn’t have to be realistic! It can be “far-fetched.” Have fun!

1. Who created the Nazca Lines?

2. How long ago were they made?

3. How were the designs made?

4. What was the purpose of the lines?

5. How did the artists view their own work?

Present your theory to the class! Try to respond to your classmates’ questions and doubts. Which group has the most believable theory?
ANSWER KEY

Lesson Description: Students learn about the Nazca Lines, an official Wonder of the World. They learn several theories about the lines and work together to come up with some of their own theories.

Please note: The reading for this topic is also available in full-page format at the end of the lesson (page 5).

PRE-READING QUESTIONS
Individual answers.

QUICK FACTS
Students can try to fill these blanks in before the reading.
Get them to check their answers after the reading.
Wonder of the World: The Nazca Lines
Location: Peru
Created by: The Nazca Indians
Age: At least 2,000 years

PRE-READING VOCABULARY
1. j  2. a  3. k  4. i  5. h  6. b
7. e  8. c  9. d  10. f  11. g  12. l

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS
A. True or False
1. False. The Nazca Lines were built in Peru.
2. False. Some of the Nazca Lines are just lines. Others feature people, plants, or other objects.
3. True.
4. True.
5. True.
6. False. The weather is dry, but there is little wind.

B. Written Answers
1. A geoglyph is a large drawing on the ground
2. According to the reading, ropes, poles, and lots of manpower were probably used to make the Nazca Lines.
3. You can't properly see the Nazca Lines from the ground because they are so massive.
4. Animals, people, plants, and other objects are depicted in the Nazca Lines.
5. Some people think the Nazca Lines were for mapping places or tracking time. Others believe they had religious purposes. Some think that they indicate water supplies.
6. The Nazca Lines have been preserved so well for so long because there is little erosion due to the dry, calm weather. It is now protected as a World Heritage Site.

Spelling Note: This lesson shows the American spelling of the word Color. Most other English-speaking countries spell it this way: Colour. Make it a challenge for your students to find this word in the text and see if they know the alternate spelling.
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