



Dear Educator,

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Mayans



Mayans



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

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

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

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



Read the words below. Look up their definitions and write them on the lines.

1. civilization _____

2. pyramid _____

Mayans

Mathematics and Astronomy

A system of mathematics was developed by the Mayas as early as 40 B.C. Other cultures around the world developed mathematics, however it appears that the Mayas invented their system separately from any other culture.



At the time the Mayas were using their mathematical system the cultures in Europe were still using the Roman numeral system which was difficult to use and it did not have a zero.

The Mayan system was quite simple using three symbols: a bar, a dot and a symbol for zero. A bar meant five and a dot meant one. This way the math could be written down and easily understood. We use a base number of 10 in our present day mathematics but the Mayans developed and used a base number of 20.



Astronomy was a subject in which the Mayas excelled. Because of the latitude of Central America, where the Mayas lived, it was easy for them to determine how often the sun would pass over their location.

By studying the moon, planets and stars, especially the Milky Way and Venus, the Mayas were also able to map out the yearly paths of the night sky.

Write the actual number for the Mayan mathematical symbols in the spaces provided. For example: Two Mayan bars 10.

Two bars and two dots _____

One dot and one bar _____

Three dots _____

Four dots and three bars _____

Mayans



Criss Cross

Can you fit these words into the criss cross?
Use a pencil so you can erase if you need to.

community
language

Mayans
ancient

farmers
writers

cultivate
calendar

