

# Design and Make an Aztec Chimalli

## National Curriculum Aims:

**History:** To study a non-European society that provides a contrast with British history.  
To design and make an Aztec shield (chimalli).

**Design & Technology:** Select from and use a wider range of materials and components according to functional properties and aesthetic qualities.

The Aztecs were known as fierce warriors. Showing bravery in battle earned respect and wealth and the best warriors showed off their success with animal skins and feathered headdresses.

Elite warriors wore special suits called tlahuiztli. These were brightly-coloured, often made from feathers, and worn over a cotton tunic soaked in brine which hardened to provide protection from blades. Shields, or chimalli, offered further protection. They were often circular and made from woven grasses or wood, backed with heavy cotton. To show his status, a skilled warrior would decorate his shield using animal skin, feathers and by painting patterns.

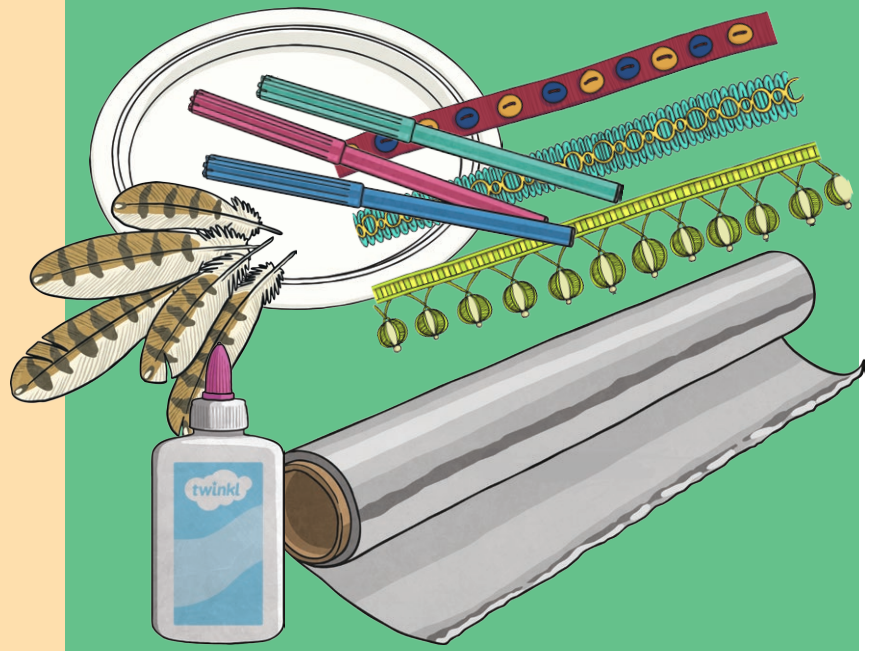


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# Aztec Chimalli

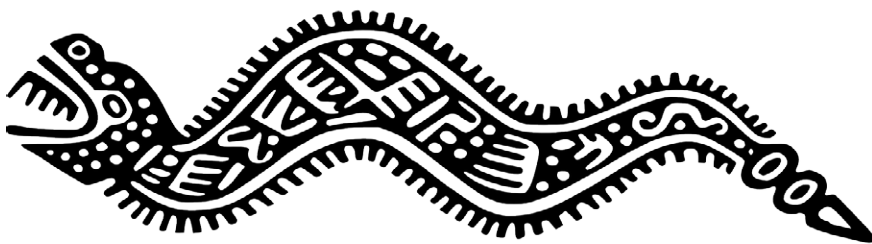
## You will need:

- Paper plate
- Coloured pens/pencils/crayons
- Feathers
- Glue
- Strips of paper or fabric
- Foil



## Instructions

1. Colour the striped edges of the paper plate in a repeating pattern. Use bright colours that would stand out in battle. Alternatively, glue feathers around the edge.
2. Decorate the centre of the plate as either animal skin or with feathers. You could cut out feather shapes from coloured paper and overlap them to create an effect.
3. Spend some time investigating Aztec patterns and drawings of animals. On a piece of paper that would fit the centre of your plate, draw an outline of your pattern or image.



4. Next, place a piece of felt or other soft material under a piece of foil. On top of the foil, put your paper with the drawing. Now, go over the lines of your drawing. This should leave an imprint on the foil.
5. Place the foil pattern over the centre of your shield.
6. For added protection, Aztec warriors would add leather strips around the bottom of their shield. Cut strips of paper to create the same effect on your shield.