

КАЗАНСКИЙ ФЕДЕРАЛЬНЫЙ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ

ИНСТИТУТ ЯЗЫКА

Кафедра английского языка

Mesoamerica: Maya (Part II)

*Учебное пособие для студентов,
обучающихся по специальности
«История»*

УДК

*Печатается по решению учебно-методической комиссии Института языка КФУ
от 22.03. 2013г.*

*заседания кафедры английского языка
протокол № 7 от 20.02. 2013г.*

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**Аржанцева Н.В., Захарова Н.А., Праченко О.В. Mesoamerica: Maya (Part II):
Учебное пособие / Н.В. Аржанцева, Н.А. Захарова, О.В. Праченко. – Казань: КФУ,
2013. -**

This textbook is intended for reading original texts in history. We strongly believe that the only effective way to revise English is to practice it as much as possible. The texts here are supplemented with comprehension and lexical exercises.

Предисловие

Настоящее пособие предназначено для занятий со студентами исторического факультета 1 и 2 курсов, а также отделения магистратуры Казанского федерального университета по специальности «История» (ориентировано на уровни Pre-Intermediate и Intermediate). Пособие разработано с учетом требований государственного стандарта высшего профессионального образования и предназначено для студентов, продолжающих изучение английского языка на базе программы средней школы.

Целью настоящего пособия является обучение чтению научной неадаптированной литературы по истории, развитие определенных навыков устной речи в пределах научной тематики, а также выработка у студентов навыка применения полученных знаний, умений и навыков работы с текстами по специальности для работы с литературой на английском языке в ходе подготовки к различного рода научным работам (курсовым, рефератам, дипломной работе, научным статьям, докладам, выступлениям на различных конференциях), а именно: перевод с английского языка на русский, реферирование и пересказ (краткий и подробный) текстов, умение перефразировать фразы различной сложности, и т.п. Также целью данного пособия является стимулирование самостоятельного, активного подхода студентов к осмыслению и анализу информации, полученной в ходе работы с материалом пособия с учетом как собственно лингвистических, так и экстралингвистических факторов.

Неадаптированные, только в отдельных случаях сокращенные тексты взяты из английских и американских первоисточников.

Данное пособие представляет собой вторую из трех частей пособия для студентов исторического факультета “Mesoamerica”.

UNIT 1: HISTORY OF THE MAYA CIVILIZATION

Text 1: Maya civilization

I. Look at the title of the text and then write down at least three questions you would like to find the answer to in the text.

II. Skim the text. Does the text contain answers to your questions?

III. Read the text & discuss the following questions:

1. Where was the Maya civilization located?
2. What does the Maya civilization have in common with other civilizations & why?
3. Did the Maya disappear? If not, where do they remain?

IV. Study the pronunciation of following proper names:

Guatemala [,gwætə'mɑ:lə] - Гватемала

Belize [be'li:z] – Белиз (государство в Центральной Америке)

Honduras [hɒn'djuərəs] - Гондурас

Yucatán [ju:kə'tɑ:n] – Юкатан (полуостров в Центральной Америке)

Mexico ['meksikəu] – Мексика

Campeche [kæm'pi:tʃi] - Кампече

The Maya civilization is a historical Mesoamerican civilization, noted for the only known fully developed written language of the pre-Columbian Americas, spectacular art and architecture, and sophisticated mathematical and astronomical systems. The Classical period of the Maya civilization extended from 250 to 900 CE. At its zenith it was one of the most densely populated and culturally dynamic societies in the world. The area of the Maya civilization extended throughout the northern Central American region which includes the present-day nations of Guatemala, Belize, western Honduras and El Salvador, as well as the southern Mexican states of Chiapas, Tabasco, and the Yucatán Peninsula states of Quintana Roo, Campeche and Yucatán.

The Maya civilization shares many features with other Mesoamerican civilizations, because there was a high degree of interaction and cultural diffusion throughout the region. Advances such as writing and the calendar did not originate with the Maya, however their civilization fully developed these. Maya influence can be detected as far afield as central Mexico, more than 1000 km from the Maya homeland. Many outside influences are to be found in Mayan art and architecture, thought to be mainly a result of trade and cultural exchange, rather than direct external conquest.

The Maya peoples never disappeared, neither at the time of the Classic period decline or with the arrival of the Spanish conquistadores and the subsequent Spanish colonization of the Americas. The Maya remain in contemporary Mesoamerican societies, and maintain a distinctive set of traditions and beliefs, combined with more recent practices such as the almost total adoption of Roman Catholicism. The Mayas and their descendants form sizeable populations throughout the region formerly occupied by the states of the ancient civilization. Many different Mayan languages continue to be spoken as the primary language.

Source: Coe, Michael D. (1999). *The Maya* (6th ed.). New York: Dante Reed.

V. Match the English words and expressions with their Russian equivalents:

1. written language	a). быть найденным
2. sophisticated	b). родина
3. spectacular art	c). культурное распространение
4. densely populated	d). протянутый
5. extended	e). плотно населенный
6. present-day nations	f). внешнее завоевание
7. cultural diffusion	g). современные народности
8. originate	h). быть замеченным
9. homeland	i). письменный язык
10. be detected	j). усложненный
11. to be found	k). зрелищное искусство
12. external conquest	l). происходить
13. throughout	m). отличительный
14. a set of traditions and	n). современные сообщества

beliefs	
15. distinctive	o). потомки
16. descendants	p). через
17. contemporary societies	q). ранее занятые (кем-то, чем-то)
18. formerly occupied by	r). ряд традиций и верований

VI. Find English equivalents for the following words and expressions:

- a. культурный обмен
- b. влияние
- c. исчезли
- d. принятие католицизма
- e. древняя цивилизация
- f. поражающие воображение искусство и архитектура
- g. протягивалась, простиралась
- h. однако
- i. упадок
- j. высокая степень взаимодействия

VII. Match the words with their definitions:

a. population	1. A society that is well organized and developed
b. civilization	2. The process of establishing political control over an area and sending their citizens there to settle
c. society	3. All of the people who live in a particular area
d. colonization	4. A particular large group of people who share laws, organizations, customs etc.
e. decline	5. A decrease in the quality, quantity, or importance of something

VIII. Translate from Russian into English:

a. Такие достижения, как письменность и календарь, берут начало не у майя, но были полностью ими усовершенствованы.

b. На пике своего расцвета это было одно из самых плотно населенных и динамичных сообществ в мире.

с. Майя остаются в современном мезоамериканском обществе, сохраняя свои традиции и верования.

IX. Give a summary of the text.

Text 2: Preclassic and classic periods

- I. Which parts of the text contain the main ideas?**
- II. Write down the heading for each paragraph of the text.**
- III. Read the text & answer the following questions:**
 1. When did villages in the Maya region appear?
 2. What was the peak of urban construction?
 3. Where & when did the earliest inscriptions and buildings appear?
 4. What was the Maya empire like in the Classic period?
- IV. Study the pronunciation of following proper names:**

Pacific [pə'sɪfɪk]

Zapotec ['zæpɒtek]

Chiapas [tʃi:'apas]

Oaxaca [wa'haka]

Olmec ['ɒl,mek]

What would become the Maya region had been inhabited since at least the 10th millennium BC. Settled villages along the Pacific coast appear from 1800 BC, which is taken as the beginning of the Maya Early Preclassic era.

Archaeological evidence shows the Maya had started to build ceremonial architecture by approximately 1000 BC and by the period known as the mid-Preclassic (or mid-Formative), around 600 BC, some of the earliest Maya complexes had been constructed. The earliest monuments consist of simple burial mounds, the precursors to pyramids erected in later times.

There is some disagreement about the boundaries which differentiate the physical and cultural extent of the early Maya and their neighboring Preclassic Mesoamerican civilizations, such as the Olmec culture of the Tabasco lowlands and the Mixe-Zoque– and Zapotec–speaking peoples of Chiapas and southern Oaxaca. Many of the earliest significant inscriptions and buildings appeared in this overlapping zone, and evidence suggests that these cultures and the formative Maya influenced one other. Eventually, the

Olmec influence faded after spreading into the Yucatan peninsula, present-day Guatemala, and other regions.

The later Classic period (c. 250 - 900) witnessed the peak of widespread urban center construction and the recording of monumental inscriptions, particularly in the southern lowland regions. They developed an agriculturally intensive, city-centered empire consisting of numerous independent city-states. This includes the famed cities of Tikal, Palenque, Copán and Kalakmul, as well as Dos Pilas, Uaxactun, Altun Ha, Bonampak and many other sites in the region.

The most notable monuments are the pyramids they built in their religious centers and the accompanying palaces of their rulers. Other important archaeological remains include the carved stone slabs usually called stelae (the Maya called them Tetun, or "Tree-stones"), which depict rulers along with hieroglyphic texts describing their genealogy, war victories, and other accomplishments.

The Maya participated in long distance trade in Mesoamerica and possibly further lands. Important trade goods included cacao, salt, and obsidian.

Sources: 1) ["Maya Archaeological Sites of Belize, Belize History"](#). Ambergris Caye.com. Retrieved 2010-08-01.

2) Coe, Michael D. (1999). *The Maya* (6th ed.). New York: Dante Reed.

3) Sharer, R. 1994. *The Ancient Maya*. 5th ed. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press

4) ["University of Florida study: Maya politics likely played role in ancient large-game decline. 2007"](#).

5) Gill, R. (2000). *The Great Maya Droughts*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

V. Translate into Russian the following words and expressions:

1. had been inhabited
2. archaeological evidence
3. neighboring civilizations
4. overlapping zone

5. suggest
6. witnessed
7. differentiate
8. accompanying palaces of their rulers
9. participated in
10. trade goods
11. the carved stone slabs
12. hieroglyphic texts

VI. Find English equivalents for the following word combinations:

1. появиться
2. приблизительно
3. могильный холм
4. границы
5. в конце концов
6. многочисленный
7. соседние цивилизации
8. изображать правителей
9. полуостров
10. по крайней мере
11. обрядовая архитектура
12. предшественники
13. в особенности
14. низменности
15. распространяться на
16. достижения

VII. Say if the following statements are true or false:

1. The Maya started to erect pyramids in the mid-preclassic period.
2. There can be found some evidence of the Olmec influence, because the Maya & the Olmec civilizations were neighbouring.
3. The best patterns of buildings & monuments were constructed in the classic period.
4. The most notable monuments are the carved stone slabs they built in their religious centers and the accompanying palaces of their rulers.

VIII. Give your own definitions to the following terms:

1. archaeological evidence
2. civilization
3. monument
4. empire
5. ruler

IX. Make a short presentation on the history of the Maya civilization.

Text 3: Collapse and Postclassic Period

I. Read the text & choose the most suitable title from the list for each paragraph:

- A) Evidence found
- B) Southern states
- C) Independent polities
- D) Causes for decline
- E) Conclusion
- F) Classical peak of development

1. For reasons which are still much debated, in the 8th and 9th centuries AD (the "Terminal Classic" period) Maya culture went into decline, with most of the cities of the central lowlands abandoned. Detailed monumental inscriptions all disappeared. Warfare, ecological depletion of croplands, and drought or some combination of those factors are usually suggested as reasons for the decline.

2. There is archaeological evidence of warfare, famine, and revolt against the elite at various central lowlands sites. There is also conclusive geological evidence, found in shells recovered from Lake Chichancanab (in modern Quintana Roo state in Mexico) by a team from the University of Florida, showing that the area suffered the worst drought in 7,000 years in the 9th century; this meteorological event is apparently connected to that of northern Europe having suffered extremely low temperatures around the same time (the same connection between drought in the Maya areas and extreme cold in northern Europe was found again at the beginning of the 20th century). This evidence seems to support Dick Gill's theory that an unusually severe drought leading to a catastrophic decimation of the population was the driving force behind the collapse of Maya civilization. However, there is no single cause universally accepted for their decline.

3. During the succeeding Postclassic period (to the early 16th century), development in the northern centers persisted, characterised by an increasing diversity of external influences. The Maya cities of the northern lowlands in Yucatan continued to flourish for centuries more; some of the important sites in this era were Chichen Itza, Uxmal, Edzná, and Coba. After the decline of the ruling dynasties of Chichen and Uxmal, Mayapan ruled all of Yucatan

until a revolt in 1450; the area then devolved to city states until the area was conquered by the Spanish.

4. The Itza Maya, Kowoj and Yalain groups of Central Peten survived the "Classic Period Collapse" in small numbers and by 1250 CE reconstituted themselves to form competing polities. The Itza kingdom had its capital at Noj Peten, an archaeological site thought to underlay modern day Flores, Guatemala. It ruled over a polity extending across the Peten Lakes region, encompassing the community of Eckixil on Lake Quexil. These sites and this region were inhabited continuously by independent Maya until after the final Spanish Conquest of 1697 AD.

5. Postclassic Maya states also continued to thrive in the southern highlands. One of the Maya kingdoms in this area, the Quiché, is responsible for the best-known Maya work of historiography and mythology, the Popol Vuh. However, by the time of the Spanish arrival in 1519 it is generally accepted that most of these centers had substantively declined from their Classical peak.

6. However, by the time of the Spanish arrival in 1519 it is generally accepted that most of these centers had substantively declined from their Classical peak.

Sources: 1) ["Classic Maya Civilization Collapse Related to Modest Rainfall Reductions, Research Suggests". *Science Daily*. 2012.](#)

2) ["Mild drought caused Maya collapse in Mexico, Guatemala". *BBC News*. 2012.](#)

3) "The Ancient Maya", Robert J. Sharer, Loa P. Traxler Contributor Loa P. Traxler, p126, Stanford University Press, 2006

II. Answer the following questions:

- a). Why did Maya culture go into decline?
- b). Did the area suffer the worst drought? When?
- c). What is Dick Gill's theory?
- d). What are the main characteristics of the Postclassic period?
- e). What is Classic Period Collapse? Which social groups survived it?

f). Where did Postclassic Maya states continue to thrive?

g). The Spanish arrival was in 1519, wasn't it? What had happened by that time?

III. Give the words from the text corresponding to the following definitions:

1. to get control of a country by fighting	
2. to become very successful or very strong & healthy	
3. a decrease in the quality, quantity, or importance of something	
4. a long period of dry weather when there is not enough water for plants & animals to live	
5. to continue to live normally in spite of many problems or after a war, illness	
6. strong & often violent action by a lot of people against their ruler or government	
7. a condition of society in which political organization exists	
8. to show or prove that something is correct	
9. a country ruled by a king or a queen	

IV. Find and use the proper adjectives for the nouns given in the list below:

e.g. evidence - archaeological evidence

- a. polities
- b. influences
- c. depletion
- d. highlands
- e. drought
- f. inscriptions

- g. decimation
- h. dynasties

V. Complete the table with the forms of the words given:

Verb	Noun
to decline	
	ruler
to arrive	
to characterise	
	conquerer
	competition

VI. Name the main reasons of the Maya culture decline.

UNIT 2: SPANISH CONQUEST OF THE MAYA

Text 1: The Spanish Conquest of Yucatán

I. Read each paragraph of the text carefully & mark sentences that express the main idea.

II. Answer the following questions:

- 1) When did the conquest start & finish?
- 2) Why did the conquest take so much time to complete?
- 3) What areas of the Maya land were conquered?
- 4) Spanish conquistadores were attracted to the northern Maya polities, weren't they? Why / Why not?
- 5) Did the Maya have a single political centre?
- 6) What was the motivation for the conquistadores in the early stages?
- 7) What caused the revolt of the Maya in the 19th century?

II. Study the pronunciation of following proper names:

Guatemala [,gwætə'mɑ:lə] - Гватемала

Peru [pə'ru:] - Перу

Aztec ['æz ,tek] – ацтек

Yucatán [,ju:kə'tæn] - Юкатан

The conquest began in 1511 and took some 170 years to complete. The Maya had no single leader (like the Inca of Peru), but instead lived in numerous independent states, some of which fiercely resisted foreign domination. Also, the land had no gold or silver except for small amounts acquired by trade, so many early Spanish conquistadors were attracted instead to central Mexico or Peru, which seemed to offer quicker and easier riches. The last Maya state, the Itza kingdom, was not subdued by Spanish authorities until 1697.

The Spanish Conquest of Yucatán was the campaign undertaken by the Spanish conquistadores against the Late Postclassic Maya states and polities, particularly in the northern and central Yucatán Peninsula but also involving

the Maya polities of the Guatemalan highlands region. This episode in the conquest and colonization of the Americas began in the early 16th century, but would prove to be a fraught and lengthier exercise in subjugation than the equivalent campaigns against the Aztec and Inca Empires. It would take some 170 years before the last recognized Maya stronghold fell, that of the Itza capital of Tayasal on Lake Petén Itzá, in 1697. However, except for the Petén region and the Guatemalan highlands, Spanish control over Yucatán itself was effectively in place by 1546.

Unlike the campaigns against the Aztec and Inca states, the Maya had no single political center whose overthrow would hasten the end of collective resistance by the indigenous peoples. Instead, the Maya were organized into a number of independent states, which the conquistador forces needed to subdue almost one by one, and many of these fiercely resisted the Spanish incursions.

Particularly in the early stages, a prime motivating factor for the conquistadores was their interest in seizing great quantities of precious metals such as gold and silver. Since the Maya lands were poor in these resources, they held comparatively little initial interest for the Spanish, who were attracted instead to central Mexico and Peru by promising reports of the greater rewards on offer there. However, with the prospects of new land grants and the acquisition of labour forces, it was not long until Spanish intentions turned to the Maya region, with the first concerted efforts to establish a presence commencing from the 1520s.

After Spanish dominion over the region was finally established, the Maya peoples themselves remained restive against Spanish rule, both under the colonial phase of New Spain and then under the newly-independent Mexican state. Maya discontent in Yucatán would later erupt into open revolt during the latter half of the 19th century, in the Caste War of Yucatán. The major portion of this conflict lasted over fifty years, during which much of the southeastern portion of the Peninsula was an effectively independent Maya state, Chan Santa Cruz. Complete suppression of the revolt was difficult to obtain, and skirmishes continued up into the 1930s.

Sources: 1) Robert Stoner Chamberlain (1948). [*The Conquest and Colonization of Yucatan, 1517-1550*](#). Carnegie Institution. 2011.

2) [COE, MICHAEL D.](#) (1987). *The Maya* (4th edition (revised) ed.). London; New York: Thames & Hudson.

3) [DÍAZ DEL CASTILLO, BERNAL](#) (1963) [1632]. *The Conquest of New Spain*. Penguin Classics. [J. M. Cohen](#) (trans.) (6th printing (1973) ed.). Harmondsworth, England: [Penguin Books](#)

4) RUGELEY, TERRY L. (1996). *Yucatan's Maya Peasantry and the Origins of the Caste War*. Austin: [University of Texas Press](#).

III. Complete the following sentences:

- 1). The conquest ...
- 2). Maya independent states...
- 3). Spanish conquistadors...
- 4). The Spanish conquest was...
- 5). Unlike the campaigns against the Aztec and Inca states...
- 6). The Maya were organized into ...
- 7). A prime motivating factor for the conquistadores was ...
- 8). After Spanish dominion was established...
- 9). ... lasted over fifty years.
- 10). Skirmishes continued up into ...

IV. Match the following words with their synonyms:

1) conquest	a). rebellion
2) revolt	b). battles
3) discontent	c). dominion
4) skirmishes	d). to get
5) precious (metals)	e). to defeat
6) to overthrow	f). to remove
7) domination	g). takeover
8) to obtain	h). continued
9) lasted	i). valuable
10) to subdue	k). dissatisfaction

V. Give English equivalents for the following expressions:

1. единый лидер
2. вылилось в открытое восстание
3. юго-восточная часть полуострова
4. оказывали неистовое сопротивление иностранному господству
5. приобретение рабочей силы

VI. Give a written translation of the text, paying attention to historical terminology.

Text 2: First encounters (1511)

I. Look at the title of the text and then write down at least three questions you would like to find the answer to in the text.

II. Skim the text. Does the text contain answers to your questions?

III. Read the text carefully & say if you agree with the following statements. Support your point of view with the facts from the text.

1. The first known Spanish landing on the Yucatán Peninsula was successful.
2. The ship's crew consisted of two men and fifteen women.
3. They reached the eastern shoreline of the Peninsula as they had intended.
4. They reached the place after approximately two weeks of drifting.
5. The ship's complement captured the local Maya.
6. Over the years the number of the Maya dwindled as they were lost to disease or exhaustion.
7. These Spanish castaways had unknowingly brought with them an epidemic disease to the region.

The first contact between Europeans and the Maya was made just over ten years before the mighty men who first brought disease to that land arrived from the east. It was, in fact, in 1502 when during his final voyage to the New World Columbus came across a trading canoe near the Bay Islands in the Gulf of Honduras. Columbus recorded that the canoe was very long, about 8 feet wide and that it had a crew of 24 men plus a number of women and children. The cargo in the canoe included cotton clothing, cacao, copper bells and axes, pottery and macanas (wooden clubs inlaid with obsidian chips). It is believed that the trading party was headed from the Yucatan to the Motagua valley.

The next recorded contact between Spaniard and Maya was in 1511. The Spanish landing on the Yucatán Peninsula was a product of misfortune, when in 1511 a small vessel bound for the island of Santo Domingo ran aground on some shoals in the Caribbean Sea, south of the island of Jamaica.

The ship's complement of fifteen men and two women set off in the ship's boat in an attempt to reach Cuba or one of the other colonies, but the prevailing currents forced them westwards until after approximately two weeks of drifting they reached the eastern shoreline of the Peninsula. Captured by the local Maya, they were divided up among several of the chieftains as slaves and a number were sacrificed and killed according to offeratory practices.

Over the succeeding years their numbers dwindled further as others were lost to disease or exhaustion, until only two were left— Gerónimo de Aguilar who had escaped his former captor and found refuge with another Maya ruler, and Gonzalo Guerrero who had won some prestige among the Maya for his bravery and had now the standing of a ranking warrior and noble. These two would later have notable, but very different, roles to play in future conflicts between the Spanish and the Mesoamerican peoples— Aguilar would become Cortés's translator and advisor, with Guerrero instead electing to remain with the Maya and served as a tactician and warrior fighting with them against the Spanish.

These Spanish castaways had unknowingly brought with them an epidemic disease to the region, probably smallpox, which would kill a great many people over the next few years.

Source: <http://www.nichbelize.org/ia-archaeology/the-spanish-conquest-and-its-aftermath.html>

IV. Give English equivalents for the following words and expressions:

1. корабль
2. последующие годы
3. истощение
4. отправиться
5. несчастье
6. найти убежище
7. направляющийся к
8. были принесены в жертву
9. играть заметную роль
10. великое множество людей

11. рабы
12. вожди (племени)
13. эпидемия

V. Match the words with their definitions:

1.set off	someone left alone on island
2.noble	
3.castaway	become gradually less or smaller
4.captured by	
5.found refuge with	
6.dwindle	belonging to the highest social class
7.sacrifice	
8.offeratory practices	give up something important or valuable

VI. Ask questions to the underlined words and phrases:

- a. The first known Spanish landing on the Yucatán Peninsula was a product of misfortune.
- b. Over the succeeding years their numbers dwindled further as others were lost to disease or exhaustion.
- c. They were divided up among several of the chieftains as slaves.
- d. These Spanish castaways had unknowingly brought with them an epidemic disease to the region.

VII. Give a summary of the text.

Text 3: Early expeditions (1517–19)

I. Read the text and write down the heading for each paragraph of the text.

II. Answer the following questions:

- 1). Were early expeditions to Yucatán successful?
- 2). How did local people greet the Spanish?
- 3). Why did Guerrero refuse to leave Maya people?
- 4). Who tried to convert the locals to Christianity? Why?

III. Study the pronunciation of the following proper names and expressions:

Córdoba [ˈkɔːdəbə] - Кордова

Cozumel [ˌkɒʊsuːˈmel]

Chetumal [ˌtʃeɪ-tuː-ˈmæl]

Cuban [ˈkjuːbən] - кубинец

Cuba [ˈkjuːbə] – Куба

The next contact was not until 1517 when Francisco Hernández de Córdoba sailed out from Cuba in search of slaves to replace the native Cubans who had been dying off in great numbers.

1.

A few different places were visited by Córdoba; some greeted the Spanish with friendship and offered to trade goods with them (most interesting to the Spaniards, they acquired a few pieces of gold ornaments in this way), while other towns greeted him with hostility and shot arrows when the Spanish approached close to shore. The expedition reported on the discovery of this new land when they returned to Cuba. The governor of Cuba Diego Velázquez ordered an expedition to send out with four ships and 200 men led by his nephew, Juan de Grijalva.

2.

He returned to Cuba with a tale that a rich empire was further to the west although he was disappointed at gathering very little gold.

This prompted the Hernán Cortés expedition in 1519. Cortés spent some time at the island of Cozumel, tried with mixed results to convert the locals to Christianity, and heard stories of other bearded white men living in the area.

3.

Guerrero petitioned his Maya chieftain to be allowed to join with his former countrymen, so he was released and made his way to Cortés's ships. Aguilar relayed that before coming he had unsuccessfully attempted to convince Guerrero to leave as well. Guerrero declined on the basis that he was by now well-assimilated with the Maya culture, had a Maya wife and three children, and he was looked upon as a figure of rank within the Maya settlement of Chetumal where he lived.

4.

Although Guerrero's later fate is somewhat uncertain, it appears that for some years he continued to fight alongside the Maya forces against Spanish incursions and provide military counsel and encouraging resistance.

5.

Source: "The Ancient Maya", Robert J. Sharer, Loa P. Traxler Contributor Loa P. Traxler, p126, Stanford University Press, 2006.

IV. Choose which of the sentences A-F match the numbered gaps in the text above. There is one extra sentence which does not belong to any of the gaps.

A. The Grijalva expedition had similar mixed experiences with the native Maya as it sailed along the coasts of Yucatán for months.

B. They also said they came in peace and were prepared to serve him against his enemies.

C. The Spaniards were surprised to see stone cities along the coast of Yucatán.

D. He sent messengers to these reported castilianos, who turned out to be the survivors of the 1511 shipwreck, Aguilar and Guerrero.

E. He quite possibly was killed in a later battle.

F. Aguilar, now quite fluent in Yucatec Maya as well as some other indigenous languages, would prove to be a valuable asset for Cortés as a translator, a skill of particular significance to the later conquest of the Aztec Empire which would be the end result of Cortés's expedition.

V. Match two halves of the statements and translate them into Russian:

1.to trade	a).the locals to Christianity
2.to greet	b).against Spanish incursions
3.to convert	c).slaves
4.in search of	d).goods
5.to fight	e).against one's enemies
6.well-assimilated	f).with friendship
7.to serve smb	g).with the Maya culture

V. Give English equivalents for the following word combinations:

1. быть разочарованным
2. оказывать сопротивление
3. добывать золото
4. приветствовать враждебно
5. прийти с миром

V. Make a brief report about early expeditions.

TEXT 4: Attempted conquests

I. Look at the title of the text. What are you going to read about?

II. Read the text & answer the questions:

1. What did Francisco de Montejo petition for?
2. Why did local chiefs greet him peaceably & swear loyalty to the King of Spain?
3. What did Maya people do when they found towns already deserted?
4. Did the Spanish have success in subduing the country?
5. What happened while Montejo set up a fortress at Campeche?
6. When & why did Montejo leave the Yucatán once again in the control of the Maya?
7. What changes did the younger Montejo introduce when he invaded Yucatán in 1542?
8. How many attempted conquests of the Maya Empire were made? When?

III. Study the pronunciation of following proper names:

Aztec ['æz-tek] - ацтек

Honduras [hɒn'djuərəs] - Гондурас

Campeche [kæm'pi:tʃi] - Кампече

In December, 1526, one of Cortés' party, the wealthy nobleman Francisco de Montejo, after persistently lobbying the Spanish crown for several years, was granted a royal contract to raise an army and conquer Yucatán. This involved three separate campaigns from 1527 to 1546.

In his first attempt (1527-1528), Montejo brought three ships with several hundred men to Santo Domingo from Spain, landing at Cozumel in September 1527 with two ships and about 200 men. Crossing to the mainland, Montejo left 65 men at these two coastal towns under his lieutenant Alonso d'Avila, then marched inland with 125 men. They toured a series of towns in the northeast part of the peninsula, some (including

Xamanha and Mochis) unknown today, another (Belma) possibly El Meco. Early in 1528, after two months spent wintering in Ecab, they fought a large battle at Aké. There, while Montejo lost half his men, over 1200 Maya were killed, with all neighboring chiefs surrendering.

He arrived in eastern Yucatán in 1527 and at first was greeted peaceably, and most local chiefs agreed with his demand that they swear loyalty to the King of Spain, for they had heard news of the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs. However as the Spanish advanced they found towns already deserted when they reached them, and the Spanish were first harried as they traveled and then openly attacked. Despite killing over 1,200 Maya in battle at Chauca the natives would not surrender, and Montejo returned to the coast under constant harassment. The Spanish set up a small fort on the coast at Xamanha in 1528, but had no further success in subduing the country. Montejo went to Mexico to gather a larger army.

Montejo returned in 1531 with a force that conquered the Maya port city of Campeche. While he set up a fortress at Campeche, he sent his son Francisco Montejo The Younger inland with an army. The leaders of some Maya states pledged that they would be his allies. He continued on to Chichen Itza, which he declared his Royal capital of Spanish Yucatán, but after a few months the locals rose up against him, the Spaniards were constantly attacked, and the Spanish force fled to Honduras. It was rumored that Gonzalo Guerrero, the Spaniard shipwrecked in 1511 who chose to stay in Yucatán, was among those directing Maya resistance to the Spanish crown. Meanwhile the elder Montejo was frequently besieged in his fort in Campeche, and many of his soldiers were tired of a long fight with little to show for it, and stated that they wished to find easier conquests elsewhere. In 1535 Montejo withdrew his forces to Veracruz, leaving the Yucatán once again completely in the control of the Maya.

Montejo the elder who was now in his late 60s, turned his royal rights in Yucatán over to his son, Francisco Montejo the Younger. The younger Montejo began the third attempt to secure Yucatán (1540-1546), by setting up a headquarters in Campeche with 300-400 soldiers. Montejo summoned Maya lords to his base and many Xiu chieftains submitted to the Spanish crown by the end of 1541. The Ah Canules once again resisted, but were defeated by Montejo's cousin at Chakan. In 1542, Montejo established the city of Mérida at Tiho where he received the peaceful submission of the

supreme ruler of Maní. Since Maní was the most powerful province of northern Yucatán, other western groups submitted as well.

Montejo next sent his cousin to Chauaca to finish the conquest in the east. Most submitted peacefully, but Montejo defeated the Cocua chieftains only after a bitter battle. However, periodic revolts which would be violently put down by Spanish troops continued throughout the Spanish colonial era. The eastern provinces retained varying degrees of independence, and continued to harass the Spaniards. These eastern Maya chiefdoms were not decisively defeated until a failed uprising in November of 1546. With their defeat, the ultimate conquest of Yucatán was assured.

Sources: 1) <http://www.athenapub.com/youconq1.htm>

2) [COE, MICHAEL D.](#) (1987). *The Maya* (4th edition (revised) ed.). London; New York: Thames & Hudson.

3) [DÍAZ DEL CASTILLO, BERNAL](#) (1963) [1632]. *The Conquest of New Spain*. Penguin Classics. [J. M. Cohen](#) (trans.) (6th printing (1973) ed.). Harmondsworth, England: [Penguin Books](#)

4) RUGELEY, TERRY L. (1996). *Yucatan's Maya Peasantry and the Origins of the Caste War*. Austin: [University of Texas Press](#).

IV. Find antonyms to the following words:

1. harassment
2. success
3. inland
4. frequently
5. elder
6. loyalty
7. defeated
8. rose up
9. capital
10. larger

V. Find synonyms to the following words:

1. a veteran

2. to conquer
3. returned
4. pledged
5. states
6. continued
7. revolts
8. besieged
9. assisting
10. resistance

VI. Match the halves of the sentences and translate them into Russian:

1. A number of Maya states	a). agreed with his demand.
2. Many of his soldiers	b). continued for years.
3. Most local chiefs agreed with his demand	c). at first pledged loyalty to Spain.
4. They had no further success	d). when they reached them.
5. Fighting and revolts	e). were tired of a long fight with little to show for it.
6. They found towns already deserted	f). pledged that they would be his allies.
7. Montejo returned	g). in subduing the country.
8. The leaders of some Maya states	h). to the coast under constant harassment.

VII. Ask all possible questions to the sentences in ex.V.

VIII. Give a summary of the text.

Text 5: The Itza of Petén

- I. Read the text and say which parts of the text contain the main idea.**
- II. Write down the heading for paragraph of the text.**
- III. Study the pronunciation of following proper names:**

Franciscan [fræn'siskən] – францисканец

Mérida ['mer-ə-də]

Guatemala [ˌgwætə'mɑ:lə] - Гватемала

IV. Put the following paragraphs into the right order:

A). In 1695 three Franciscans headed to Tayasal accompanied by four Christian Maya singers. They were well received, and a number of the Itza consented to be baptized. The Itza King, however, refused to convert to Christianity or pledge loyalty to Spain; he said a time would come when this would be the proper thing to do but that time had not arrived. A force of 60 Spanish soldiers and Maya allies were sent to the Petén the following year, but were beaten back by fierce Itza attacks.

B). In 1618 two Franciscan friars were sent from Merida to teach Christianity to the Itza. They arrived in Tayasal to find the people uninfluenced by European ways and still worshipping the traditional Mesoamerican gods. While the Itza king received them politely, they made no progress in converting the people to Christianity.

C). The Postclassic Itza Maya of the Petén Basin region should be mentioned; while that area is now part of Guatemala, in colonial times it was part of the land under the jurisdiction of the Governor of Yucatán. The Itza capital was in Tayasal, an island city in lake Petén Itza.

D). On March 13, 1697 this force succeeded in conquering the Itza of Tayasal. The Spanish burned the Itza library of books "containing lies of the devil", and reported later that the city had so many idols that with almost the entire army set at work, it took from nine in the morning until half past five in the evening to break them all. Thus ended the last independent native state of Mesoamerica.

E). In 1622 the Governor of Yucatán sent a force of 20 Spaniards and 140 Christian Indian allies to march on Tayasal, but the Itza quickly killed them. A second force on their way to the Petén in 1624 was ambushed by the Itza and met a similar fate. The Governor of Yucatán decided his energies were best spent elsewhere, and the Itza continued in independence.

F). The command in Merida decided that a major force was needed, and in 1697 sent out a force of 235 Spanish soldiers and as many Maya allies, with horses, artillery, and a large supply train with mules and men to cut a path through the jungle. They set up a fort on the shore of Lake Petén Itza across from Tayasal, and reconstructed a small warship on the lake which had been brought with them in pieces.

G). The Itza land was separated from Spanish Yucatán to the north and Spanish Guatemala to the south by thick jungles with little population. It had been visited by Cortés on his march to Honduras in 1525, when the lords of the Itza pledged loyalty to Spain, but was thereafter neglected by Spanish authorities.

1 – C

2 –

3 –

4 –

5 –

6 –

7 –

Source: [DÍAZ DEL CASTILLO, BERNAL](#) (1963) [1632]. *The Conquest of New Spain*. Penguin Classics. [J. M. Cohen](#) (trans.) (6th printing (1973) ed.). Harmondsworth, England: [Penguin Books](#)

IV. Match words similar in meaning:

accompanied by	faithfulness
neglected	battleship
loyalty	home
governor	abandoned
native	freedom
warship	escorted by
independence	ruler

VI. Choose the best variant for completing the following sentences:

1. In 1697 the command in Merida sent out soldiers, because
 - a). they planned to build a fort on the shore of the lake;
 - b). they wanted to make a way through the jungle;
 - c). they brought a warship in pieces with them;
 - d). they intended to reconstruct a small warship.
2. In 1695 three Franciscans headed to Tayasal in order to
 - a). beat Itza attacks;
 - b). make some preparation before sending Maya allies;
 - c). convert people to Christianity;
 - d). accompany four Christian Maya singers.
3. The Spanish burned the Itza library of books, because
 - a). the entire army was set at work;
 - b). the city had many idols;
 - c). thus they ended the last independent native state of Mesoamerica;
 - d). they contained lies of the devil.

VII. Give English equivalents for the following word combinations:

1. a large supply train
2. separated from
3. succeeded in
4. the last independent native state
5. pledge loyalty
6. under the jurisdiction of
7. made no progress
8. set up a fort on the shore of
9. with almost the entire army set at work

VIII. Make a presentation of the Spanish conquest of the Maya Empire.

UNIT 3: URBAN DESIGN

Text 1: Background

I. Look at the title of the text. What are you going to read about?

II. Study the pronunciation of the following proper names:

Teotihuacán [ˌteioʊˈtiːwaˈkan]

III. Read the text. Make your own questions & ask your classmates.

The Maya were an advanced society that flourished in Mesoamerica long before the arrival of the Spanish in the sixteenth century. They were skilled architects, building great cities of stone that remain even a thousand years after their civilization fell into decline. The Maya built pyramids, temples, palaces, walls, residences and more. They often decorated their buildings with intricate stone carvings, stucco statues and paint. Today, Maya architecture is important, as it is one of the few aspects of Maya life that is still available for study.

Maya tended to lay their cities out in plaza groups: clusters of buildings around a central plaza. This was true of the impressive buildings in the city center (temples, palaces, etc.) as well as smaller residential areas. These plazas are rarely neat and orderly and to some it may seem as if the Maya built anywhere they pleased. This is because the Maya built on irregularly-shaped higher ground to avoid floods and dampness associated with their tropical forest home. In the center of the cities were the important public buildings such as temples, palaces and the ball court. Residential areas radiated out from the city center, growing sparser the further they got from the center. Raised stone walkways linked the residential areas with each other and the center. Later Maya cities were built on higher hills for defense and had high walls surrounding most of the city or at least the centers.

At the onset of large-scale construction, a predetermined axis was typically established in congruence with the cardinal directions. Depending upon the location and availability of natural resources such as fresh-water wells, the city grew by connecting great plazas with the numerous platforms

that created the sub-structure for nearly all Maya buildings, by means of causeways. As more structures were added and existing structures re-built or remodeled, the great Maya cities seemed to take on an almost random identity that contrasts sharply with other great Mesoamerican cities such as Teotihuacan and its rigid grid-like construction.

Classic Era Maya urban design could easily be described as the division of space by great monuments and causeways. In this case, the open public plazas were the gathering places for the people and the focus of the urban design, while interior space was entirely secondary. Only in the Late Post-Classic era did the great Maya cities develop into more fortress-like defensive structures that lacked, for the most part, the large and numerous plazas of the Classic.

Sources: 1) <http://latinamericanhistory.about.com/od/Maya/p/Ancient-Maya-Architecture.htm>

2) Hansen, Richard D., *Continuity and Disjunction: The Pre-Classic Antecedents of Classic Maya Architecture*. University of California, Los Angeles.

3) Houston, Stephen D. (ed.), *Function and Meaning in Classic Maya Architecture*. Dumbarton Oaks 1998.

4) Martin, Simon, and Mary Miller, *Courtly Art of the Ancient Maya*. New York: Thames & Hudson, 2004.

IV. Give appropriate words for the following definitions:

1. (n) a town or small area which has its own government to make decisions about local affairs
2. (n) a type of rock that contains calcium
3. (n) a deep hole in the ground from which people take water
4. (n) a public square or market place surrounded by buildings
5. (adj) relating to a god or religion
6. (n) a raised road or path across wet ground or through water
7. (v) to not have something that you need, or not have enough of it
8. (adv) happening or done in a way that is not planned or organized

V. Say if the following sentences are true or false:

- 1). Nowadays it is uncertain if the Maya were great architects.
- 2). The Maya built their cities-plazas in lowlands.
- 3). Great Maya cities were completely different from other Mesoamerican cities.
- 4). The interior space was more important for Maya architects than the appearance of the building.
- 5). Public buildings used to be located in the city centers.

VI. Match the following words with their synonyms:

advanced	become worse
plaza	walkways
surrounding	progressive
defensive	springs
link	connect
wells	square
causeways	neighbouring
fall into decline	protective

VII. Find the adjectives corresponding to the following nouns, then translate them into Russian:

e.g. evidence - archaeological evidence

1. plazas
2. construction
3. society
4. walkways
5. carvings
6. areas
7. Resources

VIII. Using the facts from the text give us the best examples of the Maya urban design.

Text 2: Building materials

I. Read each part of the text carefully and mark sentences that express the main idea.

II. Study the pronunciation of the following words:

architecture [ˈɑrkəˌtektʃə] – архитектура

mortar [ˈmɔːtə] – строительный раствор

quarry [ˈkwɔːri] – каменоломня, карьер

limestone [ˈlaɪmstəʊn] – известняк

III. Answer the following questions:

- 1). What are the main building materials the Maya used?
- 2). What did the mortar mainly consist of?
- 3). Was the outside appearance of Maya buildings much more important than the inside? Why/Why not?
- 4). Where were fired-clay bricks found?
- 5). Why was the necessity for this limestone-stucco reduced?

A surprising aspect of the great Maya structures (0) is (A) their lack of many advanced technologies that would seem to be necessary (1) for such constructions. Lacking metal tools, pulleys and maybe even the wheel, Maya architecture (2) required one thing in abundance: manpower.

(3) Yet, beyond this enormous requirement, the remaining materials seem to have been readily available. All stone for Maya structures appears to have been (4) taken from local quarries. They most (5) often utilized limestone, which remained pliable enough to be worked with stone tools while being quarried, and only hardened once removed from its bed.

In addition to the structural use of limestone, much of their mortar (6) consisted of crushed, burnt, and mixed limestone that mimicked the properties of cement and was used just as widely for stucco finishing as it was for mortar. However, later (7) improvements in quarrying techniques reduced the necessity for this limestone-stucco as their stones (8) began to fit quite perfectly, yet it remained a crucial element in some post and lintel roofs.

The Mayan people also used mortar on their construction projects. They made the mortar by burning limestone in a very technical process. They layered the limestone with wood and put a cylinder or pipe up the middle of the stack. Next they burned the pile to make the mortar. To the Mayans the outside appearance (9) of their buildings was much more important than the inside. The temples were decorated with roof combs which sat at the top, outside edge along the front side of the temple. The mortar was also used to (10) finish the outside of buildings, coat floors, and make sculptures. The mortar also helped keep everything in place. Unfortunately, in more humid areas the stucco deteriorated quickly due to the dampness.

In the case of the common homes, wooden poles, adobe, and thatch were the primary materials; however, instances of what appear to be common (11) houses of limestone have been discovered as well. It should be noted that one instance, in the city of Comalcalco, fired-clay bricks have been found as a substitute to stone (12) because of a lack of substantial stone deposits.

Sources: 1) Hansen, Richard D., *Continuity and Disjunction: The Pre-Classic Antecedents of Classic Maya Architecture*. University of California, Los Angeles.

2) Houston, Stephen D. (ed.), *Function and Meaning in Classic Maya Architecture*. Dumbarton Oaks 1998.

3) Martin, Simon, and Mary Miller, *Courtly Art of the Ancient Maya*. New York: Thames & Hudson, 2004.

IV. Fill in the gaps. Choose the best variant given at the end of the text for each space:

0	A is	B are	C were	D has
1	A in	B out of	C for	D on
2	A wanted	B required	C demanded	D needed
3	A still	B yet	C but	D once
4	A taken	B given	C found	D discovered
5	A usually	B always	C sometimes	D often
6	A included	B excluded	C consisted	D comprised
7	A achievements	B efforts	C improvements	D attempts
8	A stopped	B began	C continued	D finished
9	A of	B for	C in	D with
10	A finish	B continue	C start	D stop
11	A buildings	B flats	C houses	D apartments
12	A thanks to	B due to	C because of	D for

V. Find English equivalents for the following words and expressions:

1. строительный проект;
2. передовые технологии;
3. каменные приспособления;
4. сделанные из глины кирпичи;
5. рабочая сила;
6. следует отметить;
7. снижали необходимость.

VI. Give your own definitions for the following terms:

- a) quarry;
- b) sculpture;
- c) technical process;
- d) a substitute;**
- e) primary materials.**

VII. Using the facts from the text give examples of the Maya building materials.

Text 3: Building process

I. Read the text. Which parts of the text contain the main ideas?

II. Write down the heading for each paragraph of the text.

III. Make your own questions & ask your classmates.

All evidence seems to suggest that most stone buildings existed on top of a platform sub-structure that varied in height from less than a meter, in the case of terraces and smaller structures, to 45 meters in the case of great temples and pyramids.

A flight of often steep stone steps split the large stepped platforms on at least one side, contributing to the common bi-symmetrical appearance of Maya architecture. Depending on the prevalent stylistic tendencies of an area, these platforms most often were built of a cut and stucco stone exterior filled with densely packed gravel. As is the case with many other Maya beliefs, those on the platforms often were related to the intended purpose of the residing structure. Thus, as the sub-structural platforms were completed, the grand residences and temples of the Maya were constructed on the solid foundations of the platforms.

As all structures were built, little attention seems to have been given to their utilitarian functionality and much to their external aesthetics; however, a certain repeated aspect, the corbeled arch, was often utilized to mimic the appearance and feel of the simple Maya hut.

Though not an effective tool to increase interior space, as it required thick stone walls to support the high ceiling, some temples utilized repeated arches, or a corbeled vault, to construct what the Maya referred to as pibnal, or sweat bath, such as those in the Temple of the Cross at Palenque. As structures were completed, typically extensive relief work was added ... often simply to the covering of stucco used to smooth any imperfections; however, many lintel carvings have been discovered, as well as actual stone carvings used as a facade. Commonly, these would continue uninterrupted around an entire structure and contain a variety of artwork pertaining to the inhabitants or purpose of a building. Broad use of painted stucco has been discovered as well.

It has been suggested that, in conjunction to the Maya Long Count Calendar, every fifty-two years, or cycle, temples and pyramids were

remodeled and rebuilt. It appears now that the rebuilding process was often instigated by a new ruler or for political matters, as opposed to matching the calendar cycle. However, the process of rebuilding on top of old structures is indeed a common one. Most notably, the North Acropolis at Tikal seems to be the sum total of 1,500 years of architectural modifications.

Sources: 1) Houston, Stephen D. (ed.), *Function and Meaning in Classic Maya Architecture*. Dumbarton Oaks 1998.

2) Martin, Simon, and Mary Miller, *Courtly Art of the Ancient Maya*. New York: Thames & Hudson, 2004.

IV. Find synonyms to the following words and expressions:

1. great temples
2. (stone steps) split (platforms)
3. were completed
4. little attention was given to
5. Maya hut
6. to increase
7. to construct
8. inhabitants
9. a ruler
10. architectural modifications

V. Say if the following sentences are true or false:

- 1) Gravel was used for building platforms.
- 2) To smooth any imperfections of a structure Maya people used stucco.
- 3) Stone buildings were created on different platforms of the same height.
- 4) A rebuilding process corresponded with a calendar cycle.
- 5) No attention was paid to utilitarian functionality of a structure.

VI. Match the words with their definitions:

1. gravel	a). surface that is above you in a room
2. an inhabitant	b). the front of a building, especially one that is large or impressive
3. a ceiling	c). small pieces of stone used for

	making paths and roads
4. a grand residence	d). a substance used for covering walls, usually on the outside of a building, to give them a rough surface
5. a facade	e). a person or animal that lives in a particular place
6. stucco	f). an impressive house or other place where someone lives, especially a large house used by an important person

V. Using the facts from the text give prominent features of the Maya building process.

Text 4: Notable constructions

I. Look at the title of the text and then write down at least three questions you would like to find the answer to in the text.

II. Skim the text. Does the text contain answers to your questions?

III. Answer the following questions:

- 1). What are the most famous structures made by the Maya?
- 2). What materials did they use in construction?
- 3). What do you know about co-called "E-group"?

IV. Read the text & do the comprehension task on page 42.

1). The platforms of approximately four meters in height where public ceremonies and religious rites were performed are called ceremonial platforms. They were mainly limestone and constructed in the fashion of a typical foundation platform, often accented by carved figures, altars and perhaps tzompantli, a stake used to display the heads of victims or defeated Mesoamerican ballgame opponents.

2). Large and often highly decorated, the palaces usually sat close to the center of a city and housed the population's elite. Any exceedingly large royal palace, or one consisting of many chambers on different levels might be referred to as an acropolis. However, often these were one-story and consisted of many small chambers and typically at least one interior courtyard; these structures appear to take into account the needed functionality required of a residence, as well as the decoration required for their inhabitants stature.

3).

4). "E-group" is a classification given by Mayanists to certain structure complexes attested in quite a few Maya sites of the central and southern lowlands - Petén region. Complexes of this type consist of a stepped pyramid main structure, which appears without fail on the western side of a

quadrilateral plaza or platform. A raised but rather elongated structure appears along the eastern side of the plaza, running north-south; a variation has three smaller temple mounds on top of or replacing this platform, the middle of these substructures placed directly opposite the main structure. Often, two other subsidiary structures appear on the north and south sides of the plaza, respectively.

5).

6). It has been theorized that these E-groups are observatories due to the precise positioning of the sun through the small temples when viewed from the pyramid during the solstices and equinoxes. Other ideas seem to stem from the possible creation story told by the relief and artwork that adorns these structures.

7).

8). Often the most important religious temples sat atop the towering Maya pyramids, presumably as the closest place to the heavens. While recent discoveries point toward the extensive use of pyramids as tombs, the temples themselves seem to rarely, if ever, contain burials. Residing atop the pyramids, some of over two-hundred feet, such as that at El Mirador, the temples were impressive and decorated structures themselves. Commonly topped with a roof comb, or superficial grandiose wall, these temples might have served as a type of propaganda.

9).

10). The Maya were keen astronomers and had mapped out the phases of celestial objects, especially the Moon and Venus. Many temples have doorways and other features aligning to celestial events. Round temples, often dedicated to Kukulcan, are perhaps those most often described as "observatories" by modern ruin tour-guides, but there is no evidence that they were so used exclusively, and temple pyramids of other shapes may well have been used for observation as well.

11).

12). There are also cave sites that are important to the Maya. These cave sites include Jolja Cave, the cave site at Naj Tunich, the Candelaria Caves, and the Cave of the Witch. There are also cave-origin myths among the Maya. Some cave sites are still used by the modern Maya in the Chiapas highlands.

Choose which of the paragraphs A-F match the numbered gaps in the text above. There is one extra paragraph which does not belong to any of the gaps.

A). E-group complexes are named after their prototypical example, Structure E-VII-sub at the site of Uaxactun. They were first identified as a meaningful complex by archaeologist Frans Blom in 1924, who excavated the site under the auspices of the Carnegie Institute.

B). As occasionally the only structure to exceed the height of the jungle, the roof combs atop the temples were often carved with representations of rulers that could be seen from vast distances. Beneath the proud temples sat the pyramids that were, ultimately, a series of platforms split by steep stairs that would allow access to the temple.

C). Archaeologists seem to agree that many palaces are home to various tombs. At Copán, beneath over four-hundred years of later remodeling, a tomb for one of the ancient rulers has been discovered and the North Acropolis at Tikal appears to have been the site of numerous burials during the Terminal Pre-classic and Early Classic periods.

D). As an integral aspect of the Mesoamerican lifestyle, the courts for their ritual ball-game were constructed throughout the Maya realm and often on a grand scale. Enclosed on two sides by stepped ramps that led to ceremonial platforms or small temples, the ball court itself was of a capital I shape and could be found in all but the smallest of Maya cities.

E). The main western structure is typically terraced (i.e. has several levels), with inset stairways on each of its four sides, with only the eastern stairway (i.e. the one leading from the plaza) providing access to the summit. The stairways have large balustrades which protrude from the pyramid, which were decorated with large stucco masks and panels of architectural art. In other examples (believed to be of a later date) this quadripartite stairway configuration is lacking.

Sources: 1) Hansen, Richard D., *Continuity and Disjunction: The Pre-Classic Antecedents of Classic Maya Architecture*. University of California, Los Angeles.

2) Houston, Stephen D. (ed.), *Function and Meaning in Classic Maya Architecture*. Dumbarton Oaks 1998.

3) Martin, Simon, and Mary Miller, *Courtly Art of the Ancient Maya*. New York: Thames & Hudson, 2004.

4) [HANSEN, RICHARD D.](#) (1991). "[Resultados preliminares de las investigaciones arqueológicas en el sitio Nakbe, Petén, Guatemala](#)". *II Simposio de Investigaciones Arqueológicas en Guatemala, 1988* (edited by J.P. Laporte, S. Villagrán, H. Escobedo, D. de González y J. Valdés). Museo Nacional de Arqueología y Etnología, Guatemala.

V. Complete the following sentences:

1. Ceremonial platforms were constructed ...
2. An acropolis is...
3. Complexes of E-group consist of...
4. Some constructions are considered to be observatories due to...
5. Temples might have served as ..., because...

VI. Match the following words with their synonyms:

1. a tomb	a). a place of worship
2. a temple	b). halls
3. observatories	c). ritual
4. to decorate	d). a grave
5. chambers	e). viewpoints
6. carved	f). to beautify
7. ceremonial	g). engraved

VII. Using the facts from the text give the short characteristics of the Maya notable constructions.

UNIT 4: WRITING & LITERACY

Text 1: Writing system

I. Read each paragraph of the text carefully & mark sentences that express the main idea.

II. Answer the following questions:

- 1). When did writing appear?
- 2). Where does it originate from?
- 3). What is a writing system?
- 4). What do you know about the Maya writing system?

III. Read the text & do the following comprehension task following the text.

1) The Maya writing system (often called hieroglyphs from a superficial resemblance to the Ancient Egyptian writing) was a combination of phonetic symbols and logograms. It is most often classified as a logographic or (more properly) a logosyllabic writing system, in which syllabic signs play a significant role. It is the only writing system of the Pre-Columbian New World which is known to completely represent the spoken language of its community.

2)

3) The earliest inscriptions in an identifiably-Maya script date back to 200 - 300 BC. However, this is preceded by several other writing systems which had developed in Mesoamerica, most notably that of the Zapotecs, and possibly the Olmecs. There is a pre-Mayan writing known as "Epi-Olmec script" (post Olmec) which some researchers believe may represent a transitional script between the Olmec writing and Maya writing, but since there are no clear examples of Olmec writing as yet, the matter is unsettled.

4) _____

5) Since its inception, the Maya script was in use up to the arrival of the Europeans, peaking during the Maya Classical Period (c. 200 - 900 AD). Although many Maya centers went into decline (or were completely abandoned) during or after this period, the skill and knowledge of Maya writing persisted amongst segments of the population, and the early Spanish conquistadores knew of individuals who could still read and write the script. Unfortunately, the Spanish displayed little interest in it, and as a result of the dire impacts the conquest had on Maya societies, the knowledge was subsequently lost, probably within only a few generations.

6)

7) A few pages survive from a fourth, the Grolier codex, whose authenticity is sometimes disputed, but mostly is held to be genuine. Further archaeology conducted at Mayan sites often reveals other fragments, rectangular lumps of plaster and paint chips which formerly were codices; these tantalizing remains are, however, too severely damaged for any inscriptions to have survived, most of the organic material having decayed.

8)

9) In reference to the few extant Maya writings, Michael D. Coe, a prominent linguist and epigrapher at Yale University stated: "[O]ur knowledge of ancient Maya thought must represent only a tiny fraction of the whole picture, for of the thousands of books in which the full extent of their learning and ritual was recorded, only four have survived to modern times (as though all that posterity knew of ourselves were to be based upon three prayer books and 'Pilgrim's Progress')."

10)

Choose which of the paragraphs A-F match the numbered gaps in the text above:

A) The decipherment and recovery of the now-lost knowledge of Maya writing has been a long and laborious process. Some elements were first

deciphered in the late 19th and early 20th century, mostly the parts having to do with numbers, the Maya calendar, and astronomy. Major breakthroughs came starting in the 1950s to 1970s, and accelerated rapidly thereafter. By the end of the 20th century, scholars were able to read the majority of Maya texts to a large extent, and recent field work continues to further illuminate the content.

B) On January 5, 2006, National Geographic published the findings of Maya writings that could be as old as 400 BC, suggesting that the Maya writing system is nearly as old as the oldest Mesoamerican writing found so far, Zapotec. In the succeeding centuries the Maya developed their script into a form which was far more complete and complex than any other that has yet been found in the Americas.

C) Most surviving pre-Columbian Maya writing is from stelae and other stone inscriptions from Maya sites, many of which were already abandoned before the Spanish arrived. The inscriptions on the stelae mainly record the dynasties and wars of the sites' rulers. Also of note are the inscriptions that reveal information about the lives of ancient Maya women. Much of the remainder of Maya hieroglyphics has been found on funeral pottery, most of which describes the afterlife.

D) In total, the script has more than a thousand different glyphs, although a few are variations of the same sign or meaning, and many appear only rarely or are confined to particular localities. At any one time, no more than around 500 glyphs were in use, some 200 of which (including variations) had a phonetic or syllabic interpretation.

E) At a rough estimate, around 10,000 individual texts have so far been recovered, mostly inscribed on stone monuments, lintels, stelae and ceramic pottery. Maya civilization also produced numerous texts using the bark of certain trees in a "book-format", called a codex. Shortly after the conquest, all of these latter which could be found were ordered to be burnt and destroyed by zealous Spanish priests, notably Bishop Diego de Landa. Out of these Maya codices, only three reasonably-intact examples are known to have survived through to the present day. These are now known as the Madrid, Dresden, and Paris codices.

Sources: 1) ["Symbols on the Wall Push Maya Writing Back by Years"](#). *The New York Times*. 2006

2) [MARCUS, JOYCE](#) (1976). *Emblem and State in the Classic Maya Lowlands: an Epigraphic Approach to Territorial Organization*. Dumbarton Oaks Other Titles in Pre-Columbian Studies. Washington D.C.: [Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection](#), [Harvard University Press](#).

3) Marcus, J. (1973) *Territorial Organization of the Lowland Classic Maya*. Science. 1973

4) [SOUSTELLE, JACQUES](#) (1984). *The Olmecs: The Oldest Civilization in Mexico*. New York: Doubleday and Co

5) [STUART, DAVID](#); and [STEPHEN D. HOUSTON](#) (1994). *Classic Maya Place Names*. Dumbarton Oaks Pre-Columbian Art and Archaeology Series, 33. Washington D.C.: [Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection](#), [Harvard University Press](#).

IV. Give a title to each part of the text.

V. Give the contents of each part in 1-2 sentences.

VI. Give a short summary of the Maya writing system.

Text 2: Writing tools.

I. Look at the text and then write down at least three questions you would like to find the answer to in the text.

II. Skim the text. Does it contain answers to your questions?

III. Read the text & answer the following questions:

1. What were Maya writing tools like?
2. Why is the Maya territory called the land of red and black?
3. What do you think why literacy was not widespread beyond the elite classes?
4. How did Maya people produce paper?

Nearly all of the Maya books disappeared during the Spanish conquest because the Maya writing was deemed to have been inspired by the Devil, and the church and government officials went to extreme lengths to destroy these examples of "paganism". Many hundreds or thousands of volumes were burned in the name of Christianity.

Paper was manufactured from the inner bark of certain kinds of trees such as the amate and ficus. Stone bark-beaters, oblong, flat grooved tools about hand-size were used to pound out the bark which was then bleached with lime, cut into strips and folded like a Japanese screen. A variety of paints were employed to illustrate these "books", which were painted on both sides and bound between elaborately decorated boards.

Although there is no archaeological record providing examples, Maya art shows that writing was done with brushes made with animal hair and quills. Codex-style writing was usually done in black ink with red highlights, giving rise to the Aztec name for the Maya territory as the "land of red and black".

Scribes held a prominent position in Maya courts. Maya art often depicts rulers with trappings indicating they were scribes or at least able to write, such as having pen bundles in their headdresses. Additionally, many rulers have been found in conjunction with writing tools such as shell or clay inkpots.

Literacy was not widespread beyond the elite classes in spite the fact that the number of logograms and syllabic symbols required to fully write the language numbered in the hundreds. An attempt to imitate the writing system (graffiti) was uncovered in various contexts, including on fired bricks.

The Maya script (it is known as Maya hieroglyphs) was the one of the pre-Columbian Maya civilization of Mesoamerica, presently the only deciphered script of the Mesoamerican writing systems. The earliest inscriptions which are identifiably Maya date to the 3rd century BC, and writing was in continuous use until shortly after the arrival of the Spanish conquistadores in the 16th century CE. Maya writing was called "hieroglyphics" or "hieroglyphs" by early European explorers of the 18th and 19th centuries who did not understand it but found its general appearance reminiscent of Egyptian hieroglyphs, to which however the Maya writing system is not at all related.

Sources: 1) [HOUSTON, STEPHEN D.](#) (1986). *Problematic Emblem Glyphs: Examples from Altar de Sacrificios, El Chorro, Rio Azul, and Xultun*. Research Reports on Ancient Maya Writing. Washington D.C: Center for Maya Research. Stuart, D. and S. D. Houston (1994). Classic Maya place names. Washington, D.C., Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection

2) [COE, MICHAEL D.](#) (1992). *Breaking the Maya Code*. London: Thames & Hudson.

3) [COE, MICHAEL D.](#); and [MARK L VAN STONE](#) (2005). *Reading the Maya Glyphs*. London: Thames & Hudson.

4) [HOUSTON, STEPHEN D.](#) (1993). *Hieroglyphs and History at Dos Pilas: Dynastic Politics of the Classic Maya*. Austin: [University of Texas Press](#).

5) [MONTGOMERY, JOHN](#) (2002). *Dictionary of Maya Hieroglyphs*. New York: Hippocrene Books

IV. Translate into Russian the following words and expressions:

1. quills
2. ink
3. scribes
4. courts
5. rulers
6. widespread beyond the elite classes
7. deciphered script

8. inner bark of trees
9. in conjunction with
10. were employed

V. Complete the table with the appropriate forms of the words given:

Verb	Noun	Adjective
know		---
	ruler	
record		
	arrival	
illustrate		
---		archaeological
decorate		

VI. Give definitions for the following terms:

- b) archaeological record
- c) writing system
- d) paganism
- e) script
- f) literacy
- g)

VII. Make a summary of the text.

Text 3: Mathematics.

- I. Which parts of the text contain the main ideas?**
- II. Read each paragraph of the text carefully and mark sentences that express the main idea.**
- III. Write down the heading for each paragraph of the text.**
- IV. Guess the meaning of the following words and expressions:**
 1. mathematician
 2. to carry out calculations
 3. solar year
 4. astronomical observations
 5. to multiply numbers
 6. to divide numbers
 7. scientific discoveries

One of the most interesting aspects about the ancient Maya is that they were able to count time with great precision and come up with various calendars without the technology that modern day mathematicians and scientists use to carry out these calculations. The Maya were able to calculate that the solar year lasted 365.242 days and in actuality modern day astronomers have found that the solar year lasts 365.242198 days. To come up with the length of the solar year, the Maya used a tool known as a gnomon. It is a rigid stick that is placed at the center of a flat surface. Since the stick casts a shadow, as the day goes by the shadow changes. When the shadow is “at its shortest then the sun has reached its highest point above the horizon, and it is true noon”. The ancient Maya also used their buildings to make their astronomical observations. The Maya were able to measure the lunar cycle as well.

The ancient Maya were not as “barbaric” as the Spanish colonizers and other European nations believed and scholars may have presumed before learning about their mathematical and scientific achievements. The ancient Maya civilization was very wise and intelligent. Unlike other number systems, the Mayan number system was developed for specific purposes.

They used a pure vigesimal system for counting and arithmetic operations and a modified vigesimal system for counting time. Moreover, a vigesimal system facilitated the expression of very large numbers.

Unlike the symbols used by other civilizations, their symbols for numbers, known as the “eye” or “shell,” the dot, and the bar, were much easier to remember, to count with, and perform arithmetical operations. Although there is still not enough evidence to conclude that the Maya used their notation to multiply and divide numbers, their number system was capable of being used to perform these operations. If they did not already multiply or divide, they would have surely come up with a method to perform these operations.

The Mayas used their mathematical knowledge for their astronomical observations as well. They used their modified vigesimal system to calculate the passage of time and come up with the most divide numbers. Moreover, their scientific discoveries were made by mere observations of the sky and the simplest tools and were almost equivalent to the discoveries made by astronomers who had technology at their disposal.

Thus, the ancient Maya were great mathematicians and scientists and, perhaps, if they had lived longer, they would have made more mathematical and scientific discoveries.

Sources:

- 1) http://math.ucsd.edu/programs/undergraduate/history_of_math_resource/history_papers/math_history_07.pdf
- 2) KETTUNEN, HARRI; and CHRISTOPHE HELMKE (2010). *Introduction to Maya Hieroglyphs*. Wayeb and Leiden University.
- 3) [MATHEWS, PETER](#) (1991). "Classic Maya emblem glyphs". In T. Patrick Culvert. *Classic Maya Political History: Hieroglyphic and Archaeological Evidence*. School of American Research Advanced Seminars. Cambridge and New York: [Cambridge University Press](#).
- 4) [TEDLOCK, DENNIS](#) (2010). *2000 Years of Mayan Literature*. California: University of California Press.
- 5) [VAN STONE, MARK L](#) (2010). *2012: Science and Prophecy of the Ancient Maya*. California: Tlacaoel Press.

V. Read the text and say if the following statements are true or false:

1. The Maya could count time with great precision using the technology like modern scientists do.
2. The Maya were able to measure the lunar and cycles.

3. The Mayan number system was a bit “barbaric”.
4. Multiplication and division were ordinary mathematical operations at that time.
5. A lot of scientific discoveries were made by astronomical observations.

VI. Match the halves of the sentences and translate them into Russian:

Unlike the symbols used by other civilizations,	they would have made more discoveries.
The ancient Maya also used their buildings	for their astronomical observations as well.
Unlike other number systems,	as the Spanish colonizers and other European nations believed.
Although there is still not enough evidence,	the Mayan number system was developed for specific purposes.
The Mayas used their mathematical knowledge	the Maya used a tool known as a gnomon.
If they had lived longer,	their symbols for numbers were much easier to remember.
The ancient Maya were not as “barbaric”	to make their astronomical observations.
To come up with the length of the solar year,	their number system was capable of being used to perform these operations.

VII. Speak about Maya mathematics using the active vocabulary from the text.

UNIT V: MAYAN SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Text I: I Maya Law

I Read the text and answer the following questions:

1. What is the duration of Maya civilization?
2. What modern countries were the territory of maya civilization in the past?

II Look at the title of the text and then write down at least 3 questions you would like to find the answer to in the text.

III Skim the text. Does the text contain answers to your questions?

IV Match the beginning of the phrase from column A and the end from column B:

A	B
1 human rights	A ruler
2 straightforward	B class
3 ongoing	C conquest
4 grow	D text
5 official	E path
6 elite	f violation
7 dynastic	G civilization
8 ancient	H progress
9 commercially	I dramatically
10 hieroglyphic	J oriented

The ancient Maya civilization existed for over two thousand years before the arrival of the Spanish conquistadores in the 16th century. The ancient Maya settled in Central America, southern Mexico, and the Yucatan peninsula, and are believed

to have been connected to the northern areas of Mesoamerica through their trading activities. For many years, very little was known about the ancient Maya. However, this has recently changed as a result of ongoing progress made by researchers in deciphering various Mayan hieroglyphic texts.

The history of the Maya civilization does not follow a straightforward path. Maya cities and regions advanced, collapsed, and had varying levels of influence at different time periods. The Classic Period from 250 – 900 A.D. is considered to have been the height of the ancient Maya civilization. During this time period, the Maya were led by dynastic rulers, the population grew dramatically, art and culture flourished, the elite classes became more entrenched, and wars and demands for tribute occurred more frequently. However, by the end of the Classic Period, the Maya kingdoms had begun to splinter and break off into smaller states. When the Spaniards arrived in the 1500s, the peak of the Maya civilization was long over and the remaining Maya states tended to be less centralized and more commercially oriented.

The Yucatec Maya first encountered the Spanish in 1502, but the official conquest of this region did not begin until 1527. The Maya fought with the Spaniards for several years until the conquest was completed in 1542. Despite the abuses that occurred during the Spanish colonization of the Maya homeland and the unfortunate human rights violations that continue to impact this region today, the Maya culture has survived and the modern day indigenous Maya of this region continue to carry on many of the traditions of their ancestors.

Source: http://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/exhibits/aztec/maya_about.html

V What do the following words and dates refer to?

1. 1542
2. 1527

3. colonization
4. the Classic Period
5. 250 – 900 A.D.
6. peninsula
7. 1502
8. 1500s

VI Complete the following sentences using information from the text:

1. By the end of the Classic Period, the Maya kingdoms...
2. The Maya fought with...
3. The ancient Maya settled...
4. The Classic Period from 250 – 900 A.D. is considered...

VII Read each paragraph of the text carefully and mark sentences that express the main ideas.

VIII Give the summary of the text.

Text II: Maya Political Structure

I Look at the title of the text. What are you going to read about?

II Read the text and answer the following questions:

1. What do you know about the structure of Maya empire at the time of the Spanish conquest?

2. What do you know about the rules of changing the governors after their death?

III Match the beginning from column A and end of phrases from column B from the text:

A	B
1 suitable	A authority
2 tribute	B village
3 government	C hierarchy
4 formulate	D a term
5 dependent	E obligations
6 political	f city
7 independent	G candidate
8 administrative	H duties
9 serve	I states
10 capital	J military strategy

The Ancient Maya shared a similar ideology and worldview, but they were never united as a single empire. Instead, the Maya lived in individual political

states that were linked together through trade, political alliances, and tribute obligations. Some of these states were independent, while others were part of larger political hierarchies. The Maya states were initially governed by simple chiefdoms. By the Classic Period, Maya governance had taken on the form of powerful centralized leaders who legitimized their authority through their political connections and their divine lineages. Individuals who disobeyed their rulers faced severe punishment because the Maya people believed that obedience to their leader was critical to maintaining the harmony of the Maya universe. Human sacrifice had begun prior to the Classic Period, and was used as a tool of social and religious control to demonstrate the power of the ruler and the gods.

At the time of the Spanish conquest, the Yucatan was divided into 18 separate Maya states, with many smaller towns and villages under the jurisdiction of a capital city. Nine of these states were ruled by a single ruler called a *halach uinic* (or *ahaw*), while the others were led by councils of nobles of elite lineage or were allied with larger states. The *halach uinic*'s power was limited by his council (*holpop*) and special military and foreign advisors, but he was still considered to be the highest authority in his state and was required to be from an elite lineage. Rulers were succeeded by their sons, brothers, or a suitable candidate who was selected by the priests and council if no relatives existed.

Each of the Maya states had a supreme military commander called a *nacom*. The *nacom* served a three year term and was responsible for formulating military strategy and calling troops to battle. The individual states also had a high priest who led a hierarchy of priests, determined the dates for festivals and ceremonies, and foretold auspicious events for the ruler. The *halach uinic* appointed the *batabs*, who were the overseers and administrators of dependent cities and villages within the state. *Batabs* usually held administrative, judicial, and military authority over their towns, ensured that tribute was paid to the *halach uinic*, and supplied troops in times of war. *Batabs* were not paid tribute, but were supported by the people who lived in their town. Each *batab* presided over a local council composed of

town officials known as the ah cuch cabob. These councilors were the heads of the different subdivisions (nalil) within the towns. The Batabs also had assistants (al kuleloob) who assisted them with carrying out their government duties. Each town had constables (tupiles) who were supervised by the batab and were charged with keeping the peace.

Source: http://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/exhibits/aztec/maya_politics.html

IV What do the phrases from exercise 2 refer to?

V Are the following statements true or false? Correct the false statements.

1. Each of the Maya states had several supreme military commanders called nacoms.
2. The responsibility of the nacom was to call troops battle and to carry out the government duties.
3. Human sacrifice was used as a tool to make people obey to the ruler.
4. In the Maya empire ruling was inherited by close or far relatives only.
5. In all times the Maya had always been as a united single empire.
6. The Ancient Maya presented an empire with varied ideology of people living in different cities, towns and villages.

VI Match the word from column A and its definition from column B from the text:

A	B
1 halach uinic (or ahaw)	A overseers and administrators of dependent cities and villages within the state
2 nalil	B constable of the town
3 nacom	C assistant of batab
4 tupile	D subdivision within the towns

5 kuleloob	E supreme military commander
6 batab	f single ruler

VII What sentences of the text contain the main ideas?

VIII Make the plan of the text and retell the text according to it.

Text III: Maya Social Structure

I Look at the title of the text and then write down at least 3 questions you would like to find the answer to in the text.

II Skim the text. Does the text contain answers to your questions?

III Read the text and answer the following questions:

1. What do you know about social structure of the Maya & division into classes?

2. Did the Maya have the system of slavery?

IV Match the beginning from column A and end of phrases from column B from the text:

A	B
1 religious	A class
2 orphan	B status
3 noble	C trade
4 government	D children
5 pay back	E leader
6 plot	f ritual
7 slave	G debts
8 slavery	H of land
9 military	I official

Maya society was rigidly divided between nobles, commoners, serfs, and slaves. The noble class was complex and specialized. Noble status and the occupation in which a noble served were passed on through elite family lineages.

Nobles served as rulers, government officials, tribute collectors, military leaders, high priests, local administrators, cacao plantation managers, and trade expedition leaders. (A)

Commoners worked as farmers, laborers, and servants. It is believed that some commoners became quite wealthy through their work as artisans and merchants, and that upward mobility was allowed between classes through service in the military. Regardless, commoners were forbidden from wearing the clothes and symbols of nobility, and could not purchase or use luxury and exotic items. Commoners generally lived outside the central areas of towns and cities and worked individual and communal plots of land.

The Maya had a system of serfdom and slavery. Serfs typically worked lands that belonged to the ruler or local town leader. (B) Individuals were enslaved as a form of punishment for certain crimes and for failing to pay back their debts. Prisoners of war who were not sacrificed would become slaves, and impoverished individuals sometimes sold themselves or family members into slavery. (C) However, unwanted orphan children became slaves and were sometimes sacrificed during religious rituals. Slaves were usually sacrificed when their owners died so that they could continue in their service after death. If a man married a slave woman, he became a slave of the woman's owner. This was also the case for women who married male slaves.

Source: http://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/exhibits/aztec/maya_social.html

V What do the phrases from exercise 2 refer to?

VI The following sentences were cut out of the text. Put them into correct place.

1. Slavery status was not passed on to the children of slaves.

2. Nobles were literate and wealthy, and typically lived in the central areas of Maya cities.

3. There was an active slave trade in the Maya region, and commoners and elites were both permitted to own slaves.

VII Complete the following sentences using information from the text:

1. Individuals were enslaved as...
2. If a man married a slave woman...
3. Nobles served as...
4. Commoners worked as...
5. Commoners generally lived...
6. Maya society was rigidly divided between...
7. Impoverished individuals sometimes sold...
8. Unwanted orphan children became...
9. Slaves were usually sacrificed when...

VIII Write down the heading for each paragraph of the text.

IX Describe the role of every class in the Mayan society.

Text IV: Mayan Life

I Before reading the text answer the following questions:

1. What do you know about the class system of people in the Mayan society?
2. Who were the most powerful people in the Mayan society?
3. What was the main “industry” in the Mayan society?
4. Do you know any farming technique used by the Mayans?

II Match the beginning from column A and end of phrases from column B from the text:

A	B
1 to lead	A honey
2 noble	B system
3 sweet	C wall
4 to raise	D technique
5 to plant	E rain
6 stone	f religious ceremony
7 class	G family
8 summer	H potato
9 to make	I a bee
10 farming	J seeds

Most of the Mayan people were farmers. The main staple of their diet was corn also known as maize. Other things that they grew were beans, squash, avocado pear, avocado, sweet potato, guava, chili peppers, cocoa beans, vanilla beans, papaya and tomatoes. They would also eat fruits from trees.

The Mayans used a farming technique called milpa, also known as slash and burn. They would clear the land by cutting down and burning all of the foliage in the spring before the summer rains. Then they would plant their crops by poking digging sticks into the ground and planting the seeds in the holes. The slash and

burn technique means that the fields would only be fertile for a few years. The Mayans practiced crop rotation to get more growing seasons out of the field.

Another farming technique used by the Mayans was terracing. They would build stone walls to level out fields in mountainous areas.

Most of the plants grown by the Mayans were for food. Other plants were grown to make dyes for clothing and chewing gum from the Sapodilla tree. The Mayans also grew plants to make medicines to heal people. They would cut down timber from the jungle to build houses and temples.

In addition to farming the Mayans raised dogs, turkeys and ducks for food. They also used the feathers from the turkeys and ducks for clothes. The Mayans raised bees to make honey. In the wild they hunted deer, rabbits, boar, armadillos and they fished. They also ate fish, turtles, iguanas and insects. The Mayans used every part of the animal for food, clothing and tools. This is very similar to the Native Americans in our country.

The main part of the Mayans diet was corn or maize. The woman would grind the corn into flour and then make a paste. Then they baked it into a tortilla, similar to a taco shell.

The Mayan family all lived together. The men farmed and hunted. The women would cook and weave. The children helped out their mothers with the chores and only went to school if they came from a noble family.

The Mayans had a class system of people, which meant that the people at the top governed over the people at the bottom. At the top were the nobles with the King being the most powerful. The King's power was hereditary which means that the oldest son would become the King when he died. The King appointed the other people. The next most powerful were the priests who helped the king and also lead religious ceremonies. The next level of people was the commoners. Most people were in this commoner category and were farmers. The bottom of the system was

the slaves. Slaves were caught during wars or if people broke a law like stealing they would become a slave.

Source: Galvin, Irene Flum, The Ancient Maya, Tarrytown, NY: Benchmark Books, 1997.

III What do the phrases from exercise 2 refer to?

IV Complete the following sentences using information from the text:

1. At the top of the class system were...
2. The Mayans grew the following plants: ...
3. The Mayans used different farming techniques: ...
4. The slash and burn technique means...
5. The King's power was...
6. The main part of the Mayans diet was...
7. In the wild the Maya hunted...
8. At the bottom of the class system were...

V Read each paragraph of the text carefully and mark sentences that express the main ideas.

VI Write down the heading for each paragraph of the text.

VII Make the plan of the text and retell the text according to it.

UNIT VI: MAYAN LEGAL SYSTEM

Text I: Maya Legal System and Sources of Law

I Look at the title of the text. What are you going to read about?

II Have you ever heard about the following? If yes, what do you know about it?

- a) Dresden Codice
- b) Paris Codice
- c) Madrid Codice
- d) *Relación de las Cosas de Yucatan* by Diego de Landa
- e) Popul Vuh
- f) Books of Chilam Balam (Books of the Jaguar Shaman).

III Match the beginning of phrases from column A and end from column B:

A	B
1 legal	A punishment
2 anthropological	B cage
3 capital	C case
4 civil	D system
5 wooden	E tradition
6 religious	f studies

The laws that governed the various Maya states were issued by the halach uinic and his council, or by the council alone if the state did not have an halach uinic. The batabs were responsible for carrying out these laws and serving as administrators to smaller towns and cities. Batabs also served as judges for their

towns and adjudicated civil and criminal cases. Court cases were generally handled swiftly in public meeting houses known as *popilna*. Judicial proceedings were conducted orally and written records were not maintained. Witnesses were required to testify under oath and there is evidence to suggest that the parties were represented by individuals who functioned as attorneys. *Batabs* would review the evidence, evaluate the circumstances of the case, consider whether the criminal act in question was deliberate or accidental, and would order an appropriate punishment. Decisions made by the *batabs* were final and could not be appealed, though the victims could pardon the accused, thus reducing their punishment. If the accused parties were found guilty, their sentences were carried out immediately by the *tupiles*. The Maya did not have prisons, but may have had wooden cages that were used as holding cells for individuals who were awaiting capital punishment. If a crime occurred that affected an individual in another town, the *batabs* in the two towns would work together to ensure that issue was resolved. The *batab* generally acted independently, but would consult with the *halach uinic* on serious cases before passing judgement.

Because the ancient Maya civilization had peaked before the Spanish Conquest, the amount of primary material on the Maya legal system is limited. The majority of Maya manuscripts and codices were destroyed by Spanish priests, and the surviving codices tend to focus on Maya astronomy, mathematics, history, calendars, and religious rituals. These include the Dresden, Paris, and Madrid Codices. Following the conquest, Maya scribes wrote various books, including the *Popul Vuh*, and the Books of Chilam Balam (Books of the Jaguar Shaman). Both of these resources contain information about Maya history, myths, and religious traditions. The conquistadores and Spanish missionaries additionally documented their observations of the Maya. Bishop Diego de Landa wrote a detailed chronicle of the Maya, entitled *Relación de las Cosas de Yucatan*. This manuscript contained information about Maya history, culture, and hieroglyphics. Finally, researchers

have relied on Maya monuments, pottery and paintings, hieroglyphic texts, and anthropological studies of modern day Maya to learn more about this civilization.

Source: http://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/exhibits/aztec/maya_legal.html

IV What do the following words and dates refer to?

1. Books of Chilam Balam
2. to find guilty
3. *Relación de las Cosas de Yucatan*
4. Codices
5. prison
6. to reduce punishment
7. painting
8. to hold cells

V Complete the following sentences using information from the text:

1. The conquistadores and Spanish missionaries...
2. Researchers have relied on...
3. Decisions made by the batabs were...
4. The majority of Maya manuscripts and codices...
5. The manuscript *Relación de las Cosas de Yucatan* by Diego de Landa contained information about
6. The Maya did not have prisons, but may have...
7. The batabs were responsible for...

8. Witnesses were required to...

VI Read each paragraph of the text carefully and mark sentences that express the main ideas.

VII Make the plan of the text and retell the text according to it.

Text II: Maya Criminal Law

Under the Maya legal system, punishments for various crimes were severe. Murder, rape, incest, treachery, arson, and acts that offended the gods were punishable by death. However, the Maya distinguished between intentional and accidental acts. For example, individuals who were found guilty of homicide were sentenced to death. However, if a killing was accidental, the perpetrator was ordered to pay restitution or sell one of his slaves to the victim's family. If the perpetrator was a minor, he would be ordered into slavery. Theft crimes were punished with restitution or temporary enslavement. The sentences of slavery and restitution were not limited to the perpetrator, but were also passed on to his family members. Maya homes were subject to special protection because they did not have doors. Individuals who entered homes to cause damage or injure others were sentenced to death. Nobles who were found guilty of crimes were treated especially harsh and were forced to have their faces permanently tattooed as a symbol of their crimes.

Adultery was considered a criminal offense. Married women who committed adultery were publicly shamed and their lovers were stoned to death. Their husbands had the option of leaving the marriage and finding a new spouse. Married men who committed adultery were sentenced to death unless their extra-marital affair was with an unmarried woman.

Pardons were available for criminals. Adulterers could avoid punishment by being pardoned by the injured husband, and families of murder victims could demand restitution in lieu of capital punishment.

Source: http://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/exhibits/aztec/maya_criminal.html

I Look at the title of the text and then write down at least 3 questions you would like to find the answer to in the text.

II Skim the text. Does the text contain answers to your questions?

III Read the text and answer the following questions:

1. What was the role of wooden cages in the system of punishment of the Maya society?
2. What is the difference between intentional and accidental acts?
3. How were the nobles who were found guilty of crimes treated?
4. What was the punishment for individuals who were found guilty of homicide?

IV Find the nouns corresponding to the following adjectives, then translate them into Russian, e.g.: legal – legal system (юридическая система)

1. capital
2. injured
3. married
4. criminal
5. extra-marital
6. temporary
7. intentional
8. special

V What do the phrases from exercise 2 refer to?

VI Complete the following sentences using information from the text:

1. Theft crimes were punished with...
2. Married men who committed adultery were sentenced to...
3. Adultery was considered...
4. Adulterers could avoid punishment by...
5. Maya homes were subject to...
6. Nobles who were found guilty of crimes were treated...

VI Read each paragraph of the text carefully and mark sentences that express the main ideas.

VII Write down the heading for each paragraph of the text.

VIII Speak about the main punishments in the Maya society.

Text III: Maya Property and Commercial Law

I Look at the title of the text. What are you going to read about?

II Before reading the text answer the following questions:

1. What do you know about the Maya property system?
2. What were the main agricultural items in the Mayan society?
3. What do you know about the currency system in the Mayan society?

Limited information is available on the Maya property system. Communal lands were owned by the nobles and ruling class, and were worked by commoners. Commoner families were also permitted to own small parcels of land that they used for subsistence agriculture. (A) Commoners were required to pay tribute to the ruler, their local elite lords, and to the gods in the form of labor, goods, offerings, and a portion of their harvests from their communal and private lands. They were also required to work on annual labor projects, such as building temples, palaces, and causeways.

In addition to the agricultural industry, the Maya produced cacao, cotton, salt, honey, dye, and other exotic goods for trade. The Maya had travelling merchants, but very little is known about them. (B) The Maya had markets to sell their surplus crops, but it is not known how the markets functioned or were governed. The Maya did have a currency system, and used cacao beans, gold, copper bells, jade, and oyster shell beads as forms of money. (C) The Maya additionally conducted business using the barter system.

The Maya used contracts, which were formalized when the parties drank balché (a mild alcoholic drink) in front of witnesses. Interest was not charged on loans and there were no criminal penalties for going into debt. Individuals who could not pay their debts would become slaves of the people who they owed

money to. If a debtor passed away, his family would assume responsibility for paying his debts.

Source: http://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/exhibits/aztec/maya_commercial.html

III The following sentences were cut out of the text. Put them into correct place.

1. Counterfeiting was a problem, and occurred when unscrupulous individuals removed the flesh of cacao beans and replaced it with avocado rinds or dirt.

2. This land could be passed down to the owner's sons.

3. There is evidence that they traded across the Maya region and Central Mexico, and conducted trade by sea.

IV Find the nouns corresponding to the following adjectives, then make sentences with them, e.g.: agricultural – agricultural industry (сельское хозяйство)

1. copper

2. agricultural

3. criminal

4. communal

5. limited

6. unscrupulous

7. private

8. annual

9. barter

10. travelling

V What do the phrases from exercise 3 refer to?

VI Complete the following sentences using information from the text:

1. The Maya did have...

2. The Maya produced...

3. If a debtor passed away...

4. Commoners were required to...

5. Individuals who could not pay their debts...

6. The Maya had markets to sell...

7. The Maya used contracts, which were...

8. Interest was not charged on...

9. Communal lands were owned by...

VII What sentences of the text contain the main ideas?

VIII Write down the heading for each paragraph of the text.

IX Give the summary of the text.

Text IV: Maya Family Law

I Look at the title of the text. What are you going to read about?

II Before reading the text answer the following questions:

1. What do you know about the maya family law?
2. What was the typical age when Mayan people got married?
3. What do you know about up-bringing of children in the mayan families?

III Match the beginning from column A and end of phrases from column B from the text:

A	B
1 government	A couple
2 legal	B training
3 market	C education
4 educational	D role
5 monogamous	E ceremony
6 ruling	f office
7 marriage	G property
8 governing	H vendor
9 inheritance	I right
10 noral	J class

Maya family law appears to have been based on customary law. Maya men and women usually got married at around the age of 20, though women sometimes got married at the age of 16 or 17. Maya marriages were frequently arranged by matchmakers, and the father of the groom had to approve the match. The bride and groom were required to have different surnames to ensure that they were not from the same lineage. A dowry was required from the groom's family, which consisted of clothing and household articles for the bride and groom. Marriage ceremonies were performed by a priest in the home of the bride's father. After the ceremony, the newlyweds lived with the bride's parents for 6-7 years. The groom was required

to work for the family during this time as a form of payment for receiving his wife. The married couple then built a permanent home next to the husband's parents and lived there until death. Couples were usually monogamous, with the exception of wealthy nobles who practiced polygamy. Divorces were permitted by simply leaving the relationship, and usually occurred when one of the parties was infertile or not carrying out his or her family responsibilities. Widowers and widows were required to remain single for one year after the death of their spouses, and could then remarry without a formal ceremony.

Children were loved and valued by their parents. They were raised at home and were provided with a moral education by their parents. Children were required to go through various religious rites at birth and puberty. After puberty, girls stayed at home until they got married. Boys were sent to live in community dormitories, but would return home each day to work with their fathers. It is not known whether boys received educational training at the dormitories or whether any formal schools existed. However, there is evidence to suggest that children were selected to be apprenticed for certain jobs, including scribes, priests, artists, and masons. This selection was based on social status and aptitude. Women were trained to manage their households, though some worked outside the home as midwives, market vendors, and matchmakers. Noble wives and mothers participated in various rituals related to the ruling class, and there is some evidence to suggest that women may have had governing roles within the various Maya states.

Inheritance property typically passed from father to son. There is also evidence that certain professions, titles, and government offices were passed down from father to son, brother to brother, or uncle to nephew. Women did not have the legal right to inherit property, but could inherit the family's debts and slavery status. If a man died without a son, property would pass to the deceased's brothers. If the sons were young when they received their inheritance, a trustee was appointed to manage the property and use the proceeds of the property to support

the sons. This was usually one of the brothers of the deceased. Once the heirs reached adulthood, they would receive what remained of the inheritance.

Source: http://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/exhibits/aztec/maya_family.html

IV What do the phrases from exercise 2 refer to?

V Complete the following sentences using information from the text:

1. Inheritance property typically passed...
2. Boys were sent to...
3. If a man died without a son...
4. Women were trained to...
5. Divorces were permitted by...
6. Marriage ceremonies were performed by...
7. The bride and groom were required to...

VI What sentences of the text contain the main ideas?

VII Write down the heading for each paragraph of the text.

VIII Make the plan of the text and retell the text according to it.

Text V: Maya International and Military Law

I Look at the title of the text and then write down at least 3 questions you would like to find the answer to in the text.

II Skim the text. Does the text contain answers to your questions?

War was a common occurrence throughout the history of the ancient Maya, and was conducted for the purpose of destroying rival states, gaining tribute, and capturing victims for human sacrifice. The halach uinic was considered the supreme military leader and was assisted by the nacom, a military adviser who was elected to this post every three years. When wars were declared, the batab was responsible for providing troops from his town to be sent to battle. However, it is not known how these troops were organized, trained, or supplied. During combat, nobles who were captured were immediately sacrificed. Other captured soldiers were forced to become slaves and were sometimes treated in a humiliating manner by the conquering army. Wars typically did not last for a long duration, and the Maya did not destroy cities because this could adversely affect their ability to collect tribute from the conquered regions.

Very little is known about foreign relations between the Maya and the Aztecs, though it is understood that the two regions engaged in trade and that the Aztecs collected tribute from certain Maya regions. It is not clear whether the Maya had nobles who served as ambassadors for their states and managed foreign relations with the Aztecs and other indigenous groups.

Source: http://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/exhibits/aztec/maya_international.html

III Read the text and answer the following questions:

1. What can you say about foreign relations between the maya and the Aztec?
2. Were there any ambassadors between them? If yes, what was their role?

IV Find the adjectives corresponding to the following nouns, then translate them into Russian, e.g.: groups – indigenous groups (коренные народы)

1. relations
2. army
3. adviser
4. military leader
5. occurrence
6. victim
7. sacrifice
8. states

V What do the phrases from exercise 2 refer to?

VI Complete the following sentences using information from the text:

1. The halach uinic was considered...
2. Maya did not destroy cities because...
3. During combat captured soldiers were forced to...
4. A military adviser was elected...
5. When wars were declared, the batab was responsible for...

VII Read each paragraph of the text carefully and mark sentences that express the main ideas.

VIII Write down the heading for each paragraph of the text.

IX Describe the relations between the Maya and the Aztec.

TEXTS FOR ADDITIONAL READING

Text I: Why did the Maya disappear?

I Look at the title of the text and then write down at least 3 questions you would like to find the answer to in the text.

II Skim the text. Does the text contain answers to your questions?

Why the Maya disappeared is a question that has baffled historians for years. Because the Maya disappeared long ago no one will ever know for sure what happened to them. Many theories exist but none are definitely true.

In the Post Classic period the Maya abandoned many of the cities in the south such as Palenque and Tikal and they migrated northward to settle Uxmal. Then Uxmal was abandoned and Chichen Itza was settled and ultimately conquered by the people of Mayapan. Mayapan ultimately fell to the Spaniards who tried to convert the people to Christianity and forced many to become slaves. Nevertheless the pattern existed that the cities would be settled and ultimately abandoned.

Some of the theories are that over population may have caused people to move because there was not be enough food for everyone. The Maya were a farming people and the farmland would not be fertilized like today. The farmland may have not produced as well and caused a famine and thus forced the Mayans to move to more fertile lands. Some historians have also said that droughts may have caused the people to move-since they would have to find land with more water to drink and farm with. Other people have suggested reasons such as climatic changes, earth quakes, and sickness or epidemics. One other big reason may have been warfare from neighboring cities or invaders from other countries. No one will ever know for sure why the Mayans abandoned their cities, but we do know that the ruins are in the jungles with the buildings standing. And the Mayans may have

moved for any number of combinations of the reasons listed above. The Mayans were a wonderful civilization and it is horrible that they collapsed. Because the Mayans fell apart so many years ago, no one will ever know why they disappeared. It is mystery that we will never know how to solve.

III Describe the main theories why the Maya disappeared.

Text II: Will the world end in 2012, like the Mayan Calendar?

I Look at the title of the text and then write down at least 3 questions you would like to find the answer to in the text.

II Skim the text. Does the text contain answers to your questions?

Countdown to December 21, 2012, 11:11 UTC. One theory suggests a galactic alignment which would create chaos on Earth because of the gravitational effect between the Sun and the Black hole called Sagittarius A, which is located at the center of our galaxy. Another theory involves a 'polar shift', which means a reversal of the north and south magnetic poles. Scientists believe that the Earth is overdue for a geomagnetic reversal. However, this can take up to 5,000 years to complete and does not start on any particular date.

Just a new beginning. NASA scientists have thoroughly studied and analyzed the possibility of the Earth ending in 2012, and have concluded that 21st December 2012 will be nothing more than a normal December solstice. There is simply no scientific evidence to support any claims of an apocalypse on Earth on December 21, 2012.

No planetary alignment. In response to theories about planetary alignments leading to an apocalypse on Earth on December 21, 2012, scientists say no planetary alignments is likely to occur in the next few decades. And even if they did, the effects on our planet would be negligible. NASA scientists also claim that the 'polar shift' theory is totally impossible. Although continents move slowly throughout time, a magnetic reversal is very unlikely to happen in the next few millennia and would not cause any harm to life on Earth. The scientists' conclusion is that the end of the Mayan calendar does not imply the end of the world, only the end of the Mayan long-count period. The 'long count' is a part of the [Maya](#)

[calendar](#) shaped like a wheel. When we reach the end of the wheel, it will turn to the beginning again, just like our modern [Gregorian calendar](#) starts again every January 1.

III What sentences of the text contain the main ideas?

IV Describe the main theories of the world end in December, 2012 and give your own opinion on this question.

Text III: The Mayan Calendar - predicting the end of the world?

I Look at the title of the text. What are you going to read about?

System. The Maya had a very sophisticated calendar system. It consisted of an almanac which was 260 days, and a 365 day year like ours. In the almanac, also called a tzolkin or count of days, each day had a number from 1 - 13 and one of 20 day names. These were names of gods. This was the sacred year. Which ever god was the day name of your birthday, would be your patron deity. The 365 day year had 18 months of 20 days, and one month of 5 days which were unlucky. On these days they fasted and made sacrifices and didn't do any work they didn't need to do. What Mayans called days were *Kins*. After 20 days *1 uinal* passed. After *18 uinals*, *1 tun* passed. *20 tuns* is *1 katun*.

1 day = 1 Kin

20 Kin = 1 Uinal (20 Days)

18 Uinals = 1 Tun (360 Days)

20 Tuns = 1 Katun (7,200 Days)

20 Katuns = 1 Baktun (144,000 Days)

20 Baktuns = 1 Pictun (2,880,000 Days)

This system, called the long count, allowed them to keep an accurate record of time for thousands of years. Only priests could truly know which day it was and when things like holidays would happen.

The Mayan calendar moves in cycles with the last cycle ending in December 2012. This is often interpreted as ["the world will end on 21 December 2012, at 11:11 UTC"](#). The last day of the Mayan calendar corresponds with the [Winter Solstice](#) (or December Solstice), which has played a [significant role in many cultures](#) all over the world. The Maya didn't invent the calendar, it was used by most cultures in pre-Columbian Central America – including the Maya – from

around 2000 BC to the 16th century. The Mayan civilization developed the calendar further and it's still in use in some Maya communities today.

Wheels working together. The Mayan Calendar consists of three separate corresponding calendars, the *Long Count*, the *Tzolkin* (divine calendar) and the *Haab* (civil calendar). Time is cyclical in the calendars and a set number of days must occur before a new cycle can begin. The three calendars are used simultaneously. The Tzolkin and the Haab identify and name the days, but not the years. The Long Count date comes first, then the Tzolkin date and last the Haab date. A typical Mayan date would read: 13.0.0.0.0 4 Ahau 8 Kumku, where 13.0.0.0.0 is the Long Count date, 4 Ahau is the Tzolkin date and 8 Kumku is the Haab date.

The Haab. The *Haab* is a 365 day solar calendar which is divided into 18 months of 20 days each and one month which is only 5 days long (*Uayeb*). The calendar has an outer ring of Mayan glyphs (pictures) which represent each of the 19 months. Each day is represented by a number in the month followed by the name of the month. Each glyph represents a personality associated with the month. The Haab is somewhat inaccurate as it is exactly 365 days long. An actual tropical or solar year is 365.2422 days long. In today's [Gregorian calendar](#) we adjust for this discrepancy by making almost every fourth year a [leap year](#) by adding an extra day – [a leap day](#) – on the [29th of February](#).

The Tzolkin. The divine calendar is also known as the Sacred Round or the Tzolkin which means “the distribution of the days”. It is a 260-day calendar, with 20 periods of 13 days used to determine the time of religious and ceremonial events. Each day is numbered from one to thirteen, and then repeated. The day is also given a name (glyph) from a sequence of 20 day names. The calendar repeats itself after each cycle.

The Long Count. The Long Count is an astronomical calendar which was used to track longer periods of time, what the Maya called the “universal cycle”. Each

such cycle is calculated to be 2,880,000 days (about 7885 solar years). The Mayans believed that the universe is destroyed and then recreated at the start of each universal cycle. This belief still inspires a myriad of prophecies about the end of the world. The “creation date” for the current cycle we are in today, is 4 Ahaw, 8 Kumku. According to the most common conversion, this date is equivalent to August 11, 3114 BC in the [Gregorian calendar](#) or September 6 in the [Julian calendar](#).

In common with the other Mesoamerican civilizations, the Maya used a base 20 (vigesimal) and base 5 numbering system in mathematics. Also, they independently developed the concept of zero by 357 AD (Europeans did not import the zero concept until the 12th century from India.). Inscriptions show them on occasion working with sums up to the hundreds of millions and dates so large it would take several lines just to represent it. They produced extremely accurate astronomical observations; their charts of the movements of the moon and planets are equal or superior to those of any other civilization working from naked eye observation.

Also in common with the other Mesoamerican civilizations, the Maya utilized a highly accurate measure of the length of the solar year, far more accurate than that used in Europe as the basis of the Gregorian calendar. They did not use this figure for the length of year in their calendar, however. Instead, the Maya calendar was based on a year length of exactly 365 days, which means that the calendar falls out of step with the seasons by one day every four years. By comparison, the Julian calendar, used in Europe from Roman times until about the 16th century, accumulated an error of one day every 128 years. The modern Gregorian calendar accumulates a day's error in approximately 3257 years.

II Read each paragraph of the text carefully and mark sentences that express the main ideas.

III Write down the heading for each paragraph of the text.

**IV What is the main difference between three Mayan calendars?
Describe each of them.**

Source: <http://www.timeanddate.com/calendar/mayan.html>

Text IV: III Mysterious Decline of the Maya

I Look at the title of the text. What are you going to read about?

From the late eighth through the end of the ninth century, something unknown happened to shake the Maya civilization to its foundations. One by one, the Classic cities in the southern lowlands were abandoned, and by A.D. 900, Maya civilization in that region had collapsed. The reason for this mysterious decline is unknown, though scholars have developed several competing theories.

Some believe that by the ninth century the Maya had exhausted the environment around them to the point that it could no longer sustain a very large population. Other Maya scholars argue that constant warfare among competing city-states led the complicated military, family (by marriage) and trade alliances between them to break down, along with the traditional system of dynastic power. As the stature of the holy lords diminished, their complex traditions of rituals and ceremonies dissolved into chaos. Finally, some catastrophic environmental change--like an extremely long, intense period of drought--may have wiped out the Classic Maya civilization. Drought would have hit cities like Tikal--where rainwater was necessary for drinking as well as for crop irrigation--especially hard.

All three of these factors – overpopulation and overuse of the land, endemic warfare and drought – may have played a part in the downfall of the Maya in the southern lowlands. In the highlands of the Yucatan, a few Maya cities--such as Chichén Itzá, Uxmal and Mayapán--continued to flourish in the Post-Classic Period (A.D. 900-1500). By the time the Spanish invaders arrived, however, most Maya were living in agricultural villages, their great cities buried under a layer of rainforest green.

Source: <http://www.history.com/topics/maya>

II Read each paragraph of the text carefully and mark sentences that express the main ideas.

III Write down the heading for each paragraph of the text.

IV Say in short about the factors of the decline of the Maya.

Text IV: The Maya Today

The Maya civilization and culture used to cover most of the Mesoamerican region. Now most of the Maya have blended in with the modern cultures of the area.

There are few Mayans today due to the fact that the Guatemalan government wanted to destroy the Mayan culture. But there are still more than 6 million who live mostly in Mexico, Guatemala and Belize. Even though they still wear their ancient clothing styles, they also like to wear new and modern clothes. In Mayan villages you'll find cars and trucks on the road. They have schools and some Catholic churches. Most homes have radios and electricity. Some villages even have movie theaters, gas stations and taverns. Mayans still learn about their ancestors and their ancient number system and hieroglyphics. Many of them prefer to be part of the Mayan minority then blend in with the others in their country.

There are still some priests who understand the ancient calendar. People come to these Daykeepers to know about baby names, wedding dates and other special occasions. The Spanish American Colonies were largely cut off from the outside world, and the ruins of the great ancient cities were little known except to locals. In [1839](#) United States traveler and writer [John Lloyd Stephens](#), hearing reports of lost ruins in the jungle, visited Copán, Palenque, and other sites with English architect and draftsman [Frederick Catherwood](#). Their illustrated accounts of the ruins sparked strong interest in the region and the people, and they have once again regained their position as a vital link in Mesoamerican heritage.

However, in many locations, Mayan ruins have been overgrown by the jungle, becoming dense enough to hide structures just a few meters away. To help find ruins, researchers have turned to satellite imagery. The best way to find them is to look at the visible and near-infrared spectra. Due to their limestone construction, the monuments affected the chemical makeup of the soil as they deteriorated. Some moisture-loving plants stayed away, while others were killed off or

discolored. The effects of the limestone ruins are still apparent today to some satellite sensors.

Much of the contemporary rural population of the [Yucatán Peninsula](#), [Chiapas](#) (both in Mexico), [Guatemala](#) and [Belize](#) is Maya by descent and primary language.

The ancient Maya had diverse and sophisticated methods of food production. It was formerly believed that [shifting cultivation](#) (swidden) agriculture provided most of their food but it is now thought that permanent raised fields, terracing, forest gardens, managed fallows, and wild harvesting were also crucial to supporting the large populations of the Classic period in some areas.

Indeed, evidence of these different agricultural systems persist today: raised fields connected by canals can be seen on aerial photographs, contemporary rainforest species composition has significantly higher abundance of species of economic value to ancient Maya, and pollen records in lake [sediments](#) suggest that corn, manioc, [sunflower seeds](#), [cotton](#), and other crops have been cultivated in association with [deforestation](#) in Mesoamerica since at least 2500 BC.

Contemporary [Maya peoples](#) still practice many of these traditional forms of agriculture, although they are dynamic systems and change with changing population pressures, cultures, economic systems, climate change, and the availability of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides.

Source: <http://library.thinkquest.org/J0112511/home.htm>

I What sentences of the text contain the main ideas?

II Describe the life of the Mayans now and say about the main territories of their life nowadays. Does it differ from the past?

III Describe the comparison between the past and the present agriculture of Maya.

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