

Mesoamerica: The Mayan Civilization Note Guide**

- Before the Mayans, a group of people called the Olmecs lived in Mesoamerica
 - Mesoamerica - "Middle" America
 - Stretches from central Mexico to Central America
- The Olmecs are best known for the large heads they carved from stone
- The Altiplano Indians are another group of people in Mesoamerica
 - The Altiplano are best known for the city of Teotihuacan
- 2000BCE - Mayans begin settling in Mesoamerica
 - Most of the area is forest, so they clear the land
- The Mayans plant a lot of maize
 - Maize - Corn
- The Mayans used resources from the forest to survive
- Mayan history is divided into three parts:
 - Pre-Classic Age (2000BCE - 200CE)
 - Classic Age (200CE - 900CE)
 - Post-Classic Age (900CE - 1500CE)
- Pre-Classic Age:
 - Mayan Civilization gets started
 - Not many advances
- Post-Classic Age:
 - Mayans abandon their cities and the civilization declines
- Villages begin during the Pre-Classic Period
 - 2000BCE - 200CE
- Houses were made from wood and vines from forest
- Mayans lived in small villages that were isolated from each other
- Eventually, Mayans started to trade with each other
- 200CE - Large Mayan cities begin to appear
- Mayan civilization flourishes during the Classic Age
 - 200CE - 900CE
- Over 40 large cities included in this civilization
 - Large city = 60,000 people or more
- Cities are actually city-states
 - Each has its own government and king
 - All cities are separate from each other
 - No one united all the Mayan cities into one Empire
- Trade linked everyone together
 - Cotton, Cacao beans, feathers, obsidian, and jade
- Mayan cities are known for their buildings
 - Grand palaces, pyramids, and temples
 - Elaborate paintings and carvings
- Palenque - Palace of Pacal
 - Very popular ruler - ruled when he was 12 years old
 - Ruled for 50 years
 - His temple was built to record events of his life
- Mayans often built canals and plazas for gathering
- Farmers terraced hillsides to grow more food
- They played a ball game similar to soccer and basketball

- Kings were in charge - highest class
 - He was believed to be related to the gods
- Priests, nobles, warriors - Upper class
 - All the power in Mayan society was in top two classes
- Farmers - lower class
 - Women cared for children, cooked, and did weaving
 - Men farmed, hunted, and made tools
- Lower class had to pay the upper class with crops
 - Also had to help build buildings
- If you were captured in war, you became a slave
- Mayans were polytheistic
- Mayans believed they always had to please the gods
 - Keep the gods happy to prevent terrible things
- Gods needed blood for nourishment
 - And to prevent the end of the world
 - Blood offerings were made through body piercings
 - Blood offerings were made through human sacrifices
 - Prisoners were popular sacrificial victims
- Mayans built many observatories
 - Observatory - a building where people can study the sky
 - Believed that the stars would show the best time for religious festivals
- Developed two calendars
 - 260 days and 365 days
- Very skilled mathematicians
 - First people in Western Hemisphere to invent '0'
- Developed a writing system
 - Similar to Egyptian hieroglyphics
 - Carved writings on stone
 - Wrote stories on bark paper books
- Amazing art and architecture
 - Temple-pyramids made out of stone
 - Decorated with jade and gold
 - No metal tools for construction
 - Used obsidian
- 900CE - Mayan civilization begins to decline
 - No more temples or grand buildings
 - People abandon the cities
- Why?
 - Common people rebel?
 - War?
 - Disease?
 - Natural Disaster?
 - Too many people, but not enough food?
- We don't know for sure now, but someday we might

Name _____ Period _____

Mesoamerica: The Mayan Civilization Note Guide*

- Before the Mayans, a group of people called the _____ lived in Mesoamerica
 - _____ - “Middle” America
- The _____ Indians are another group of people in Mesoamerica
 - The Altiplano are best known for the city of _____
- _____ - Mayans begin settling in Mesoamerica
- The Mayans plant a lot of _____
 - _____ - Corn
- The Mayans used _____ from the forest to survive
- Mayan history is divided into _____ parts:
 - _____ Age (2000BCE - 200CE)
 - _____ Age (200CE - 900CE)
 - _____ Age (900CE - 1500CE)
- Pre-Classic Age:
 - _____ Civilization gets started
 - Not many _____
- Post-Classic Age:
 - Mayans abandon their _____ and the civilization _____
- Mayans lived in small villages that were _____ from each other
- _____ - Large Mayan cities begin to appear
- Mayan civilization flourishes during the _____ Age
- Over _____ large cities included in this civilization
- Cities are actually _____
 - Each has its own _____ and king
 - All cities are _____ from each other
 - No one united all the Mayan cities into one _____

- _____ linked everyone together
- Mayan cities are known for their _____
 - Grand palaces, pyramids, and _____
- Mayans often built _____ and plazas for gathering
- Farmers _____ hillsides to grow more food
- _____ were in charge - highest class
- Priests, nobles, warriors - _____ class
- _____ - lower class
- Lower class had to pay the upper class with _____ and help build buildings
- Mayans were _____
- Mayans believed they always had to please the _____
- Gods needed _____ for nourishment
 - Blood offerings were made through body _____
 - Blood offerings were made through _____ sacrifices
- Mayans built many _____
 - _____ - a building where people can study the sky
- Developed two _____
 - 260 _____ and 365 _____
 - First people in Western Hemisphere to invent _____
- Developed a _____ system
- _____ - Mayan civilization begins to decline
 - No more _____ or grand buildings
 - People abandon the _____
- Why?
 - Common people _____?
 - _____?
 - _____?
 - Natural _____?
 - Too many _____, but not enough food?

Mesoamerica: The Mayan Civilization Note Guide

- Before the Mayans, a group of people called the _____ lived in _____
 - Mesoamerica -
- The _____ Indians are another group of people in _____
 - The _____ are best known for the city of _____
- _____ - _____ begin settling in Mesoamerica
- The _____ plant a lot of _____
 - Maize -
- The Mayans used _____ from the forest to survive
- _____ history is divided into _____ parts:
 - _____ Age (2000BCE - _____)
 - _____ Age (200CE - _____)
 - _____ Age (900CE - _____)
- _____ Age:
 - _____ Civilization gets started
 - Not many _____
- _____ Age:
 - _____ abandon their _____ and the civilization _____
- _____ lived in small villages that were _____ from each other
- _____ - Large Mayan _____ begin to appear
- Mayan _____ flourishes during the _____ Age
- Over _____ large _____ included in this civilization
- Cities are actually _____
 - Each has its own _____ and _____
 - All cities are _____ from each other
 - No one _____ all the Mayan cities into one _____

- _____ linked everyone together
- _____ cities are known for their _____
 - Grand _____, pyramids, and _____
- Mayans often built _____ and _____ for gathering
- Farmers _____ hillsides to grow more _____
- _____ were in charge - _____ class
- _____, nobles, _____ - _____ class
- _____ - lower class
- Lower class had to pay the _____ class with _____ and help build _____
- Mayans were _____
- Mayans believed they always had to _____ the _____
- Gods needed _____ for _____
 - _____ offerings were made through body _____
 - _____ offerings were made through _____ sacrifices
- Mayans built many _____
 - Observatory -
- Developed two _____
 - _____ and _____
 - First people in _____ Hemisphere to invent _____
- Developed a _____ system
- _____ - Mayan _____ begins to decline
 - No more _____ or grand _____
 - People abandon the _____
- Why?
 - Common people _____?
 - _____?
 - _____?
 - Natural _____?
 - Too many _____, but not enough _____?