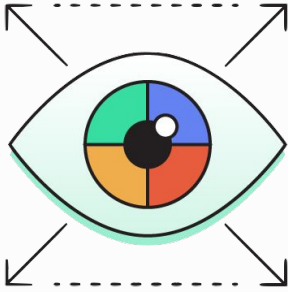


## Formative Assessment:

# Perspective



**Thinking historically means considering how one's personhood has influenced their perspective. It also means recognizing how diverse viewpoints and experiences shape the understanding of historical events. This allows students of history to cultivate empathy for the people of the past that are studied.**

**Directions:** Read the following author context and primary source. Then, answer the questions on perspective that follow. The multiple choice questions for this formative assessment are Weighted Multiple Choice (WMC) Questions. This means that there is only one *incorrect* answer, but the other 3 choices are weighted. The *two best* answers are 2 points, the *next-best* answer is 1 points, and the *incorrect* answer is 0 points.

# Formative Assessment: Perspective

## Author Context:

Bernardino de Sahagún was a Spanish Franciscan friar who arrived in Mexico in 1529, just eight years after the Spanish conquest of the Aztec Empire. As a Catholic missionary, his primary goal was to convert Indigenous people to Christianity. He was also an expert linguist and learned the native language of Nahuatl, spending more than 50 years in the study of Aztec beliefs, culture, and history. To help other friars identify Aztec religious practices that would help the friars convert them to Christianity, Sahagún spent decades interviewing Nahua informants and compiling their descriptions of Aztec gods, rituals, and daily life into a massive work known as the Florentine Codex. This massive work has given Sahagún the title "the father of American ethnography (the systematic study of a culture)." Sahagún wrote in both Nahuatl and Spanish, and the images in the Codex were drawn by Indigenous artists under his supervision.

Source: Bernardino De Sahagún, Book 1: Gods, *General History of the Things of New Spain*, The Florentine Codex, 1577. [Library of Congress](#) (Images 32, 40, and 41).

Translated by Dr. Berenice García Garagarza for the [Digital Florentine Codex](#) project.

The first of these goddesses was named Cihuacoatl. They said that this goddess inflicted adverse things, such as poverty, dejection, and troubles. She often appeared, as they say, as a lady dressed in some garments such as the ones that are used in the palace. They said that at night she screamed and howled in the air.

This goddess is called Cihuacoatl, which means "woman of the snake." And they also called her Tonantzin, which means "our mother." In both of these aspects, it seems that this goddess is our mother Eve, who was deceived by the snake, and that they had received notice of the business that took place between our mother Eve and the snake.

The garments in which this woman appeared were white, and she wore her hair in such a way that it formed something like two small horns crossed above her forehead. They also say that she carried a cradle on her back, like one who carries her own child in it;

and she would sit down in the tianquiz among the other women and, after disappearing, leave the cradle behind. When the other women noticed that cradle lying there, forgotten, they would peek to see what was inside of it, only to find a flint stone shaped like the point of the lance that they used to kill the ones whom they sacrificed. Thus, they came to understand that Cihuacoatl had been the one who left it there.

Cihuacoatl



## Formative Assessment: Perspective

1. Using both the author context *and* the primary source, select the **two statements** that best demonstrate how the perspective of Bernardino de Sahagún influenced his description of the Aztec goddess, Cihuacoatl.
  - A. Sahagún's detailed description of Cihuacoatl's white garments and horned hairstyle reflects his careful documentation of Aztec visual culture and appearance.
  - B. Sahagún's missionary purpose led him to frame Cihuacoatl as a source of poverty and trouble, framing her in a way that would help friars identify and suppress her worship.
  - C. Sahagún's Catholic faith led him to compare Cihuacoatl to Eve, interpreting an Aztec goddess through a Christian framework rather than on her own terms.
  - D. Sahagún's deep respect for Aztec religious traditions led him to present Cihuacoatl as a celebrated and beloved figure in Aztec society.

2. Historians evaluate the significance of the attributes of a person to better interpret a source. Using both the author context and the primary source, explain why one of the statements you chose represents a more significant influence on Sahagún's description of Cihuacoatl. Cite evidence.



## Formative Assessment: Perspective

- Using both the author context *and* the primary source, select the **two statements** that best demonstrate how the perspective of Bernardino de Sahagún influenced his description of the Aztec goddess, Cihuacoatl.
  - Sahagún's detailed description of Cihuacoatl's white garments and horned hairstyle reflects his careful documentation of Aztec visual culture and appearance. **(1 point)**
  - Sahagún's missionary purpose led him to frame Cihuacoatl as a source of poverty and trouble, framing her in a way that would help friars identify and suppress her worship. **(2 points)**
  - Sahagún's Catholic faith led him to compare Cihuacoatl to Eve, interpreting an Aztec goddess through a Christian framework rather than on her own terms. **(2 points)**
  - Sahagún's deep respect for Aztec religious traditions led him to present Cihuacoatl as a celebrated and beloved figure in Aztec society. **(0 points)**

2. Historians evaluate the significance of the attributes of a person to better interpret a source. Using both the author context and the primary source, explain why one of the statements you chose represents a more significant influence on Sahagún's description of Cihuacoatl. Cite evidence.

**With properly cited evidence from the primary source and author context, students can successfully make the case that either Choice B or Choice D held more influence on Tambara's writing. Still, perhaps the strongest case can be made for Choice C. Without assuming intent, Choice C clearly demonstrates how Sahagún's background of faith would influence his interpretation of Cihuacoatl as similar to the biblical Eve. Choice B is also compelling, but does assume more intent ("suppress"). There is, however, evidence that Sahagún did not like Aztec beliefs at all, so with properly cited evidence, this can be supported. Choice A is only worth 1 point because it does acknowledge is systematic approach that nicknamed him America's first ethnographer; however, documentation style is not as attached to perspective as faith and beliefs. Finally, Choice D because this celebratory perspective isn't justified by the author context at all; rather, it is contradictory.**



## 1. Weighted Multiple Choice

<b>Choice 1</b>	2 points (Choice B or C)	1 point (Choice A)	0 points (Choice D)
<b>Choice 2</b>	2 points (Choice B or C)	1 point (Choice A)	0 points (Choice D)
			<b>Subtotal: _____ / 4</b>

## 2. Short Answer: More Significant Factor

3 points	2 points	1 point	0 points
Student identifies one choice as a more significant factor and cites clear evidence from both the author context and primary source to justify their choice.	Student identifies one choice as more significant and cites clear evidence from one source to justify their answer. Both sources may be cited, but only one provides clear justification.	Student identifies one choice as more significant and may or may not cite evidence to justify their answer. If evidence is cited, it does not provide clear justification for their choice.	Students does not identify one choice as more significant. Student either misunderstood question or did not attempt to answer it.
			<b>Subtotal: _____ / 3</b>

**Total: \_\_\_\_\_ / 7**

