

Nombre \_\_\_\_\_ Apellido \_\_\_\_\_

Fecha: Es el \_\_\_\_\_ de \_\_\_\_\_

# Mayas



The Mayan civilization in the **Pre-Classic Period** lasted approximately 2,000 years. Mayas during this period formed communities, farmed, made basic pottery and used clay to make small figurines. They constructed small burial grounds during this period.

During the **Classic Period**, which lasted about 1,000 years, the Mayas built many buildings and temples. In the Classic Period, they developed city states. These city states were areas of government, usually a small city with a lot of land around it, in which the people lived and worked. The small city was the center of the community.

The Mayas practiced religion during all three periods. They built the most famous and largest monuments and pyramids devoted to their religion during the Classic Period.

The **Post-Classic Period** lasted about 2,400 years. During this time, the Mayas stopped building the large temples. Then the civilization collapsed.



The ancient Mayas were very good farmers. They cultivated their crops by building terraces and fields for crops and even had a method of irrigation using canals. They also harvested wild plants for food and medicines.

Their diet consisted of sunflower seeds, bananas, honey, corn, squash, peppers, and beans, among other plants. Fish or meat were eaten mostly at religious festivals and ceremonies. Manioc (also known as cassava) was a plant that the Mayas cultivated. It is a very starchy root plant that has carbohydrates which are a good source of energy. The roots of this plant are used to make a starch which is an ingredient in the tapioca we eat today.

The Mayas also grew Cacao beans which were used to make a chocolate drink that the higher classes of people enjoyed.



# Mayans

## Art and Architecture

The ancient Mayas painted murals in their temples and religious buildings. These murals depicted Mayan life and were painted in vibrant colors. Of course, most of the colors did not last over hundreds of years, but some colors remain so that archaeologists can determine the original colors. One of the colors that was used in murals and other paintings was turquoise. This color became famous and is known as Maya Blue.



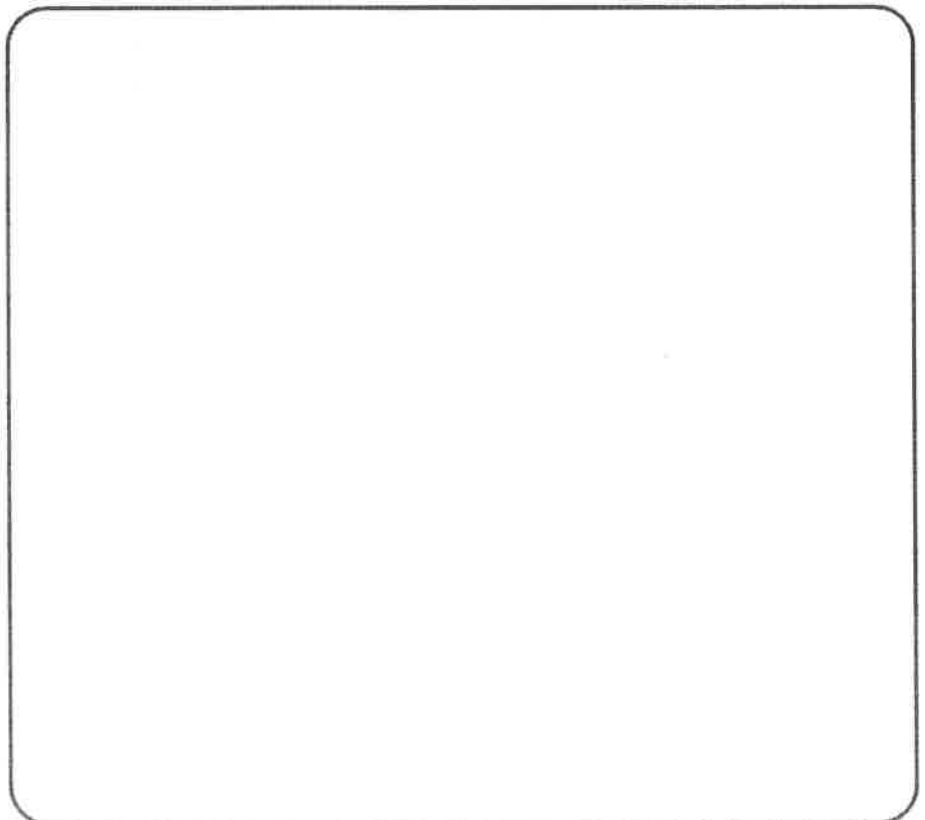
The Mayas also made pottery and decorated it. They etched stone with pictures of people and animals and painted the stone. Headdresses, along with jewelry were made of metal and feathers.

Mayan artisans were very skilled in weaving beautiful pieces of cloth. These pieces were often used as clothing for the rulers and religious leaders.

Their architecture is considered to be equal in beauty to the Roman and Greek structures. The Mayas used stone and made cement and plaster to build their buildings. The buildings were large and temples were often pyramids of stone with steps on all four sides.

The temples were built for religious ceremonies and were put in the middle of large areas so that many people could attend and see the religious leaders perform the ceremonies at the top of the pyramids.

Draw a picture of a pyramid.  
Color it the colors that you think the Mayas would have used.

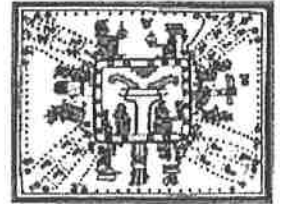


# Mayans

## Mayan Calendar

Perhaps the greatest accomplishment of the Mayan culture was the discovery and development of the calendar. Mayas used their knowledge of astronomy and mathematics to develop their calendar during the Classic Period. The calendars were very complex and extremely accurate.

The stone calendars made by the Mayas lasted to be discovered by archaeologists hundreds of years after the ancient Mayan civilization was over. Some of these stone calendars are now displayed in museums. Many of the Mayan calendars were round in shape. Symbols were used to indicate days of the week, weeks and months.



Early Mayan calendars were based on 260 days a year and later were based on 365 days a year, as our present day calendars are based.

The Mayas even used the mathematics from their calendar in some of their buildings. For example, at the Mayan ruins in Chichen Itza the structure of the Pyramid of Kukulkan was based on the calendar. There are 365 steps, counting the platform on the top, and the steps on all four sides. These steps relate to the 365 days in a calendar year.

Almanacs were also made by the Mayas. An almanac is a record of astronomical data, weather and crop reports, etc. These records helped future generations of people.

Write two sentences about the Mayan calendar.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Mayans

## Religion

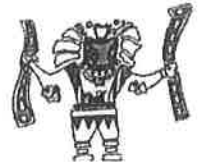


Many of the ancient religions of the world were based on nature because nature affected the quality of life for the people. The Mayas had a religion based on nature, naming gods of lightning, rain, sun, crops, etc. They also included gods from their study of astronomy.

Some of the most important gods were: Itzamna, the god of creation and fire, and Chac, the god of lightning and rain. Fire, lightning and rain were important to the people for life to be sustained.

The Mayas believed in good and bad nature gods. The religious services were held at the temples in front of hundreds of people.

There were many festivals celebrating and honoring the gods of rain, wind, and crops. Festivals were also held for birth, death and even war.



Read the questions below. Write your answer on the line.

1. Name a Mayan nature god? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Why did the Mayas worship nature gods? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Who performed the religious services? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Name one reason a festival was held? \_\_\_\_\_

# Mayans

## Spelling

Print the correct spelling word on the line.

1. almannac  
alnamac  
almanac

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2. calander  
calandar  
calendar

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3. anciant  
ancient  
ancent

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4. culture  
culture  
cultrue

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5. cymbol  
symbol  
symble

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# Mayans



## Word Find

Find and circle these words.  
They run down, across, and diagonally.

stone  
religion

temples  
writing

pottery  
steps

painting  
gold

pyramids  
math

build  
astronomy

q y m n m p n k k r z h p f k  
b s q j h i y p n y a u x s f  
d n c d n f z r b k z m d p a  
u h s t w x q n a g n l t g m  
b s j p y n d g p m o v c n p  
a e t x m d e n b i i f e i o  
m l w o o t s k s u g d r t g  
j p a i n t i n g d i r s i j  
b m m a o e h g n q l l r r q  
o e g a r y b t z x e r d w d  
v t p o t t e r y n r r j k r  
j q y d s h h m x b y l x n s  
b s a l a e s t e p s w o h l  
h v m o r o u w f f w o e j z  
u j c g y y d v n d l m q f d