

AZTEC_KIDS @ THE CROSSROADS

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LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. Extra Blog Posts

Ask students to pretend to be Yoatl and write a short blog post (around 300 words) about one of his adventures. Some possible topics:

- Competition between boys training to be priests and boys training to be warriors
- The Great Vigil: how does Yoatl celebrate?
- Conversations Yoatl has with Marina, the Mayan woman he meets when he is captured by the enemy

2. A Different Point of View

Ask students to choose a different character from *Aztec* (for example, Tepin, Zolin, or Matlal) and write a short blog post (around 300 words) about one of the events in the book from that character's perspective. Things to consider:

- How would your character view Yoatl? For example, is Zolin scared of Yoatl when they meet in battle, or is he surprised? Does Tepin feel sorry for Yoatl because he won't become a priest, or does she think he'll make a good warrior?
- What does your character think about the situation? For example, how does Zolin feel when Tepin frees him from slavery? Does he understand that she and Yoatl were trying to help him, or does he think his escape was just luck? Why does Tepin agree with her brother's plan to free Zolin? What convinces her to help him, and what does she hope will happen?

3. Class Discussion

Have students discuss the structure of the book. Some questions to ask:

- Why did the author choose blog posts to tell this story?
- How are blog posts similar to and different from book chapters?
- Do you think this literary technique (blog posts) worked? Why or why not?
- Some books are written as diaries (for example, *Leslie's Journal*, *Go Ask Alice*, *Anne Frank's The Diary of a Young Girl*). How are blog posts different from a diary?

4. Blog Research

Ask students to prepare a presentation on blogging. Things to consider:

- Why do people blog?
- What are some common topics for blogs?

- How can you tell if a blog is popular?
- How can you judge whether or not a blog is a reliable source of information?
- How are blogs different from newspapers and magazines?

Extra Credit

For extra credit, let students research free blogging websites (such as Livejournal and Blogger) and set up their own blog accounts. They can post their blog entries from the Learning Activities above, or create a class blog.