



Pottery with cacao beans

# Early Civilizations: The Maya



## Teacher Guide

Maya children today



Pyramid



Hieroglyphs



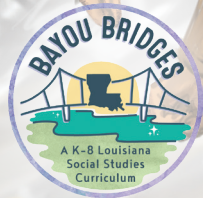
Pok-ta-pok ball game





# Early Civilizations: The Maya

## Teacher Guide



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# Early Civilizations: The Maya

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**Early Civilizations: The Maya**  
**Teacher Guide**  
Bayou Bridges Louisiana Social Studies, Grade 4

## UNIT 6

# Introduction

## ABOUT THIS UNIT

### The Big Idea

The Maya developed a large, complex civilization in Mesoamerica between 200 and 900 CE.

The Maya thrived in the rainforests and mountainous terrain of Belize, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula from about 200 to 900 CE. Known for their pyramids, hieroglyphics, and advanced calendars and systems of mathematics, the Maya disappeared abruptly from the archaeological record—a mystery that continues to be a subject of discussion and research.

# What Students Should Already Know

Students using Bayou Bridges should already be familiar with:

- first modern humans in Africa
- nomadic hunter-gatherers
- early humans' use of fire, weapons, and tools
- causes of migration from Africa north to Europe and east to Asia
- causes of the Agricultural Revolution
- how a stable food supply was linked to permanent settlements and specialization
- development of a barter economy
- characteristics of civilization, including culture, infrastructure, government, technology, belief systems, writing, and social structure
- geographic characteristics of Mesopotamia
- early civilizations of Mesopotamia, such as Sumer, Akkad, and Babylon
- development of writing in Mesopotamia
- significance of the Code of Hammurabi and the *Epic of Gilgamesh*
- development of religion in ancient Israel
- important events and people in the Hebrew Bible
- importance of the Nile River in ancient Egypt
- characteristics of ancient Egyptian society, including its social classes and governmental structure
- building and purpose of the Egyptian pyramids
- rise and influence of the kingdoms of Nubia and Kush
- function and influence of trade in the Near East
- geography of India, China, and Greece
- characteristics of Indus River valley culture
- development and spread of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism
- achievements of ancient Indian leaders, such as Ashoka and Samudragupta
- scientific and mathematical achievements of ancient India
- characteristics of Huang He and Yangzi cultures
- features of the Xia, Shang, and Zhou dynasties

## Time Period Background

This timeline provides an overview of key events related to the content of this unit. Use a classroom timeline with students to help them sequence and relate events that occurred from 200 CE to the present day.

200 CE	Ancient Maya civilization flourishes.
500s CE	The city of Chichén Itzá is founded.
900s CE	The ancient Maya abandon their cities.
1500s CE	The Maya of Guatemala create the <i>Popol Vuh</i> .
1839 CE	John Lloyd Stephens and Frederick Catherwood explore the abandoned city of Copán.
1960s CE	Early computers help archaeologists understand Mayan writing.
2000s CE	Today, millions of descendants of the ancient Maya live in southern Mexico, Belize, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras.



- city-state and the feudal system
- Confucianism and Daoism
- characteristics of Minoan and Mycenaean civilizations
- characteristics of Athenian democracy
- characteristics of Spartan society
- important people and events of the Persian Wars
- important people and events of the Peloponnesian War
- Greek architecture, drama, and philosophy
- ancient Olympic Games
- accomplishments of Alexander the Great
- geography of ancient Rome
- development of the Roman Republic
- causes and effects of the Punic Wars
- characteristics of life in ancient Rome
- rise of Julius Caesar
- fall of the Roman Republic
- Octavian and the beginning of the Roman Empire
- significance of Diocletian and the division of the empire
- significance of Constantine and the adoption of Christianity
- fall of Rome and the Western Roman Empire
- Byzantium and the Eastern Roman Empire
- significance of Justinian's code
- geography of imperial China
- significance of Qin Shi Huangdi and the Qin dynasty
- early construction of the Great Wall and Grand Canal
- rise of the Han dynasty
- characteristics of Legalism
- development of the Silk Road and the importance of silk
- Han dynasty accomplishments such as porcelain and papermaking
- migration of nomadic hunters from Asia to North America during the Ice Age

- spread of peoples with different languages and ways of life across North and South America
- development in present-day Louisiana of several prehistoric Indigenous cultures with distinct ways of life

## What Students Need to Learn

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- geography of Maya territory
- Maya agriculture and specialization
- importance of religion in Maya culture
- organization of Maya city-states
- the significance of the Mayan writing system
- the Maya's advanced understanding of astronomy and mathematics
- the potential causes of the Maya civilization's decline

## AT A GLANCE

The most important ideas in Unit 6 are the following:

- The Maya developed an advanced agricultural society that was deeply rooted in religious tradition and beliefs.
- Despite their lack of physical technology, the Maya had an advanced understanding of mathematics and astronomy.
- The Maya civilization thrived for approximately seven hundred years, then disappeared from the archaeological record in the 900s CE. Although historians have posited several theories about what happened to the ancient Maya, there is no definitive evidence about their ultimate fate.
- Today, descendants of the ancient Maya live throughout Central America and other parts of the world.

## WHAT TEACHERS NEED TO KNOW

Each chapter of the Teacher Guide is accompanied by a brief What Teachers Need to Know document that provides background information related to the chapter content. The background information will summarize the chapter content and provide some additional details or explanation. These documents are not meant to be complete histories but rather memory refreshers to help provide context for what students are learning. For fuller, more detailed explanations, see the list of recommended books in this Introduction.

To find the What Teachers Need to Know documents, look for the link to download the Bayou Bridges Online Resources at the beginning of each chapter.

## UNIT RESOURCES

### Student Component

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*Early Civilizations: The Maya* Student Reader—two chapters

### Teacher Components

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*Early Civilizations: The Maya* Teacher Guide—two chapters. The guide includes lessons aligned to each chapter of the *Early Civilizations: The Maya* Student Reader, with a daily Check for Understanding and Additional Activities—such as vocabulary practice, primary source analysis, literature connections, and virtual field trips—designed to reinforce the chapter content. Chapter

Assessments, a Performance Task Assessment, and Activity Pages are included in Teacher Resources, beginning on page 36.

- The Chapter Assessments test knowledge of each chapter using standard testing formats.
- The Performance Task Assessment requires students to apply and share the knowledge learned during the unit through either an oral or a written presentation.
- The Activity Pages are designed to support, reinforce, and extend content taught in specific chapters throughout the unit.

*Early Civilizations: The Maya* Timeline Card Slide Deck—seven individual images depicting significant events and individuals related to the Maya civilization. In addition to an image, each card contains a caption, a chapter number, and the Framing Question, which outlines the focus of the chapter. The Teacher Guide will prompt you, lesson by lesson, as to which card(s) to display. The Timeline Cards will be a powerful learning tool, enabling you and your students to track important themes and events as they occurred within this expansive time period.

Use this link to download the Bayou Bridges Online Resources for this unit, where the specific link to the Timeline Card Slide Deck may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/bayou-bridges-online-resources/>

You may wish to print the Timeline Cards to create a physical timeline in your classroom. To do so, you will need to identify available wall space in your classroom on which you can post the Timeline Cards over the course of the unit. The timeline may be oriented either vertically or horizontally, even wrapping around corners and multiple walls—whatever works best in your classroom setting. Be creative; some teachers hang a clothesline so that the image cards can be attached with clothespins!

200 CE



Chapter 1

500s CE



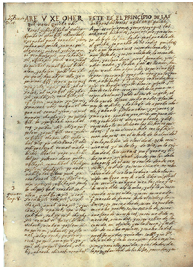
Chapter 1

900s CE



Chapter 2

1500s CE



Chapter 1

1839 CE



Chapter 2

1960s CE



Chapter 2

2000s CE



Chapter 2

### The Timeline in Relation to Content in the Student Reader

The events highlighted in the Unit 6 Timeline Cards are in chronological order, but the chapters that are referenced are not. The reason for this is that the Student Reader is organized thematically, not chronologically. Chapter 1, "The Maya," describes ancient Maya life from 200 to 900 CE. Chapter 2, "Where Did the Maya Go?," addresses theories about the Maya civilization's decline and describes how researchers are piecing together evidence to find out what really happened. This information is not presented chronologically.

### Understanding References to Time in the *Early Civilizations: The Maya Unit*

As you read the text, you will become aware that in some instances general time periods are referenced, and in other instances specific dates are cited. That is because the text discusses both trends over time and specific events. For example, it is generally accepted that the Maya civilization was at its height

between 200 and 900 CE. Specific dates are not necessary for a time period that broad. The text also discusses a trip made by two explorers in 1839. That year is specifically named to give readers a contextual understanding of where in history the journey took place.

### Time to Talk About Time

Before you use the Timeline Cards, discuss with students the concept of time and how it is recorded. Here are several discussion points that you might use to promote discussion. This discussion will allow students to explore the concept of time.

1. What is time?
2. How do we measure time?
3. How do we record time?
4. How does nature show the passing of time? (Encourage students to think about days, months, and seasons.)
5. What is a specific date?
6. What is a time period?
7. What is the difference between a specific date and a time period?
8. What is a timeline?

## USING THE TEACHER GUIDE

### Pacing Guide

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The *Early Civilizations: The Maya* unit is one of six history and geography units in the Grade 4 Bayou Bridges Louisiana Social Studies Curriculum. A total of fifteen days has been allocated to the *Early Civilizations: The Maya* unit. We recommend that you do not exceed this number of instructional days to ensure that you have sufficient instructional time to complete all Grade 4 units.

At the end of this Introduction, you will find a Sample Pacing Guide that provides guidance as to how you might select and use the various resources in this unit during the allotted time. However, there are many options and ways that you may choose to individualize this unit for your students, based on their interests and needs. So we have also provided you with a blank pacing guide that you may use to reflect the activity choices and pacing for your class. If you plan to create a customized pacing guide for your class, we strongly recommend that you preview this entire unit and create your pacing guide before teaching the first chapter.

## Reading Aloud

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Cognitive science suggests that even in the later elementary grades and into middle school, students' listening comprehension still surpasses their independent reading comprehension (Sticht, 1984).

For this reason, in the Bayou Bridges Curriculum Series, reading aloud continues to be used as an instructional approach in these grades to ensure that students fully grasp the content presented in each chapter. Students will typically be directed to read specific sections of each chapter quietly to themselves, while other sections will be read aloud by the teacher or student volunteers. When you or a student reads aloud, always prompt students to follow along. By following along in this way, students become more focused on the text and may acquire a greater understanding of the content.

## Picture This

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During the reading of each section of the chapter, pause periodically to check student comprehension. One quick and easy way to do this is to have students describe what they see in their minds when reading a particular paragraph. Students who struggle to identify images may need a bit more support.

## Turn and Talk

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After reading each section of the chapter, whether silently or aloud, Guided Reading Supports will prompt you to pose specific questions about what students have just read. Rather than simply calling on a single student to respond, provide students with opportunities to discuss the questions in pairs or in groups. Discussion opportunities will allow students to more fully engage with the content and will bring to life the themes or topics being discussed. This scaffolded approach—reading manageable sections of each chapter and then discussing what has been read—is an effective and efficient way to ensure that all students understand the content before proceeding to the remainder of the chapter.

For more about classroom discussions, including an evaluation rubric, download the Bayou Bridges Online Resource “About Class Discussions and Debates”:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/bayou-bridges-online-resources/>

## Primary Sources

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Most chapters include a Student Reader feature and Additional Activities built around the exploration of primary sources. Primary sources are an essential part of understanding history. They are a window to the past and provide a

deeper understanding of the human experience. Students are encouraged to explore these sources through the structured activities provided in each chapter.

For more about primary sources, download the Bayou Bridges Online Resource “About Teaching with Primary Sources”:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/bayou-bridges-online-resources/>

To facilitate student engagement with these primary sources, an Artifact Study Activity Page and a Primary Source Analysis Activity Page have been provided in the Teacher Resources for this unit. You may also wish to explore the primary source analysis worksheets from the National Archives, the UCI History Project, the Library of Congress, and the U.S. House of Representatives Archives, links to which can be found in the Online Resources for this unit.

## Framing Questions

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At the beginning of each Teacher Guide chapter, you will find a Framing Question, also found at the beginning of each Student Reader chapter. The Framing Questions are provided to help establish the bigger concepts and to provide a general overview of the chapter. The Framing Questions, by chapter, are:

Chapter	The Framing Question
1	What characterized the early Maya civilization?
2	What factors may have led the Maya to abandon their cities?

## Core Vocabulary

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Domain-specific vocabulary, phrases, and idioms highlighted in each chapter of the Student Reader are listed at the beginning of each Teacher Guide chapter, in the order in which they appear in the Student Reader. Student Reader page numbers are also provided. The vocabulary, by chapter, are:

Chapter	Core Vocabulary
1	temple, archaeologist, architect, priest, sacrifice, omen, equinox, leap year, hieroglyph, vessel, initiation ceremony
2	superstition, decipher, theory, drought

## Activity Pages

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The following Activity Pages can be found in Teacher Resources, pages 48–56. They are to be used with the chapter specified for either Guided Reading Support, Additional Activities, or homework. Be sure to make sufficient copies for your students prior to conducting the guided reading or activities.

- Chapter 1—Letter to Family (AP 1.1)
- Chapter 1—Artifact Study (AP 1.2)




- Chapter 1—Primary Source Analysis (AP 1.3)
- Chapter 2—Claims and Evidence (AP 1.4)
- Chapter 1—Characteristics of Civilization (AP 1.5)
- Chapter 1—Map of Maya Civilization (AP 1.6)
- Chapter 2—Three-Column Chart (AP 2.1)
- Chapter 2—Domain Vocabulary: Chapters 1–2 (AP 2.2)

## Additional Activities and Website Links

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A link to Additional Activities may be found at the end of each chapter in this Teacher Guide. While there are multiple suggested activities for this unit, you should choose activities to complete based on your available instructional time and your students' interests and needs. Many of the activities include website links, and you should check the links prior to using them in class.

Many chapters include activities marked with a . This icon indicates a preferred activity. We strongly recommend including these activities in your lesson planning.

### Books

Baquedano, Elizabeth. *Aztec, Inca, & Maya*. DK Eyewitness. New York: DK Children, 2011.

Kule, Elaine A. *World of the Maya*. Amazing Ancients! New York: Penguin Workshop, 2020.

Maloy, Jackie. *The Ancient Maya*. A True Book. Danbury, CT: Children's Press, 2010.

Manzanero, Paula K. *Where Is Chichen Itza?* Illustrated by Dede Putra. New York: Penguin Workshop, 2020.

Richards, Jon, and Jonathan Vipond. *History in Infographics: The Maya*. London: Wayland, 2022.

## EARLY CIVILIZATIONS: THE MAYA SAMPLE PACING GUIDE

For schools using the Bayou Bridges Social Studies Curriculum

TG—Teacher Guide; SR—Student Reader; AP—Activity Page

### Week 1

**Day 1**

**Day 2**

**Day 3**

**Day 4**

**Day 5**

#### Early Civilizations: The Maya

"The Maya" Core Lesson (TG & SR, Chapter 1)	"The Maya" Core Lesson (TG & SR, Chapter 1) "Map of Maya Civilization" (TG, Chapter 1 Additional Activities, AP 1.6)	"Primary Source: Excerpt from the <i>Popol Vuh</i> " (TG & SR, Chapter 1, AP 1.3)	"Characteristics of Civilization" (TG, Chapter 1, AP 1.5)	"The Maya Myth of the Morning Star" (TG, Chapter 1 Additional Activities)
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### Week 2

**Day 6**


**Day 7**

**Day 8**

**Day 9**

**Day 10**

#### Early Civilizations: The Maya

"ARTIFACT STUDY: Maya Maize God" (TG, Chapter 1 Additional Activities, AP 1.2)	"Maya Trade" (TG, Chapter 1 Additional Activities)	 "Virtual Field Trip: The Ball Courts of Chichén Itzá" (TG, Chapter 1 Additional Activities)	Chapter 1 Assessment	"Where Did the Maya Go?" Core Lesson (TG & SR, Chapter 2)  Domain Vocabulary: Chapters 1–2 (TG, Chapter 2 Additional Activities, AP 2.2)
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### Week 3

**Day 11**

**Day 12**

**Day 13**

**Day 14**

**Day 15**

#### Early Civilizations: The Maya

"The Fall of the Maya" (TG, Chapter 2 Additional Activities, AP 1.4)	"Virtual Field Trip: The Yucatec Maya Today" (TG, Chapter 2 Additional Activities)	Chapter 2 Assessment	Unit 6 Performance Task Assessment	Unit 6 Performance Task Assessment
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# EARLY CIVILIZATIONS: THE MAYA PACING GUIDE

\_\_\_\_\_ 's Class

(A total of fifteen days has been allocated to the *Early Civilizations: The Maya* unit in order to complete all Grade 4 history and geography units in the Bayou Bridges Curriculum Series.)

## Week 1

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Day 4

Day 5

*Early Civilizations: The Maya*

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## Week 2

Day 6

Day 7

Day 8

Day 9

Day 10

*Early Civilizations: The Maya*

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## Week 3

Day 11

Day 12

Day 13

Day 14

Day 15

*Early Civilizations: The Maya*

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## CHAPTER 1

# TOPIC: The Maya

**The Framing Question:** What characterized the early Maya civilization?

### Primary Focus Objectives

- ✓ Identify the geographic features of Maya territory in Mesoamerica. (4.6, 4.7, 4.19, 4.19.a)
- ✓ Describe the importance of agriculture in early Maya society. (4.11, 4.12, 4.19)
- ✓ Recall traditions, practices, and stories of the Maya religion. (4.8, 4.12)
- ✓ Understand the significance of the Maya's mathematical and scientific achievements. (4.19.f)
- ✓ Understand the meaning of the following domain-specific vocabulary: *temple, archaeologist, architect, priest, sacrifice, omen, equinox, leap year, hieroglyph, vessel, and initiation ceremony.*

### What Teachers Need to Know

For background information, download the Bayou Bridges Online Resource “About The Maya”:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/bayou-bridges-online-resources/>

### Materials Needed

#### Activity Pages



AP 1.1  
AP 1.2  
AP 1.3  
AP 1.5

- individual student copies of Letter to Family (AP 1.1)
- individual student copies of Artifact Study (AP 1.2), Primary Source Analysis (AP 1.3), and Characteristics of Civilization (AP 1.5).
- image from the Internet of terrace farming
- world map or globe
- small, handheld mirror
- wall calendar
- Internet access
- capability to display Internet in the classroom

Use this link to download the Bayou Bridges Online Resources for this unit, where the specific link to the image may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/bayou-bridges-online-resources/>

## Core Vocabulary (Student Reader page numbers listed below)

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**temple, n.** a building with a religious use or meaning (2)

*Example:* People still visit the ancient stone temple to see how the Maya once worshipped.

*Variations:* temples

**archaeologist, n.** an expert in the study of material remains of people from the past (6)

*Example:* The archaeologist took pictures of the artifacts before she began cleaning them.

*Variations:* archaeologists, archaeology (n.), archaeological (adj.), archaeologically (adv.)

**architect, n.** a person who designs buildings (7)

*Example:* The company hired an architect to design its new office building.

*Variations:* architects, architecture (n.), architectural (adj.)

**priest, n.** a person who has the training or authority to carry out religious ceremonies or rituals (7)

*Example:* The priest led the villagers in a prayer ceremony.

*Variations:* priests

**sacrifice, n.** something or someone given or killed for a religious purpose (11)

*Example:* The village elders decided that this year's sacrifice to the gods would be a goat and a bull.

*Variations:* sacrifices, sacrifice (v.), sacrificial (adj.)

**omen, n.** an occurrence or event believed to be a sign of the future (11)

*Example:* The cloudless sky is a good omen for tonight's baseball game.

*Variations:* omens

**equinox, n.** a day in which daytime and nighttime are about the same length, which happens twice every year (12)

*Example:* After the spring equinox, the hours of light per day outnumber the hours of darkness.

*Variations:* equinoxes

**leap year, n.** a year that has 366 days, or one more than a typical year, and occurs every four years (12)

*Example:* Because she was born in a leap year, the date of her birthday only occurs every four years.

*Variations:* leap years

**hieroglyph, n.** a picture or symbol representing an idea, object, syllable, or sound (14)

*Example:* The tour guide told us that the hieroglyph had been drawn more than a thousand years ago.

*Variations:* hieroglyphs, hieroglyphic (adj.), hieroglyphic (n.), hieroglyphics (n.)

**vessel, n.** a container (14)

*Example:* The clay vessel was almost too heavy to carry when it had water in it.

*Variations:* vessels

**initiation ceremony, n.** a special event to mark a person's entry into a certain group or status (15)

*Example:* Manuel's entire family attended the initiation ceremony for his scouting troop.

*Variations:* initiation ceremonies

## THE CORE LESSON 35 MIN


### Introduce *Early Civilizations: The Maya Student Reader*

5 MIN

Distribute copies of *Early Civilizations: The Maya Student Reader*. Suggest students take a few minutes to look at the cover and flip through the Table of Contents and the images in the book. Ask students to brainstorm individual words or simple phrases describing what they notice in the Table of Contents and various illustrations; record this information in a list on the board or chart paper. Students will likely mention pyramids, farming, religion, and games.

### Introduce "The Maya"

5 MIN

 Point out the Americas on a globe or world map. Explain to students that in the last unit, they learned about Indigenous peoples of North America. Point out North America on the globe or map. Then tell students that in this unit, they will learn about one of the many Indigenous peoples of Mesoamerica, which is a region that includes southern Mexico and Central America. Point it out on the globe or map.

Call students' attention to the Framing Question. Tell students that as they listen to and read the chapter, they should be on the lookout for things that characterized the early Maya civilization.

### Guided Reading Supports for "The Maya"

25 MIN

When you or a student reads aloud, **always** prompt students to follow along. By following along, students may acquire a greater understanding of the content. Remember to provide discussion opportunities.

## “The Mysterious Civilization” and “Geographic Challenges,” pages 2–5

### Scaffold understanding as follows:

#### Read the section “The Mysterious Civilization” on pages 2–4 aloud.

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary term *temple*, and explain its meaning.


**SUPPORT**—Point out the image of the pyramid on page 2. Ask students what other civilizations they’ve studied that also built pyramids. (*ancient Egyptians, Nubians*) Explain that the pyramid in the image is topped by a temple. (4.4)

**SUPPORT**—Explain to students that the term *Mesoamerica* refers to a historical region. It’s a place where certain civilizations emerged, but it’s not used to describe or locate any present-day place.

**SUPPORT**—Point out the word *flourished* in the second paragraph of the section. Explain that *flourish* means to develop and become successful.

#### Read the section “Geographic Challenges” on pages 4–5 aloud.


 **SUPPORT**—Using the map on page 4, guide students to locate the Yucatán Peninsula. (4.6, 4.19.a)

 **SUPPORT**—Invite students to compare the map on page 4 to the depiction of the Americas on the world map or globe. Help students recognize that the map in the Student Reader shows the land that is today Mexico, Central America, and the northern part of South America. (4.2.c, 4.4, 4.6)


#### After reading the text, ask the following questions:

**LITERAL**—When was the Maya civilization at its height? (4.2.a, 4.5.a)

» The Maya civilization was at its height between 200 and 900 CE.

 **LITERAL**—In what part of the world was the Maya civilization located? (4.6)

» The Maya civilization was located in Mesoamerica. Today this land is known as Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Belize.


 **EVALUATIVE**—Why might someone describe the geography of the Maya civilization as challenging for growing crops? (4.6, 4.7)

» Land in this region was often highlands or mountainous. Even the lowlands weren’t very good for farming; they ranged from tropical forests to desert. It was also difficult to access water.

## “Agricultural Solutions,” pages 5–6


**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**Invite volunteers to read the section on pages 5–6 aloud.**

 **SUPPORT**—After the first paragraph is read, display the image of terrace farming. Explain that a terrace is a flat piece of land carved out of the side of a mountain or a hill. Terraces on a hillside are similar to a staircase, if a staircase were made for giants! The fields are the flat steps that your foot stands on. The rest of the hill acts as the risers, or the horizontal part of the stair that supports the flat step.

**SUPPORT**—After the second paragraph is read, remind students that people still eat tortillas today. Anyone who has eaten a taco, burrito, or quesadilla has eaten a tortilla. Ask students to raise their hands if they have eaten a tortilla.

**After the volunteers read the text, ask the following questions:**

 **LITERAL**—How did Maya farmers adapt to the difficult terrain on which their civilization was built? (4.7, 4.18.b, 4.19.g)

- » Maya farmers built terraces into the hillsides of the highlands. They also developed irrigation systems, water wells, and ways to catch and store rainwater.

**LITERAL**—What was the most common job held by the Maya people of the past? (4.11)

- » Most Maya people were farmers.

**EVALUATIVE**—How did having surplus food affect the Maya population? (4.5.c, 4.11, 4.12)

- » The Maya people were able to store their surplus food for later use, which meant that not everyone had to farm. People who did not farm could specialize in other types of work, such as beekeeping, fishing, pottery, or construction. This would have provided the Maya with more goods and expanded their economy.

## “A Network of City-States,” pages 6–7

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**Have students read the section on pages 6–7 with a partner.**

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary term *archaeologist*, and explain its meaning. Clarify for students that the phrase *material remains* means the physical objects left from a group of people in the past, such as bones, tools, pottery, or buildings.





**SUPPORT**—Remind students that other ancient civilizations also had city-states. Ask volunteers to explain what a city-state is (*a city that is its own political unit and has its own ruling government*) and name other civilizations that had them (*ancient Mesopotamia, ancient Greece*). (4.4)

**SUPPORT**—Point out the word *cacao* (/ka\*cow/) in the second paragraph of the section. Explain that cacao is a bean that is used to make chocolate.

**SUPPORT**—Direct students to the image of Maya pottery on page 6. Point out the cacao beans on the pottery. Explain that the beans are not only in the vessel the figure is holding but also covering the figure’s torso and piled behind and under the figure.

**OPTIONAL ACTIVITY**—If time allows, have students complete an Artifact Study (AP 1.2) about the Maya pottery on page 6. (4.2, 4.2.a)

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary term *architect*, and explain its meaning.

**After students read the text, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—How was the Maya civilization organized? (4.19)

- » The Maya civilization was broken into city-states. City-states were independent but traded with one another. They experienced both times of war and times of peace.

**INFERENTIAL**—Why do you think the Maya built their city-states using stone and earth? (4.19.g)

- » The Maya probably built their city-states out of stone and earth because those were the natural materials they had the most of. Stone and earth would have also made sturdy buildings and defensive walls to go around their cities.

**EVALUATIVE**—What evidence from this section could you use to prove the claim that most Maya city-states were not constantly threatened with attacks from enemies? (4.5.d)

- » The third paragraph says that some Maya city-states “had defensive features such as moats and earthworks, but many did not.” Defensive structures would be necessary only if a city-state were under threat of attack. Because most Maya city-states didn’t have these features, we can assume that enemy attacks were not a big concern.


**“Service to the Gods,” pages 7–8**

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**Invite volunteers to read the section on pages 7–8 aloud.**

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary term *priest*, and explain its meaning.

**SUPPORT**—Tell students that the Maya believed in many gods and goddesses. Ask a volunteer if they remember the word that describes that type of belief. (*polytheism* or *polytheistic*) Ask students to name other polytheistic societies they have learned about. (*ancient Mesopotamia, ancient Egypt, ancient Greece, ancient Rome*) (4.3, 4.8)

 **SUPPORT**—Point out the name of the Maya wind god, Huracán (/ur\*ah\*cahn/), in the third paragraph of the section. Ask students if they know a word that sounds similar. (*hurricane*) Explain that *hurricane* comes from the word *Huracán*. Explain that like Louisiana, the area where the ancient Maya lived sometimes experienced hurricanes and continues to do so today. (4.7, 4.12)

**Note:** The word *Xibalba* is pronounced (/she\*ball\*bah/). Say the name aloud, and have students repeat it after you.

**SUPPORT**—Point out the image of the pyramid at Chichén Itzá on page 8. Ask students to compare the pyramid to other ancient buildings they have studied. What other buildings does this remind them of? (*Students may cite the Egyptian pyramids, Egyptian mastabas, or Mesopotamian ziggurats.*)

**After the volunteers read the text, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—According to Maya legend, why did the gods make humans? What are humans made from? (4.8, 4.12)

- » The gods made humans because the gods wanted to be worshipped. They made humans out of mud, wood, and finally corn.

**LITERAL**—What was the purpose of Xibalba? (4.2.a)

- » Xibalba created distance between the sky and the earth so that plants and animals had a place to live.

**EVALUATIVE**—The first sentence of the section says, “From the size of the pyramids, it is clear that religion was a key part of Maya life.” Explain how the text provides examples in the following sentences that support the author’s claim. (4.2.b)

- » Maya pyramids were very large, especially in height. They were built to honor the gods. The author is saying that the size of the temples was directly related to how much the Maya honored their gods. If the Maya had not honored their gods so much, the temples would have been much smaller.

### “The Popol Vuh,” pages 8–9

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**Read the section on pages 8–9 aloud.**

**SUPPORT**—Help students understand the meaning of the phrase “like breath on a mirror” with a practical demonstration. Show students a clean handheld mirror. Note how they can easily see their reflections and the reflections of things in the classroom. Now take a deep breath in. Hold it for a moment, then exhale onto the mirror. It should fog. Show the mirror to students. Ask volunteers to describe what they see in the mirror now. (*clouds, nothing, fuzzy things, shadows, etc.*) If time allows, give students the opportunity to look at their own reflection in the fogged mirror.

**After read the text, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—What was the *Popol Vuh*? (4.8, 4.12)

» The *Popol Vuh* was a collection of Maya religious stories.

**EVALUATIVE**—Why is the *Popol Vuh* important? (4.2.b, 4.12)

» The *Popol Vuh* is important because it was written during a time when the Spanish were destroying Maya texts. If it had not been saved, we probably wouldn’t know anything about Maya religion.


**EVALUATIVE**—What did the authors of the *Popol Vuh* mean when they said that human understanding was “like breath on a mirror”? (4.5.a)

» The authors of the *Popol Vuh* meant that humans can’t even begin to see or understand the world in the way that the gods did.

### “Serious Play,” pages 9–11

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**Have students read the first three paragraphs of “Serious Play” on page 9 with a partner.**

 **SUPPORT**—Direct students back to the map on page 4. Have them locate the Yucatán Peninsula. Explain that that’s where Chichén Itzá was located. The pyramid in the image on page 8 is still there, as is a *pok-ta-pok* court.

**SUPPORT**—After reading the description of *pok-ta-pok*, ask students if the game reminds them of any sports they watch or play. (*Students may compare it to basketball or soccer.*)

**Have students read the remainder of the section on pages 10–11 with a partner.**

**SUPPORT**—Call attention to the idiom “the stakes are high” in the first paragraph on page 10. Explain to students that when the stakes are high, a person has a lot to lose.

**SUPPORT**—Call attention to the word *spectators* in the second paragraph on page 10. Explain that spectators are people who go to an event to

watch. The Maya watched *pok-ta-pok* much like people today watch games such as football, baseball, or basketball.

**SUPPORT**—Explain the context of the statement “There is no whistle for a foul” in the last paragraph on page 10. Many students may play a sport or have seen one in person or on television. The Maya did not have referees to make sure the athletes were playing fairly in *pok-ta-pok*. This shows that they were probably being aggressive and perhaps bending the rules while playing, especially with the stakes being so high.

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary term *sacrifice*, and explain its meaning.

**After students read the text, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—What is *pok-ta-pok*? (4.2.a, 4.19.b)

- » *Pok-ta-pok* is a ball game that the Maya played on the ball courts that are found at the sites of many Maya cities.

**EVALUATIVE**—How is *pok-ta-pok* similar to modern sports? How is it different? (4.2.c, 4.5.b)

- » *Pok-ta-pok* is similar to modern sports because it uses a ball, like basketball, volleyball, tennis, and even racquetball. It has a goal, like soccer, basketball, and football. Also, the Maya watched *pok-ta-pok* games the way people today watch sports such as football, baseball, and basketball. Unlike those sports, however, the goal or hoop is hung on its side. Unlike today’s sports, people could not use their hands or feet to touch the ball. They had to use other parts of their bodies, like hips, elbows, or knees.

**LITERAL**—In what way did *pok-ta-pok* have religious significance to the Maya? (4.12)

- » The game was seen as a contest between good and evil. The winners were considered “good,” and the losers were considered “evil.”

**INFERENTIAL**—How do you think *pok-ta-pok* got its name? (4.2.a, 4.3, 4.19.b)

- » It may have gotten its name from the sound the ball made bouncing against the ground and the stone walls.

**INFERENTIAL**—Why do you think the Maya allowed the outcome of a game to determine who lived or died? (4.2.a, 4.3, 4.5.a, 4.5.c, 4.12, 4.19.b)

- » The Maya may have believed the outcome of the game was determined by the gods. If a certain group lost, that was who the gods wanted sacrificed.

## “Wisdom in the Sky,” pages 11–13

### Scaffold understanding as follows:

#### Read the first four paragraphs of the section on pages 11–13 aloud.

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary terms *omen*, *equinox*, and *leap year*, and explain their meanings.

**SUPPORT**—Help students understand the word *equinox* by explaining that this word comes from two Latin words that mean equal and night. When you put them together, you get *equinox*, which means equal night and refers to a time when day and night are equal in length. Equinoxes—days in which daytime is equal in length to nighttime—only happen twice a year, usually around March 20 and September 22 (the beginning of spring and the beginning of autumn).

**SUPPORT**—To help students better understand leap years, explain that most years have 365 days. Every fourth year has 366 days. That extra day is tacked onto the end of February. February usually has 28 days, but every four years, the calendar has a February 29. People who are born on February 29 only get to celebrate their actual birthday every four years!

#### Invite volunteers read the last three paragraphs of the section on page 13 aloud.

**SUPPORT**—Before students begin reading, display a modern paper calendar or a digital calendar on the screen. Ask students to identify features of our calendar, such as the twelve-month year, the seven-day week, and the names of the months and days. Ask why a calendar is an important tool, and have students discuss how a calendar helps them.

**SUPPORT**—Remind students that the word *solar* is used to describe things that are powered by or related to the sun. The Maya invented a solar calendar that was based on the movement of the sun. What other solar-related items can they name? (*solar power*, *solar panel*, *solar system*, *solar eclipse*, *solar day*)

#### After the volunteers read the text, ask the following questions:

**LITERAL**—What did the Maya use to make precise observations about the sky? (4.19.f)

- » The Maya used their eyes—and only their eyes—to make precise observations about the sky.

**EVALUATIVE**—What clues indicate that the builders of the pyramid at Chichén Itzá placed their structure precisely according to observations of the sky? (4.19.f)

- » During the two equinoxes each year, the sun hits the sculpture in such a way that the shadow of a stone serpent looks like it is slithering

down the stairs as the day goes on. The builders would have had to put the pyramid in exactly the right place for that to happen.

**INFERENCE**—What does the text suggest when it says that the Maya didn't have telescopes, computers, or satellites? (4.2.a, 4.5.a)

- » This detail suggests that the Maya studied astronomy without the modern tools and technology that we consider necessary to do so. That makes their accomplishments even more impressive. (4.19.f)

**EVALUATIVE**—The Maya calculation for the precise length of the year was almost exactly the same as modern calculations. What does that tell you about the Maya? Why? (4.19.f)

- » It tells me that the Maya were scientifically advanced. We had to use complicated tools and scientific and mathematical methods to figure out the precise length of the year. The Maya did not have those same tools and methods, yet they were able to come up with almost the same answer.

**LITERAL**—In what ways is the Maya solar calendar similar to the one we use today? (4.2.c, 4.19.f)

- » The two calendars are similar because both are based on the movement of the sun. They each have approximately 365 days and are divided into months.

**LITERAL**—In what ways is the Maya solar calendar different from the one we use today? (4.2.c, 4.19.f)

- » The two calendars are different because even though they are the same overall length, they are divided into different numbers of months. Our calendar has twelve months that are fairly equal in length. The Maya calendar has eighteen months, one of which is only five days long.

**LITERAL**—What is the purpose of the Sacred Round? (4.12, 4.19.f)

- » The Sacred Round is a calendar used to keep track of religious holidays. It is separate from the Maya solar calendar.

**INFERENCE**—Why do you think the Maya solar calendar and the Sacred Round had a different number of days? (4.2.a, 4.3, 4.5.a)


- » Possible answer: The Maya solar calendar was based on something the Maya could see, which was the position of the sun at certain times of the year. We know the Sacred Round was related to religion, which is not directly connected to the position of the sun. Perhaps the 260 days in the Sacred Round calendar came from a religious story or tradition common in Maya culture.

## “Words and Numbers,” pages 14–15

### Scaffold understanding as follows:

#### Have students read the section on pages 14–15 independently.

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary terms *hieroglyph* and *vessel*, and explain their meanings.

 **SUPPORT**—Point out the name *Copán* in the third paragraph. Tell students that this is a city in Honduras. Have students locate Honduras on a world map or globe. (4.6)

**SUPPORT**—Ask students what other civilization used hieroglyphs. (*ancient Egyptians*) Explain that Egyptian hieroglyphs and Mayan hieroglyphs look very different but work in a similar way. Both use pictures to represent words or ideas. (4.4)

**SUPPORT**—Point out the sentence “A climb up this staircase is a journey back in time” in the third paragraph of the section. Ask volunteers to say whether they think the meaning of this sentence is literal or not. Help students understand that the author is saying the staircase takes you to a place that might *feel* like you’re going back in time. They could also be saying that the staircase takes you to artifacts from an earlier time. The author does not literally mean the stairs have time-traveling capabilities.

**SUPPORT**—Prompt students to recall another early civilization that developed the concept of zero. (*the Gupta Empire in ancient India*) (4.4)

#### After students read the text, ask the following questions:

**LITERAL**—In what way are Mayan hieroglyphs like a code? (4.12, 4.19.f)

- » In hieroglyphic writing, each symbol represents, or is code for, something else. You can only understand the writing if you know the code.

**LITERAL**—Where did the Maya carve hieroglyphs? (4.12, 4.19.f)

- » The Maya carved hieroglyphs into the walls of temples and other buildings, stairs, monuments, stone statues, sculptures, ceramic vessels, and books.

**EVALUATIVE**—How is the Maya number system different from our own? (4.2.a, 4.5.a, 4.19.f)

- » The Maya did not use the Arabic numeral system of 1, 2, 3, etc. They used dots, bars, and shells. A dot stood for one. A bar stood for five. A shell stood for zero.

## “Coming of Age,” pages 15–16

### Scaffold understanding as follows:

**SUPPORT**—Explain that the section title, “Coming of Age,” is a common phrase that refers to becoming an adult. The transition from childhood to adulthood occurs at different ages and in different ways in different cultures. Ask students to name ceremonies we have today to mark a person’s passage into adulthood. (*Students might name a ceremony such as a graduation or a quinceañera or a rite of passage such as getting a driver’s license or moving into one’s own apartment.*)

### Have students read the section on pages 15–16 independently.

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary term *initiation ceremony*, and explain its meaning.

### After students read the text, ask the following questions:

**LITERAL**—At what age did young Maya people enter adulthood? (4.12)

» Maya children became adults at the age of fourteen.

**LITERAL**—The Maya believed that some gods were good and some gods were bad. How did that affect the Maya’s outlook on daily life? (4.12)

» The Maya thought that the existence of good and evil explained why life had both joys and sorrows.

**EVALUATIVE**—How would your life be different if you were growing up in the Maya culture? (4.12)

» Possible answer: If I were growing up in the Maya culture, I probably wouldn’t be at school. I would be helping on my family’s farm or taking care of the house and doing other household chores. When I got older, I would be expected to get married and run a farm and raise family of my own.

## “What Is Beauty?” and “Decline in Power,” page 16

### Scaffold understanding as follows:

### Read the sections on page 16 aloud.

**SUPPORT**—Explain that when a person is born, their skull isn’t completely hard yet. Babies’ skulls are made of soft, bony plates that can move around, which makes being born a lot easier. Those plates move into place and harden by the time a person is two years old. For the first few months of a baby’s life, those plates can be shaped by outside forces. Today, babies who are born with skulls that are not round are fitted with little helmets to help their skulls become rounder. The Maya used this same principle



when they used wooden boards to shape the backs of their babies' skulls to make them flat.

**TURN AND TALK**—Help students understand how the meaning of beauty changes depending on culture and time period. Explain that some modern cultural practices, such as tattoos or piercings, used to be thought of as unattractive during students' grandparents' and great-grandparents' generations. In other cultures, however, tattoos and piercings are considered to be marks of both honor and beauty. Lead a classroom discussion about what students individually find to be beautiful and why the meaning of beauty is different all over the world. (4.5.b)

**After reading the text, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—How did the Maya try to ensure their babies would grow up to be beautiful? (4.12)

- » They hung things in front of babies' noses to help babies develop crossed eyes. They strapped babies to long boards to make the backs of their heads flat. The Maya considered flat heads and crossed eyes beautiful.

**EVALUATIVE**—How are Maya ideas about beauty different from modern American ideas? How are they similar? (4.5.b)

- » The Maya thought crossed eyes and flat heads were beautiful. Modern American ideas of beauty tend to favor people with un-crossed eyes and round heads. But our cultures are similar in that they place importance on physical beauty.

Activity Page




AP 1.5

**Have students complete Characteristics of Civilization (AP 1.5) with details about the Maya.**

**Primary Source Feature: "Excerpt from the *Popol Vuh*," page 17**

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

-  **Background for Teachers:** Much like the book of Genesis in the Bible tells the Abrahamic religions' story of creation, the *Popol Vuh* tells the Maya story of creation. It details the origin of everything and the relationships between humans, gods, and animals. It also tells the story of the conflict between the Hero Twins and the lords of the underworld. This particular excerpt is about how the gods created humans. It should be noted that like most other creation stories, Maya creation stories also began as oral traditions. They were recorded by Maya scholars after the emergence of a written Mayan language, then translated into Spanish by a Christian priest in the early 1700s.

Direct students to the Primary Source Feature on page 17.

Introduce the source to students by reviewing what students read about the Maya creation myth and the *Popol Vuh* earlier in Chapter 1. Explain that this source tells the story of the Maya creation myth.

Invite volunteers to read the source aloud.

**Note:** The name *Tepew* is pronounced (/tae\*pae\*ue/) and the name *Q'uk'umatz* is pronounced (/goo\*koo\*mots/). Say the names aloud, and have students repeat them after you.

Activity Page



AP 1.3

Distribute Primary Source Analysis (AP 1.3), and have students complete the Activity Page independently or with a partner.

After students have completed the Activity Page, ask the following questions:

**LITERAL**—How did the gods create Earth? (4.2.a, 4.5.b)

» They shouted the name “Earth,” and Earth appeared.

**LITERAL**—What kinds of humans did the gods create and then destroy as failed attempts? What had gone wrong? (4.2.a, 4.5.b)

» The gods first made humans out of clay, but those people could not move and melted in the sun. Next the gods made humans out of wood. Those people lacked intelligence. Finally, the gods made humans out of yellow and white corn. These humans could hear, see, and think.

**EVALUATIVE**—Which evidence from the text could you use to support the claim that the Maya gods valued humans more than animals? (4.2.b)

» The text says that the gods created humans because the gods “felt that Earth was missing something essential.” Animals alone were not enough for the gods. They wanted people who could hear, see, and think. The text also says that the people were grateful for their creation and “built great temples to honor” the gods. Animals could not honor the gods in this way. This is why humans had more value to the gods than animals.

## Timeline Card Slide Deck

- Show students the Chapter 1 Timeline Cards. Read and discuss the captions, making particular note of any dates.
- Invite students to note any comparisons with events previously studied or any examples of change or continuity that they notice. (4.1)
- Review and discuss the Framing Question: “What characterized the early Maya civilization?”



## CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING 10 MIN

### Ask students to:

- Write a short answer to the Framing Question: “What characterized the early Maya civilization?”
  - » Key points students should cite include: agricultural society; organization into city-states with complex architectural creations such as pyramids; deeply religious society; game of *pok-ta-pok* with religious meaning; advanced understanding of astronomy and mathematics; development of several calendar systems; Maya childhood and coming of age; Maya ideas of beauty; hieroglyphic writing system.
- Choose one of the Core Vocabulary terms (*temple, archaeologist, architect, priest, sacrifice, omen, equinox, leap year, hieroglyph, vessel, or initiation ceremony*), and write a sentence using the term.

To wrap up the lesson, ask several students to share their responses.

**Note:** Distribute copies of Letter to Family (AP 1.1) for students to take home.

Activity Page



AP 1.1

## Additional Activities

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Download the Bayou Bridges Online Resources for this unit, where the Additional Activities for this chapter may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/bayou-bridges-online-resources/>

## CHAPTER 2

# TOPIC: Where Did the Maya Go?

**The Framing Question:** What factors may have led the Maya to abandon their cities?

### Primary Focus Objectives

- ✓ Recall the importance of Stephens and Catherwood’s 1839 discovery. (4.2.a, 4.5.a)
- ✓ Describe what modern researchers have learned from Mayan hieroglyphs. (4.19.f)
- ✓ Explain scholarly theories regarding the Maya’s unexplained disappearance. (4.19.g)
- ✓ Understand the meaning of the following domain-specific vocabulary: *superstition*, *decipher*, *theory*, and *drought*.

### What Teachers Need to Know

For background information, download the Bayou Bridges Online Resource “About Where Did the Maya Go?”:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/bayou-bridges-online-resources/>

### Materials Needed

Activity Page



AP 2.1

- individual student copies of Three-Column Chart (AP 2.1) (optional)
- world map or globe.
- Internet access
- capability to display Internet in the classroom
- image from the Internet of the temple at Chichén Itzá before restoration

Use this link to download the Bayou Bridges Online Resources for this unit, where the specific link to the image may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/bayou-bridges-online-resources/>

### Core Vocabulary (Student Reader page numbers listed below)

**superstition, n.** a false belief in the power of magic, luck, or unseen forces (20)

*Example:* The only superstition I believe in is that you shouldn’t walk under a ladder. That’s dangerous!

*Variations:* superstitions, superstitious (adj.)

**decipher, v.** to break a code or uncover the meaning of a message (21)

*Example:* My math teacher's messy handwriting is hard to decipher.

*Variations:* decipherers, deciphering, deciphered

**theory, n.** an idea or belief about something that has not been proven (22)

*Example:* One theory says that disease ended the Maya civilization.

*Variations:* theories, theorize (v.), theoretical (adj.), theoretically (adv.)

**drought, n.** a long dry period without rain (23)

*Example:* The farmer had to bring water to his fields every day because of the drought in his area.

*Variations:* droughts

## THE CORE LESSON 35 MIN

### Introduce "Where Did the Maya Go?"

5 MIN

Briefly review what students read about the Maya in Chapter 1, including their location in Mesoamerica, their deep religious beliefs, and their development as a primarily agricultural society. Explain that in this chapter, students will discover how we know what we know about the Maya, as well as what scientists and archaeologists think happened to the ancient Maya.

Call students' attention to the Framing Question. Tell students that as they read, they should look for information about the factors that may have led the Maya to abandon their cities.

### Guided Reading Supports for "Where Did the Maya Go?"

30 MIN

When you or a student reads aloud, **always** prompt students to follow along. By following along, students may acquire a greater understanding of the content. Remember to provide discussion opportunities.

#### "Ruins in the Rainforest," pages 18–20


**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**Invite volunteers to read the section on pages 18–20 aloud.**

**SUPPORT**—Provide students with context for what was happening in the United States at the time of Stephens and Catherwood's expedition in 1839. There were only twenty-six states, the earliest railroads were being built for transportation, and the telephone had not yet been invented. The U.S. government was paying for people to travel and explore places unknown to them. Travelers kept records of what they saw or experienced.

**SUPPORT**—Direct students back to the image of the temple at Chichén Itzá on page 8 in Chapter 1. Explain that when explorers found Chichén

Itzá, it was not the clear, clean, open scene shown in the image. Instead, the ruins were overgrown by the jungle. Show students the image of the temple at Chichén Itzá before restoration. Explain that what Catherwood and Stephens found in Honduras was similarly overgrown.

 **SUPPORT**—Direct students to the image of *Gateway of the Great Teocallis* on pages 18–19. Tell students that this piece of art is a type of print called a lithograph. Lithographs use a multistep process that begins with drawing parts of the image on stone or metal. Every different color used in the picture has to be drawn and inked separately, then lined up perfectly for printing on the final image.

**After the volunteers read the text, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—Who were John Lloyd Stephens and Frederick Catherwood? (4.2.a, 4.5.a)

- » They were explorers who found the remains of Maya ruins in present-day Honduras.

**EVALUATIVE**—How did Stephens and Catherwood know the “lost” society was advanced? (4.2.a, 4.5.a)

- » They could tell the society was advanced because of the architecture of the buildings the people left behind.

### “Mysterious Writing,” pages 20–22

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**Read the first two paragraphs of the section on pages 20–21 aloud.**

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary term *superstition*, and explain its meaning.

**SUPPORT**—Tell students that the Spanish began their conquest of Mexico in the early 1500s. They had heard stories about fabulous riches, including gold. By 1546, the Spanish had conquered the Aztec peoples in the north and moved into the Yucatán, Guatemala, and Honduras, where descendants of the early Maya lived. The Maya had already left their cities hundreds of years before.

**SUPPORT**—Point out the word *marveled* in the second paragraph of the section. Explain that this word helps the reader understand that Stephens and Catherwood were extremely excited and impressed by the Maya carvings.

**Invite volunteers to read the remainder of the section pages 21–22 aloud.**

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary term *decipher*, and explain its meaning.

**SUPPORT**—Remind students that for many centuries, we couldn't read Egyptian hieroglyphs, either. It was the discovery of the Rosetta Stone in the 1800s that helped scholars crack the code of ancient Egyptian writing. Unfortunately, there is no "Rosetta Stone" for Mayan hieroglyphs.

**After the volunteers read the text, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—Why did Bishop Diego de Landa order the burning of Maya books and images? (4.2.a, 4.5.a, 4.8)

- » De Landa was a Catholic priest. He disagreed with the Maya religion and said the books and images were full of superstition and lies. He had the books and images destroyed so no one else could see them.

**LITERAL**—If Bishop de Landa successfully destroyed the Maya books and images, how do we have access to Mayan hieroglyphs today? (4.2.a, 4.5.a, 4.19.f)

- » Many Mayan hieroglyphs survived on things that couldn't be burned, such as statues, pottery, and buildings. Four ancient Maya texts also survived the burning.

**LITERAL**—How did Bishop de Landa almost prevent modern scholars from understanding how to correctly translate Mayan glyphs? (4.2.a, 4.5.a)

- » He wrote a book about Maya culture that incorrectly translated many Mayan glyphs.

**EVALUATIVE**—Would it have been possible for scholars to translate Mayan glyphs before the invention of the computer? Why or why not? (4.2.b, 4.2.c, 4.5.d)

- » Possible answer: No, it would not have been possible for scholars to translate Mayan glyphs before the invention of the computer. People had tried for centuries to understand the meaning of Mayan writing but could not make sense of all the data until they began seeking help from computers.

### "Where Did Everybody Go?," pages 22–25

**Scaffold understanding as follows:**

**Have students read the first three paragraphs of the section on page 22 with a partner.**

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary term *theory*, and explain its meaning.

**SUPPORT**—After students read the paragraphs, direct them back to the second paragraph. Have partners identify the paragraph's claim (*the Maya*

left their cities sometime between 800 and 900 CE) and the evidence (details) that support the claim (the writing stopped in the 900s, and temples and pyramids began to fall into disrepair). (4.2.a, 4.2.b)

**SUPPORT**—Point out the word *disrepair* at the end of the second paragraph. Remind students that the prefix *dis-* means not. So something that is in disrepair is not repaired, which means it is damaged or falling apart.

**SUPPORT**—Remind students that theories are ideas, not facts. Facts need proof or evidence that show they're true.

**Have students read the remainder of the section on pages 22–25 independently.**

**CORE VOCABULARY**—Point out the vocabulary term *drought*, and explain its meaning.

**SUPPORT**—Distribute Three-Column Chart (AP 2.1), or have students make a three-column chart of their own to keep track of scholars' theories about what might have happened to the Maya. The left column should be titled "Theory." The middle column should be titled "Evidence For," and the right column should be titled "Evidence Against." Tell students they can use the chart to evaluate theories about the Maya's disappearance for themselves. (4.5.b)

**SUPPORT**—Remind students that famine is widespread hunger due to low food supplies. Ask volunteers to remind the class about other historical famines they've read about. (4.3, 4.4)

**After students read the text, ask the following questions:**

**LITERAL**—What evidence do historians cite to show that the Maya abandoned their cities around 900 CE? (4.2.a, 4.5.a)

- » There are no Mayan hieroglyphs that show dates after 900 CE. Their pyramids and other structures began to fall into disrepair.

**INFERENTIAL**—Why do you think a civilization might abandon its cities? (4.5.a)

- » Possible answer: Maybe an enemy attacked the cities and the people had to leave.

**LITERAL**—What evidence argues against the theory that farmers rose up against their noble rulers? (4.19.g)

- » There is no indication that the old rulers were replaced with new ones.

**LITERAL**—What are some of the factors that may have caused the early Maya to move away from their cities and into the surrounding countryside? (4.19, 4.19.a, 4.19.g)

- » They may have moved to escape famine, drought, unfair rulers, or diseases. They may also have moved to be closer to the sea so they could trade by water instead of over land.

Activity Page



AP 2.1



**EVALUATIVE**—Why do some scholars think the disappearance of the early Maya is not related to the introduction of new diseases? (4.19.g)

- » The Spanish brought new diseases to the Americas after 1500 CE. The early Maya disappeared from their cities around 900 CE.

**EVALUATIVE**—What is suggested by the fact that there are millions of people living today who speak languages related to ones spoken by the Maya? (4.19.g)

- » This fact suggests that while the Maya people scattered from their cities, they did not disappear or die. They carried on their culture and traditions, including their language.

## Timeline Card Slide Deck

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- Show students the Chapter 2 Timeline Cards. Read and discuss the captions, making particular note of any dates.
- Invite students to note any comparisons with events previously studied or any examples of change or continuity they notice. (4.1)
- Review and discuss the Framing Question: “What factors may have led the Maya to abandon their cities?”



### CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING 10 MIN

#### Ask students to:

- Write a short answer to the Framing Question: “What factors may have led the Maya to abandon their cities?”
  - » Key points students should cite include: they may have risen up against the priests and nobles; they may have succumbed to disease; they may have been subject to famine from drought or floods; they may have been victims of a natural disaster; they may have moved closer to the sea.
- Choose one of the Core Vocabulary words (*superstition*, *decipher*, *theory*, or *drought*), and write a sentence using the word.

To wrap up the lesson, ask several students to share their responses.

## Additional Activities

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Download the Bayou Bridges Online Resources for this unit, where the Additional Activities for this chapter may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/bayou-bridges-online-resources/>

## UNIT 6

# Teacher Resources

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## Assessment: Chapter 1—The Maya

A. On your own paper, write the letter that provides the best answer.

1. Use the map to answer the following question.



On which geographic feature did the Maya civilization grow? (4.6)

- a) Amazon River
  - b) South America
  - c) Atlantic Ocean
  - d) Yucatán Peninsula
2. How did Maya farmers adapt to the mountainous terrain of Mesoamerica? Select the **two** correct answers. (4.7)
- a) They only farmed in the lowlands.
  - b) They cut flat terraces into the hillsides.
  - c) They raised grazing animals like sheep.
  - d) They developed ways to store rainwater.
  - e) They grew more vegetables and less fruits.

3. Use the image to answer the following question.



What does this sculpture represent? (4.2.a, 4.5.a, 4.12)

- a) a human sacrifice to the Maya's gods
- b) the Maya story about the creation of humans
- c) the importance of the cacao bean to the Maya
- d) a Maya child's initiation ceremony into adulthood

Use the image to answer questions 4 and 5.



4. What is the game depicted in the image called? (4.12)
- a) pok-ta-pok
  - b) wall-by-wall
  - c) slap-ne-slap
  - d) hand-to-hand
5. What was the most dangerous part of the game? (4.5.a, 4.12, 4.19)
- a) Players on the losing team were sometimes sacrificed to the gods.
  - b) Players were not allowed to use their hands or feet to throw or kick the ball.
  - c) Players were awarded points based on how much they hurt the other team.
  - d) Players who performed poorly would be kicked out of Maya society for weakness.
6. According to Maya religious tradition, from what did the gods successfully make humans? (4.5.a, 4.8)
- a) fire
  - b) clay
  - c) corn
  - d) wood

Use the image to answer questions 7 and 8.



7. Historians know equinoxes were important to the Maya because of the pyramid at Chichén Itzá and its \_\_\_\_\_. (4.5.a, 4.19.f)
- a) decorations honoring the Maya gods of sunlight and darkness, which turn golden exactly at noon on the equinox
  - b) decorative fountains, which turn crystal clear on the equinox and become cloudy before the sun sets again
  - c) mountaintop location, which receives the light of the equinox before anywhere else in Mesoamerica
  - d) statue of a snake, which casts a shadow that slithers down the pyramid steps only on the equinox

8. How were pyramids used in Maya culture? (4.5.a, 4.12, 4.19)

- a) They were places of worship.
- b) They were marketplaces.
- c) They were burial sites.
- d) They were palaces.

9. Use the image to answer the following question.



What type of writing system did the Maya use? (4.12)

- a) pictographs
  - b) dots and dashes
  - c) hieroglyphic symbols
  - d) letters of the alphabet
10. Which conclusion about the ancient Maya is best shown by their calendar system? (4.5, 4.5.a, 4.19.f)
- a) They created new styles of art.
  - b) They designed cities to look the same.
  - c) They had great understanding of geography.
  - d) They had advanced knowledge of mathematics.
11. Use the excerpt to answer the following question.

“Long ago, there was only darkness, and the world was quiet. But then, two powerful gods named Tepew and Q’uk’umatz created a place between the sea and the sky. They shouted out the name “Earth,” and suddenly, Earth appeared! Mountains rose up, and plains spread out, dotted with trees and plants of all kinds.” —from the *Popol Vuh*

What is the *Popol Vuh*? (4.5.a, 4.8)

- a) a collection of Maya religious stories
  - b) a Maya fable about nature’s blessings
  - c) a prayer recited during Maya harvests
  - d) a series of journals about Maya history
- B. On your own paper, write a well-organized paragraph in response to the following prompt:**

Make a claim about the importance of corn to Maya culture. Then support or refute your claim with evidence from Chapter 1. (4.2.a, 4.2.b, 4.3, 4.5.a, 4.5.d, 4.11, 4.12)

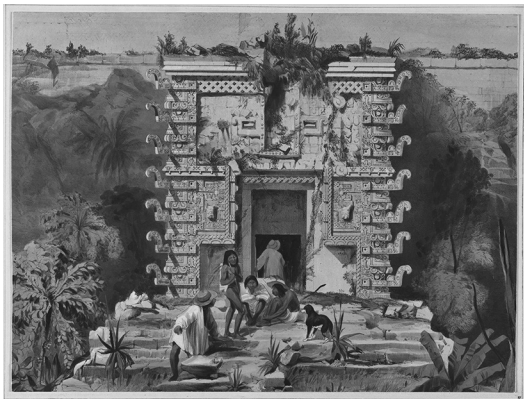
## Assessment: Chapter 2—Where Did the Maya Go?

### A. On your own paper, write the letter that provides the best answer.

Use the following excerpt to answer questions 1 and 2.

“Archaeologists believe that the Maya left their cities sometime between 800 and 900 CE. It’s possible this event happened over just a few decades. Until the 900s, the Maya kept careful historical records. They used their hieroglyphs to carve names and dates on pyramids and temples. Then in the 900s, the writing mysteriously stopped. The temples and pyramids began to fall into disrepair.”

1. What is the claim in this paragraph? (4.2.b)
  - a) The Maya left their cities sometime between 800 and 900 CE.
  - b) It’s possible this event happened over just a few decades.
  - c) The temples and pyramids began to fall into disrepair.
  - d) The Maya kept careful historical records.
2. Which sentence is evidence that supports the claim? (4.2.b)
  - a) The Maya left their cities sometime between 800 and 900 CE.
  - b) They used their hieroglyphs to carve names and dates.
  - c) Then in the 900s, the writing mysteriously stopped.
  - d) The Maya kept careful historical records.
3. What was the effect of Stephens and Catherwood’s work? (4.5.c)
  - a) Scholars immediately decoded Mayan writings and hieroglyphs.
  - b) People around the world became interested in Maya history.
  - c) The Maya civilization rebuilt its cities.
  - d) Maya artifacts were created.
4. Use the image to answer the following question.



What type of geographic environment was the ancient city of Copán built in? (4.19.g)

- a) rainforest
- b) highlands
- c) terrace
- d) desert

5. Who was Bishop Diego de Landa? (4.2.a, 4.3, 4.5.a)
- a) a Spanish warrior who conquered the Maya people
  - b) a scholar who translated the *Popol Vuh* into Spanish
  - c) a Maya religious leader who befriended a Spanish priest
  - d) a Catholic missionary who burned all but four Maya books
6. Use the image to answer the following question.

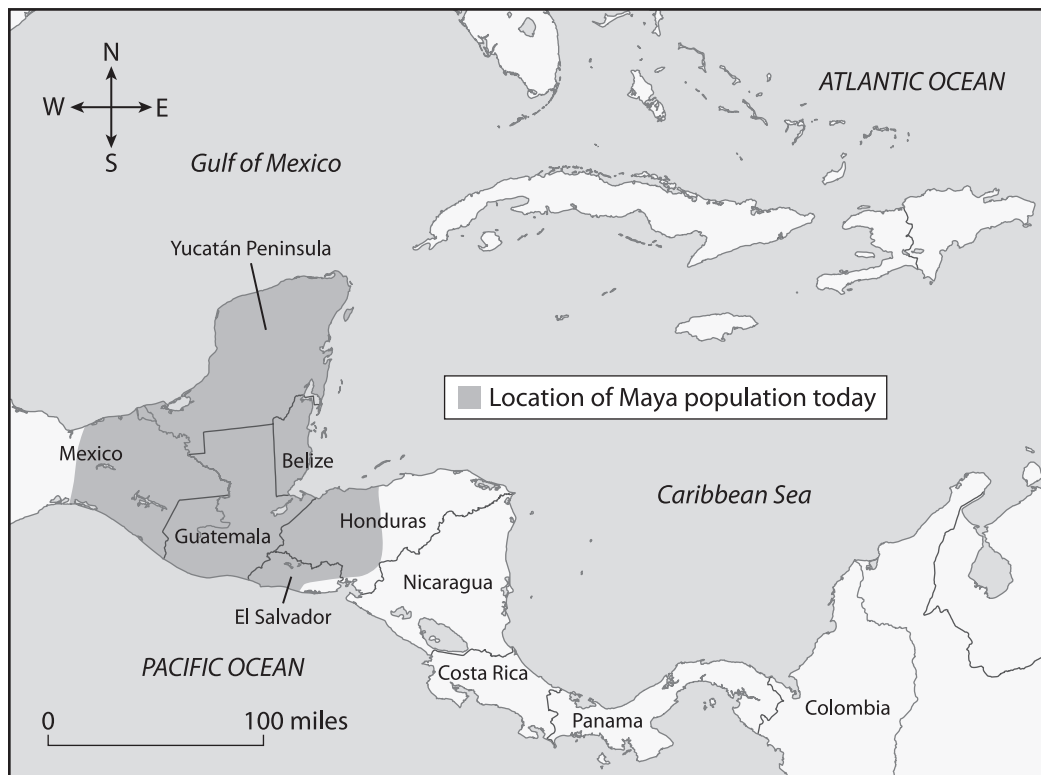


What helped researchers decipher Mayan glyphs like these in the 1960s? (4.2.a, 4.3, 4.5.a)

- a) Catherwood's illustrations
- b) Egyptian hieroglyphics
- c) de Landa's notes
- d) early computers



7. Use the map to answer the following question.



According to this map, which modern-day countries have large populations of Maya people today?

(4.6, 4.7, 4.19.g)

- a) Texas, Mexico, and Florida
  - b) Mexico, Belize, and Guatemala
  - c) Costa Rica, Guatemala, and El Salvador
  - d) the Caribbean, Central America, and Belize
8. What are archaeologists' theories about why the Maya left their cities? Select **two** correct answers. (4.2.a, 4.19.g)
- a) They wanted to be safer away from conflicts.
  - b) The *Popol Vuh* predicted that they should leave.
  - c) Maya rulers cast out their subjects for being disloyal.
  - d) Diseases brought by the Spanish killed many people.
  - e) The Maya cut down too many trees, which decreased rainfall.
9. Why do historians think the Maya may have moved toward the coast? (4.5.c, 4.19.g)
- a) There was a much smaller chance of foreign invasion along the coast.
  - b) The risk of earthquakes and other natural disasters was less near the sea.
  - c) Shipping routes were starting to become sea-based instead of land-based.
  - d) The farming and fishing opportunities were much greater than in the lowlands.

10. Why do historians think the Maya left their cities around 900 CE and not later? (4.2.b, 4.3, 4.19.g)
- a) The dirt surrounding the ruins of Maya pyramids dates back to 900 CE.
  - b) Archaeologists did not find any dates later than 900 CE carved into Maya buildings.
  - c) There is evidence that other people were living in Maya territory after 900 CE.
  - d) Archaeologists located a dated pillar that describes a Maya family's departure.

**B. On your own paper, write a well-organized paragraph in response to the following prompt:**

Make a claim about what you think forced the ancient Maya out of their cities. Then support or refute your claim with evidence from Chapter 2. (4.2.a, 4.2.b, 4.3, 4.5.a, 4.5.d, 4.19.g)

## Performance Task: *Early Civilizations: The Maya*

**Teacher Directions:** Even based on what little we know of them, the Maya were a remarkably advanced society. Despite their lack of technology, the advancements they made in science and mathematics alone rival those made hundreds of years later by peoples with far more sophisticated instruments and a more thorough understanding of the world.

Activity Page



AP 1.4

Ask students to give a presentation in response to the following prompt. Encourage students to use information from their Student Reader and Additional Activities in their responses. Have students use the Claims and Evidence Activity Page (AP 1.4) to organize their thoughts and plan their presentations. (4.2, 4.2.a, 4.2.b, 4.3, 4.5, 4.5.a, 4.5.c, 4.12, 4.19.f)

### Prompt:

What is the greatest achievement of ancient Maya civilization?

A sample table, completed with possible notes, is provided below to serve as a reference for teachers, should some prompting or scaffolding be needed to help students get started.

<b>Sample Claim:</b>	The greatest achievement of ancient Maya civilization is the Mayan writing system.
<b>Reason:</b>	Without the Mayan writing system, we would not know anything about the Maya or their culture and traditions.
<b>Evidence:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Maya wrote down everything. They kept very good records not just in books but on buildings, pottery, and monuments.</li><li>• There are more than eight hundred glyphs in the Mayan writing system.</li><li>• The system is so complex that scholars are still trying to decipher parts of it today.</li><li>• Because of the writing system, we can read Maya numbers. That helps us know how the Maya understood math.</li><li>• Maya numbers also help us understand how the Maya used astronomy to create their calendars. One of them is exactly like ours.</li><li>• The Mayan writing system also gives us clues about when the Maya left their cities.</li></ul>
<b>Counterclaim and Answer:</b>	The greatest achievement of the ancient Maya is not their writing system. It is their understanding of astronomy. However, the Maya used their writing system to record their understanding of astronomy, so we can see today that writing was important to all parts of ancient Maya culture.

## Performance Task Scoring Rubric

**Note:** Students should be evaluated on the basis of their presentation using the rubric.

Students should not be evaluated on the completion of the Claims and Evidence Activity Page (AP 1.4), which is intended to be a support for students as they think about their responses.

<b>3</b>	<p>Response is accurate, detailed, and persuasive. It addresses all parts of the prompt. The claim is clearly stated, well developed, and fully supported with relevant information that includes both content knowledge and source details. The response demonstrates sound, cohesive reasoning and analysis, making insightful and well-explained connections between the claim, information, and evidence. The presentation is clearly articulated, is focused, and demonstrates strong understanding of the Maya; a few minor errors may be present.</p> <p>Response may cite some or all of the following details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• hieroglyphs</li><li>• math</li><li>• astronomy</li><li>• religion</li><li>• agriculture</li></ul>
<b>2</b>	<p>Response is mostly accurate, is somewhat detailed, and addresses the prompt. The claim is clearly stated and sufficiently supported and developed with some relevant information that includes both content knowledge and source details. The response demonstrates a general understanding of the Maya, with analysis and reasoning that are somewhat cohesive and sound but may be uneven. Connections between the claim, information, and evidence are made, but some explanations may be missing or unclear. The presentation is organized and focused, but some minor errors may be present.</p>
<b>1</b>	<p>Response shows effort but is incomplete or limited and only partially addresses the prompt. The claim may be inaccurate or vague, but it is supported by at least one piece of relevant information or evidence. The response shows some understanding of the Maya, but analysis and reasoning, while accurate, are vague, incomplete, or lacking connections. The presentation may also exhibit issues with organization and/or focus.</p>
<b>0</b>	<p>Response is too brief or unclear to evaluate. It lacks an identifiable claim, accurate or relevant supporting information, and accurate analysis or reasoning. The response demonstrates minimal or no understanding of the Maya. The presentation may exhibit major issues with organization and/or focus.</p>

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **Performance Task Activity: *Early Civilizations: The Maya***

The Maya were an advanced people whose knowledge of math, science, and the natural world was centuries ahead of its time. Give a presentation where you explain your answer to the question “What is the greatest achievement of ancient Maya civilization?” You should give specific examples and support your answer with evidence from the unit.

Use the Claims and Evidence Activity Page (AP 1.4) and the lines below to take notes and organize your thoughts. Remember to include details from the chapters and primary sources in *Early Civilizations: The Maya* as well as from the sources and resources in the unit activities.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Activity Page 1.1

Use with Chapter 1

### Letter to Family

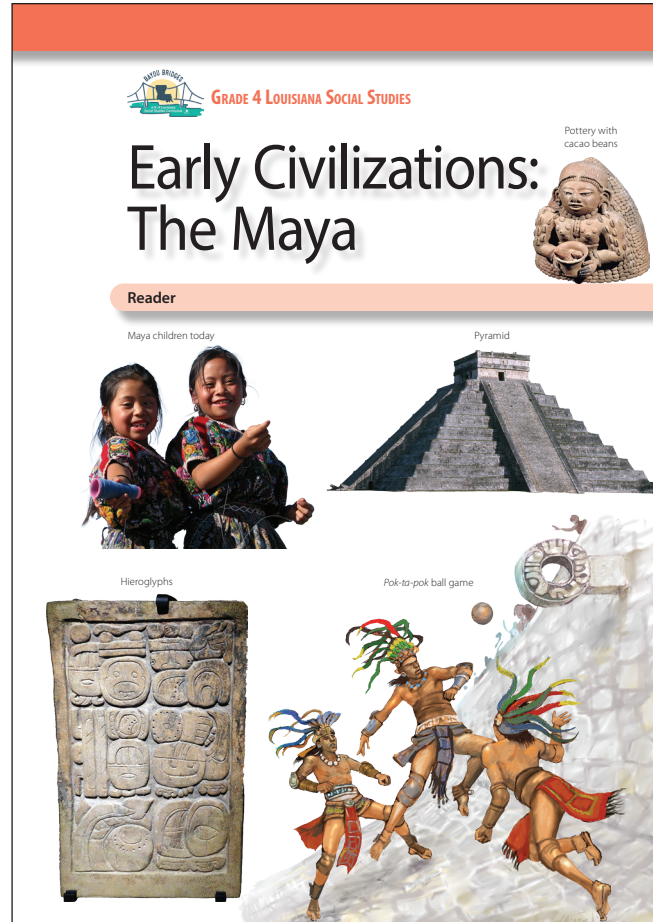
During the next few weeks, as part of our study of the Bayou Bridges Louisiana Social Studies program, your child will be learning about the ancient Maya civilization. They will learn about advancements made by the Maya in areas of farming, government, astronomy, and mathematics. Despite their lack of technology, the Maya's knowledge of the physical world and abstract mathematical concepts was astonishingly precise.

In this unit, students will learn about the geography of Mesoamerica and analyze how the Maya adapted their farming techniques to the difficult terrain. They will make connections between the preservation of historical artifacts and the ability to understand an ancient culture. They will also learn to use what they've read and examine it to make a claim and support it with relevant evidence.

As part of their exploration, students will also learn a little bit about the Maya religion, which includes a brief mention of human sacrifice. This information is presented in a factual, age-appropriate way rather than in a manner that suggests the value or correctness of any particular culture or practice. The goal is to foster understanding of and respect for people and communities that may be different from those with which students are familiar.

Sometimes students have questions regarding how the information they are learning relates to themselves and their own experiences. In such instances, we will encourage each student to discuss such topics with you. We recognize that the best place to find answers to those types of questions is with your family and the adults at home.

Please let us know if you have any questions.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity Page 1.2**

**Use with Chapter 1**

**Artifact Study**

**Describe the artifact.**

1. What type of object is it? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Where is it from? \_\_\_\_\_
3. When was it made? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What color is it? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What shape is it? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What size is it? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What is it made of? \_\_\_\_\_

**Think about the artifact.**

8. What knowledge or experience was needed to create it?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Why was it made? What is its purpose?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Could it have been made by one person, or did it require a group?  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. How has the artifact changed over time?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity Page 1.2 (continued)**

**Use with Chapter 1**

**Think about context.**

**12.** What do you know about the time and place the artifact was created?

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**Draw a conclusion about the artifact.**

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary Source Analysis**

<p><b>Describe the source.</b></p>	<p><b>Connect the source to what you know.</b></p>
<p><b>Understand the source. Identify its message, purpose, and/or audience.</b></p>	<p><b>Draw a conclusion from or about the source.</b></p>

**SOURCE:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

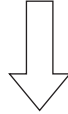
Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity Page 1.4**

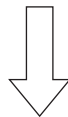
**Use with Chapter 2**

**Claims and Evidence**

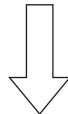
**STATE THE CLAIM** *What opinion or position are you defending?*



**STATE THE REASON** *Why should someone agree with this claim?*



**IDENTIFY THE EVIDENCE** *What details from the text and sources support the reason?*



**RECOGNIZE A COUNTERCLAIM** *What different opinion or position might someone have? What argument might be used against you?*

**ANSWER THE COUNTERCLAIM** *How will you disprove the counterclaim?*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity Page 1.5**

**Use with Chapter 1**

**Characteristics of Civilization**

**Fill in the chart with details about the civilization. Remember, not every society has every characteristic.**

**Name of Civilization:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Details About the Civilization</b>
culture	
specialization	
infrastructure	
stable food supply	
government	
technology	
belief systems	
writing	
social structure	

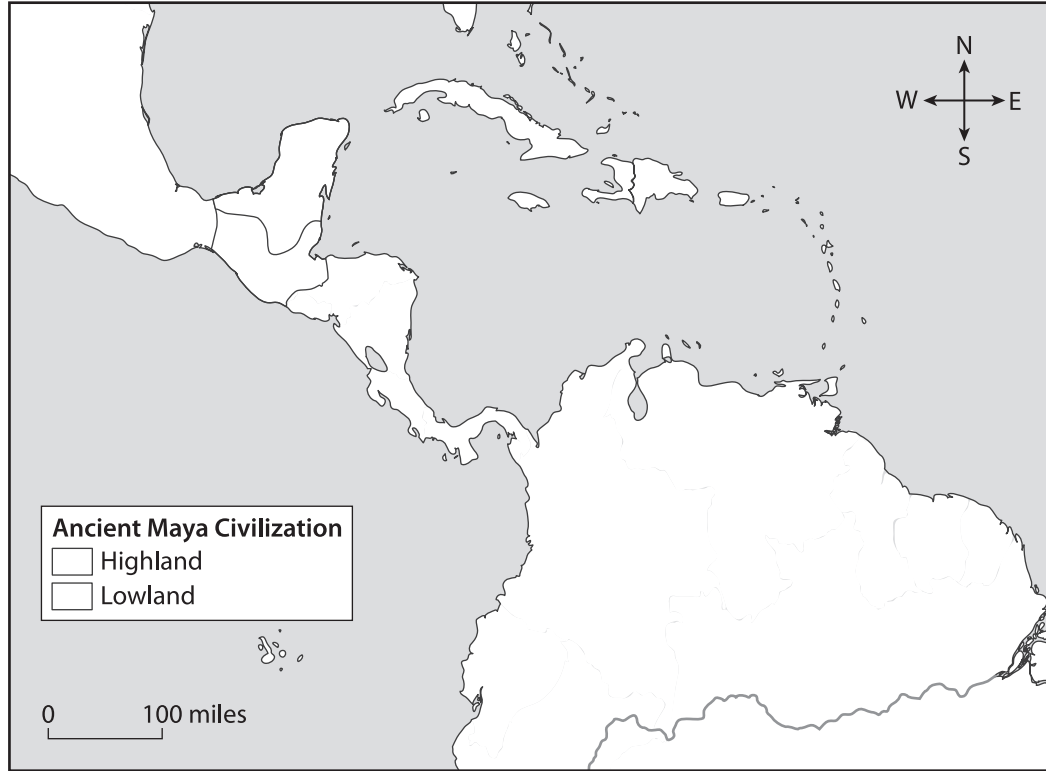
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity Page 1.6**

**Use with Chapter 1**

**Map of Maya Civilization**



1. Label the following bodies of water:  
Pacific Ocean      Atlantic Ocean      Gulf of Mexico      Caribbean Sea      Amazon River
2. Label the following landmasses:  
North America      South America      Central America      Yucatán Peninsula
3. Draw in and color the areas of the highlands and lowlands where the Maya lived. Add the colors you used to the key.
4. What bodies of water touched the land where the Maya lived?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. On which continent is the Amazon River located?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Which region is farther north, the highlands or the lowlands?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Three-Column Chart

Theory	Evidence For	Evidence Against

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Activity Page 2.2

Use with Chapter 2

Domain Vocabulary: Chapters 1–2

For each word, write the letter of the definition.

- |       |                        |                                                                                                   |
|-------|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| _____ | 1. leap year           | a) a special event to mark a person's entry into a certain group or status                        |
| _____ | 2. equinox             | b) an occurrence or event believed to be a sign of the future                                     |
| _____ | 3. architect           | c) a false belief in the power of magic, luck, or unseen forces                                   |
| _____ | 4. archaeologist       | d) to break a code or uncover the meaning of a message                                            |
| _____ | 5. superstition        | e) a container                                                                                    |
| _____ | 6. temple              | f) an expert in the study of material remains of people from the past                             |
| _____ | 7. vessel              | g) something or someone given or killed for a religious purpose                                   |
| _____ | 8. decipher            | h) an idea or belief about something that has not been proven                                     |
| _____ | 9. initiation ceremony | i) a picture or symbol representing an idea, object, syllable, or sound                           |
| _____ | 10. hieroglyph         | j) a year that has 366 days, or one more than a typical year, and occurs every four years         |
| _____ | 11. priest             | k) a person who has the training or authority to carry out religious ceremonies or rituals        |
| _____ | 12. sacrifice          | l) a building with a religious use or meaning                                                     |
| _____ | 13. theory             | m) a person who designs buildings                                                                 |
| _____ | 14. omen               | n) a day in which daytime and nighttime are about the same length, which happens twice every year |

# 2022 LOUISIANA STUDENT STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL STUDIES:

## GRADE 4

- 4.1** Create and use a chronological sequence of related events to compare developments and describe instances of change and continuity.
- 4.2** Use a variety of primary and secondary sources to:
  - a)** Analyze social studies content.
  - b)** Explain claims and evidence.
  - c)** Compare and contrast multiple sources.
- 4.3** Explain connections between ideas, events, and developments in world history.
- 4.4** Compare and contrast events and developments in world history.
- 4.5** Construct and express claims that are supported with relevant evidence from primary and/or secondary sources, content knowledge, and clear reasoning in order to:
  - a)** Demonstrate an understanding of social studies content.
  - b)** Compare and contrast content and viewpoints.
  - c)** Explain causes and effects.
  - d)** Describe counterclaims.
- 4.6** Create and use geographic representations to locate and describe places and geographic characteristics, including hemispheres; landforms such as continents, oceans, rivers, mountains, and deserts; cardinal and intermediate directions; climate and environment.
- 4.7** Use geographic representations and historical information to explain how physical geography influenced the development of ancient civilizations and empires.
- 4.8** Describe the origin and spread of major world religions as they developed throughout history.
- 4.9** Describe the characteristics of nomadic hunter-gatherer societies, including their use of hunting weapons, fire, shelter and tools.
- 4.10** Describe early human migration out of Africa, first to Europe and Asia, then to the Americas and Australia.
- 4.11** Explain the effects of the Agricultural Revolution, including the barter economy, food surpluses, domestication of plants and animals, specialization, and the growth of permanent settlements.
- 4.12** Identify and explain the importance of the following key characteristics of civilizations: culture, specialization, infrastructure, stable food supply, government, technology, belief systems, writing, and social structure.
- 4.13** Describe the geographic, political, economic, and cultural structures of the ancient Near East.
  - a)** Identify and locate geographic features of the ancient Near East, including the Black Sea, Persian Gulf, Euphrates River, Tigris River, Mediterranean Sea, and Zagros Mountains.

- b) Explain how geographic and climatic features led to the region being known as the Fertile Crescent.
- c) Explain how irrigation, silt, metallurgy, production of tools, use of animals and inventions, such as the wheel and plow, led to advancements in agriculture.
- d) Describe how changes in agriculture in Sumer led to economic growth, expansion of trade and transportation, and the growth of independent city-states.
- e) Identify important achievements of the Mesopotamian civilization, including cuneiform, clay tablets, ziggurats, and the Epic of Gilgamesh as the oldest written epic.
- f) Describe the significance of the written law in the Code of Hammurabi, and explain the meaning of the phrase “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.”
- g) Describe the achievements of the ancient Israelites.

**4.14** Describe the geographic, political, economic, and cultural structures of ancient Egypt.

- a) Identify and locate geographic features of ancient Egypt, including the Mediterranean Sea, Red Sea, Nile River and Delta, and the Sahara Desert.
- b) Explain the structure of ancient Egyptian society, including the relationships between groups of people and the role played by the pharaoh and enslaved people.
- c) Explain Egyptian beliefs about the afterlife, the reasons for mummification, and the use of pyramids.
- d) Describe the significance of key figures from ancient Egypt, including Queen Hatshepsut, Ramses the Great, and the significance of the discovery of Tutankhamun’s tomb on the modern understanding of ancient Egypt.
- e) Describe the achievements of ancient Egyptian civilization, including hieroglyphics, papyrus, and the pyramids and Sphinx at Giza.
- f) Describe the cultural diffusion of ancient Egypt with surrounding civilizations through trade and conflict.

**4.15** Describe the geographic, political, economic, and cultural structures of ancient India.

- a) Identify and locate geographic features of ancient India, including the Ganges River, Indus River, Himalayan Mountains, Indian Ocean, and the subcontinent of India.
- b) Explain the emergence of civilization in the Indus River Valley as an early agricultural civilization and describe its achievements, including architecture built with bricks, roads arranged into a series of grid systems, and sewer systems.
- c) Identify the long-lasting intellectual traditions that emerged during the late empire of ancient India, including advances in medicine and Hindu-Arabic numerals.

**4.16** Describe the geographic, political, economic, and cultural structures of ancient Greece.

- a) Identify and locate geographic features of ancient Greece, including the Mediterranean Sea, Athens, the Peloponnesian peninsula, and Sparta.
- b) Describe how the geographic features of ancient Greece, including its mountainous terrain and access to the Mediterranean Sea contributed to its organization into city-states and the development of maritime trade.
- c) Describe the concept of the polis in Greek city-states, including the ideas of citizenship, civic participation, and the rule of law.
- d) Explain the basic concepts of direct democracy and oligarchy.
- e) Explain the characteristics of the major Greek city-states of Athens and Sparta, including status of women, approaches to education, type of government, and the practice of slavery.



- f) Describe the causes and consequences of the Persian Wars, including the role of Athens and its cooperation with Sparta.
- g) Describe the polytheistic religion of ancient Greece.
- h) Identify Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle as great philosophers of ancient Greece and explain how ideas can spread through writing and teaching.
- i) Identify examples of ancient Greek architecture, including the Parthenon and the Acropolis.
- j) Identify Alexander the Great and explain how his conquests spread Hellenistic (Greek) culture.

**4.17** Describe the geographic, political, economic, and cultural structures of ancient Rome.

- a) Identify and locate the geographic features of ancient Rome, including the Mediterranean Sea, Italian Alps, Rome, Italian Peninsula, and the Tiber River.
- b) Explain how the geographic location of ancient Rome contributed to its political and economic growth in the Mediterranean region and beyond.
- c) Describe the class system of ancient Rome, including the roles and rights of patricians, plebeians, and enslaved people in Roman society.
- d) Describe the polytheistic religion of ancient Rome and its connection to ancient Greek beliefs.
- e) Describe the characteristics of Julius Caesar's rule, including his role as dictator for life.
- f) Explain the influence of Augustus Caesar, including the establishment of the Roman Empire and its expansion during the Pax Romana.
- g) Describe how innovations in engineering and architecture contributed to Roman expansion, including the role of: aqueducts, domes, arches, roads, bridges, and sanitation.
- h) Describe the fall of the Western Roman Empire, including difficulty governing its large territory and political, military, and economic problems.

**4.18** Describe the geographic, political, economic, and cultural structures of ancient China.

- a) Identify and locate geographic features of ancient China, including the Gobi Desert, Plateau of Tibet, Himalayan Mountains, Yangtze River, Pacific Ocean, and the Yellow River.
- b) Describe the influence of geographic features on the origins of ancient Chinese civilization in the Yellow River Valley, and explain how China's geography helped create a unique cultural identity.
- c) Describe problems prevalent in the time of Confucius and explain the concepts of filial piety (dutiful respect) and the Mandate of Heaven.
- d) Explain the significance of the unification of ancient China into the first Chinese empire by Qin Shi Huangdi.
- e) Describe how the size of ancient China made governing difficult and how early dynasties attempted to solve this problem, including the construction of the Grand Canal and the Great Wall.
- f) Explain the major accomplishments of the Han Dynasty, including the magnetic compass, paper making, porcelain, silk, and woodblock printing.
- g) Describe how the desire for Chinese goods influenced the creation of The Silk Road and began a process of cultural diffusion throughout Eurasia.

**4.19** Describe the geographic, political, economic, and cultural structures of Indigenous civilizations of the Americas.

- a)** Identify and locate geographic features in the Americas, including Mississippi River and Delta, Amazon River, the Pacific Ocean, Appalachian Mountains, Gulf of Mexico, Atlantic Ocean, South America, and the Yucatan Peninsula.
- b)** Describe the cultural elements among Indigenous communities in the Americas, including housing, clothing, games/entertainment, dance, and how food was gathered/caught and cooked.
- c)** Explain how nomadic groups of people first hunted and traveled throughout what would become Louisiana.
- d)** Explain how people living in what would become Louisiana gradually moved towards seasonal hunting and gathering, using new tools and practices for hunting, and building large mounds for ceremonial and practical purposes.
- e)** Describe key characteristics of Poverty Point culture, including art, hunting methods, dress, food, use of mounds, and resources traded there.
- f)** Explain the major accomplishments of the Mayans, including advancements in astronomy, mathematics and the calendar, construction of pyramids, temples, and hieroglyphic writing.
- g)** Describe the influence of geographic features on the origins of the Mayan civilization and explain theories related to the abandonment of their cities.

## Answer Key: Early Civilizations: The Maya

### Chapter Assessments

#### Chapter 1

- A. 1. d 2. b, d 3. c 4. a 5. a 6. c 7. d 8. a 9. c 10. d 11. a
- B. Students should clearly state an accurate claim and support it with relevant evidence, such as: The Maya's main crop was corn. They had such a steady supply of it that some people were able to specialize in careers outside of farming, such as beekeeping or fishing. Corn played a major role in Maya religious stories. In the *Popol Vuh*, the gods successfully made humans out of corn. Answers should include explanations of how the evidence supports the claim.

#### Chapter 2

- A. 1. a 2. c 3. b 4. a 5. d 6. d 7. b 8. a, e 9. c 10. b
- B. Students should clearly state an accurate claim and support it with relevant evidence, such as: The Maya cut down many, many trees in order to grow their crops. That caused less evaporation of water, which caused less rainwater. The Maya were already experiencing a drought. Even less rainwater would have made it almost impossible to survive. Answers should include explanations of how the evidence supports the claim.

### Activity Pages

#### Artifact Study (AP 1.2): Chapter 1 Maya Pottery

1. a piece of pottery
2. the ancient Maya civilization in Mesoamerica
3. between 200 and 900 CE
4. light brown
5. It is the shape of a woman's torso and head.
6. I cannot tell what size it is.
7. It appears to be made of clay.
8. The person who made this had to know how to sculpt and carve clay and make sure it wouldn't crack or break while it dried.
9. I'm not sure why it was made. It might have been made to honor the cacao bean or to thank the gods for it.

10. It could have been made by one person.

11. The artifact might have lightened in color, but it has not changed much over time.

12. The ancient Maya were mostly farmers. They grew enough food that some people were able to specialize in other trades, including pottery. Maya city-states traded with one another. One of the goods they traded was cacao.

**Conclusion:** Cacao was an important crop to the Maya.

#### Primary Source Analysis (AP 1.3): Chapter 1 Primary Source Feature

**Source:** Excerpt from the *Popol Vuh*

**Describe the source:** a part of the Maya creation story

**Connect the source to what you know:** The *Popol Vuh* is a collection of Maya religious stories originally written in the Mayan language, then translated into Spanish. It was written in the 1500s but recorded stories told for centuries. The Maya were polytheistic. They saw the world as having three parts: the sky, the earth, and the underworld. The gods created humans so they would have someone to worship them.

**Understand the source:** The purpose of the excerpt is to explain how the earth was created. It describes how the gods Tepew and Q'uk'umatz first created Earth between the sea and the sky. Then they made animals. Eventually, the gods realized they needed people. The first people were made out of clay, but they couldn't move and melted in the heat. The next people were made out of wood, but they didn't have any intelligence. The gods consulted the animals, who led them to a place where corn grew. The gods used this corn to create the third version of humans, who could see, hear, and think. The humans built temples to honor the gods, and everyone was happy.

**Draw a conclusion from or about the source:** The *Popol Vuh* emphasizes the importance of humans in the lives of the gods. The gods weren't happy before they made humans; before humans were made, the gods felt like something was missing. One lesson from the *Popol Vuh* is that gods need humans just as much as humans need gods. Another lesson is that even gods have to try several times before they get something exactly right.

## Characteristics of Civilization (1.5): Chapter 1

**Civilization:** Maya

**Culture:** Mesoamerican; developed on the Yucatán Peninsula in present-day southeastern Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Belize

**Specialization:** farming, beekeeping, fishing, engineering, construction, pottery

**Infrastructure:** organized into city-states, a few with defensive structures; built of stone and earth

**Stable food supply:** corn, beans, squash, tomatoes, pumpkin

**Government:** City-state rulers were considered to be godlike; city-state governments were independent.

**Technology:** raised garden beds, terraced farming system, irrigation systems, water wells

**Belief systems:** polytheistic; religion a major part of daily life

**Writing:** hieroglyphs carved into pyramids, pottery, books, sculptures, and monuments

**Social structure:** Adulthood began at fourteen; marriages were business arrangements.

## Map of Maya Civilization (AP 1.6)

1. See map in Student Reader, p. 4.
2. See map in Student Reader, p. 4.
3. See map in Student Reader, p. 4.
4. Pacific Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean Sea
5. South America
6. lowlands

## Domain Vocabulary: Chapters 1–2 (AP 2.2)

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. j | 8. d  |
| 2. n | 9. a  |
| 3. m | 10. i |
| 4. f | 11. k |
| 5. c | 12. g |
| 6. l | 13. h |
| 7. e | 14. b |



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