

Activity Page 1.1**Use with Chapter 1****Letter to Family**

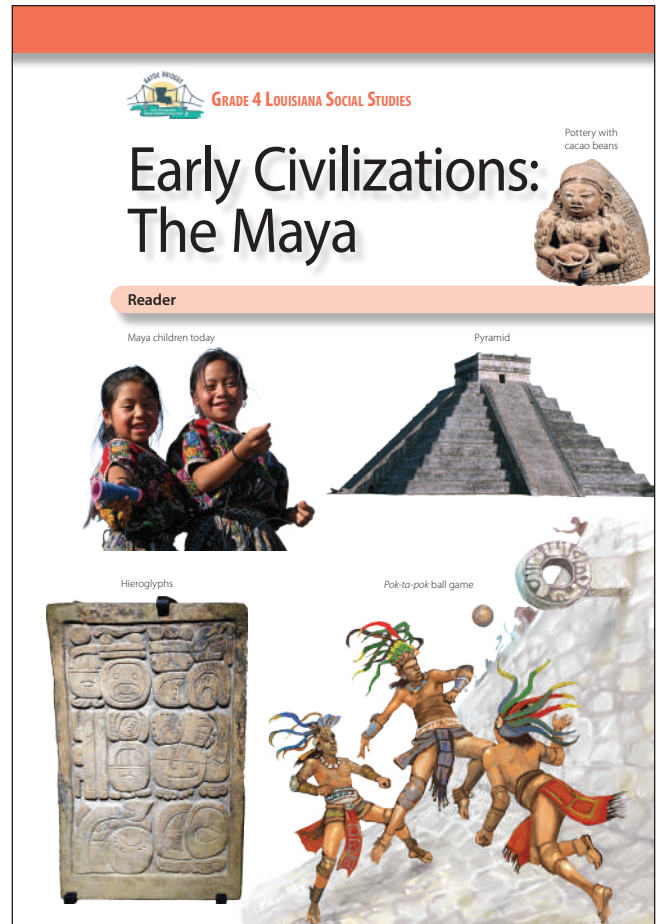
During the next few weeks, as part of our study of the Bayou Bridges Louisiana Social Studies program, your child will be learning about the ancient Maya civilization. They will learn about advancements made by the Maya in areas of farming, government, astronomy, and mathematics. Despite their lack of 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?

Draw a conclusion about the artifact.

Name _____ Date _____

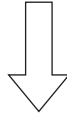
Primary Source Analysis

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

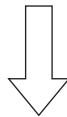
SOURCE:

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.

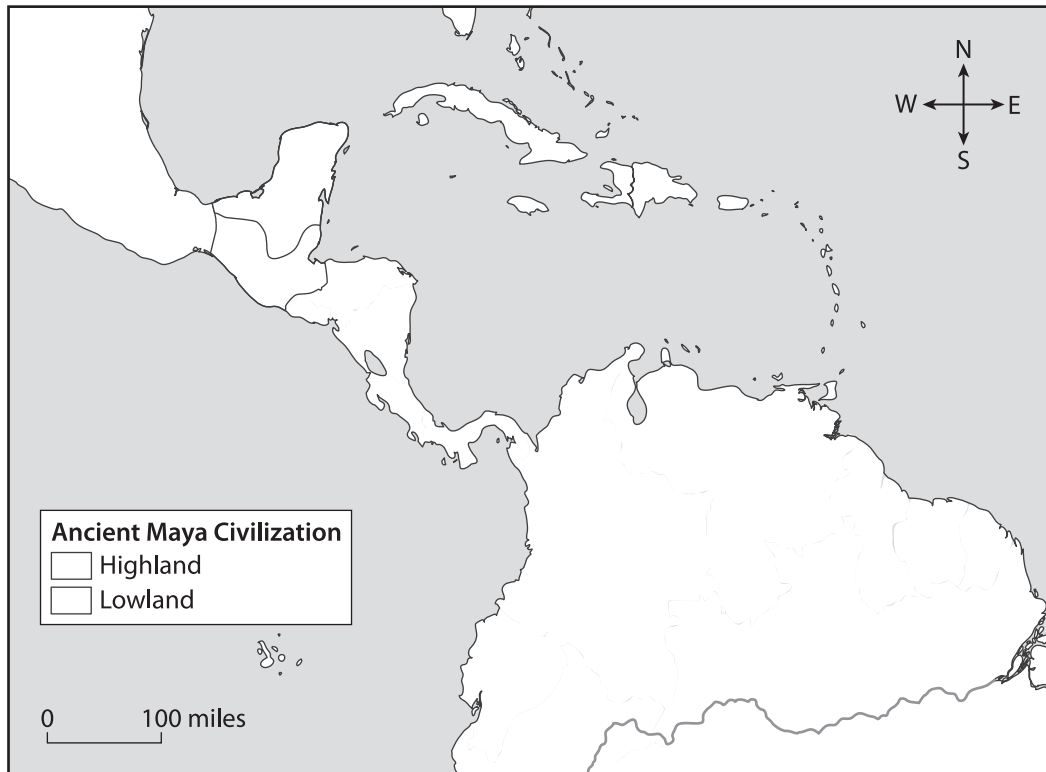
Name of Civilization: _____

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

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

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 |

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)

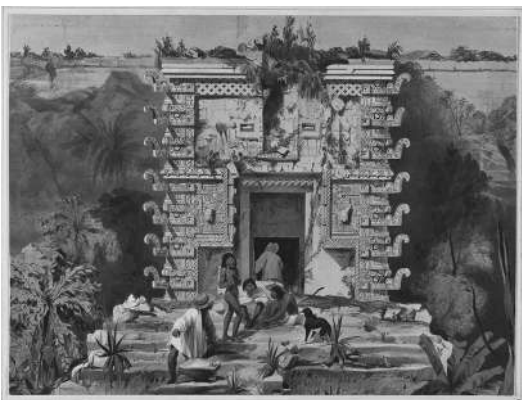
Assessment: Chapter 2—Where Did the Maya Go?

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)

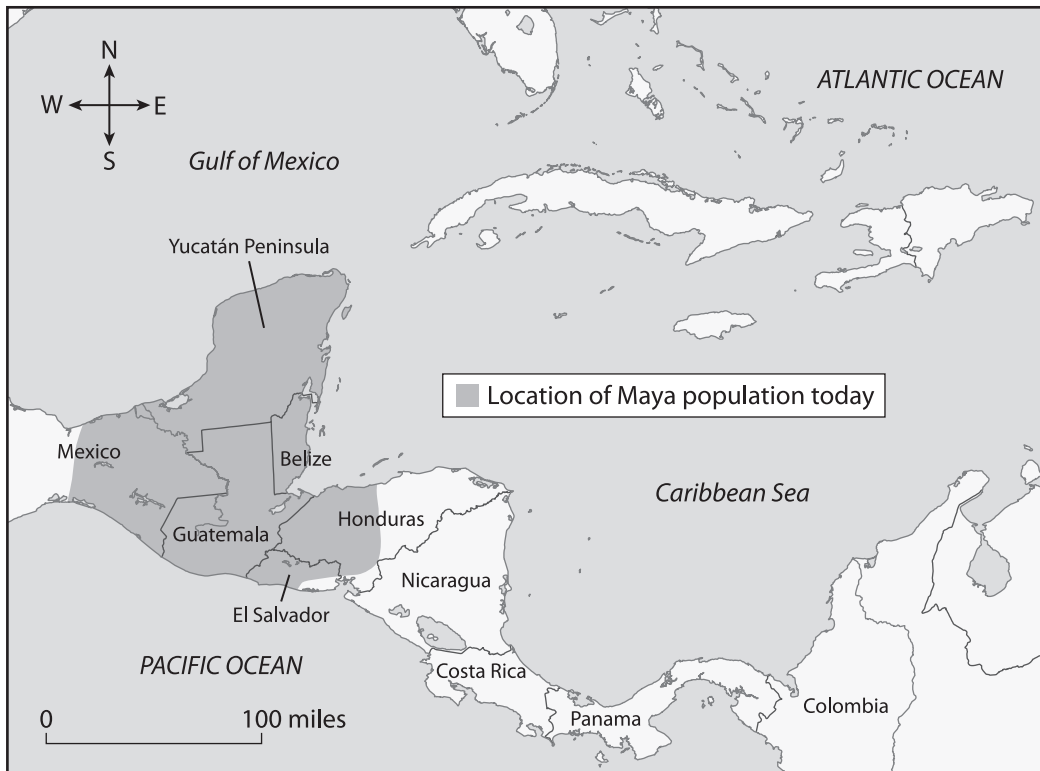
- a) rainforest
- b) highlands
- c) terrace
- d) desert

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)

