

READ THE PASSAGE

Underline or make notes about words you do not understand.

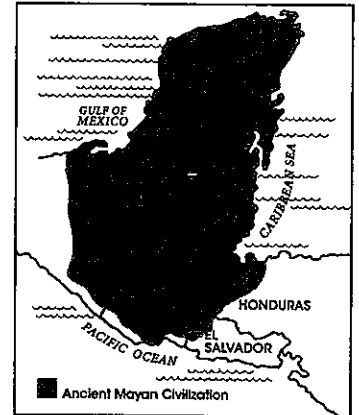
Mayan Calendars

The Maya were an influential people living in what is now Guatemala, Belize, Honduras, El Salvador, and parts of southern Mexico. The ancient Maya developed sophisticated systems of agriculture, architecture, science, mathematics, and writing. One of the most important Mayan developments was the creation of calendars.

The ancient Maya had several calendars. The Tzolkin (ZOL-keen) calendar was tied to religious beliefs. The Haab (hayb) calendar was based on the length of a year.

Understanding astronomy helped the Maya accurately measure days, months, and years. A year had 365 days by Mayan calculations, as it does in our own calendar. The Mayan year, though, was made up of 18 months, and each month had 20 days. An extra 5 days were added to complete the calendar year. These days rounded out the calendar nicely, but the Maya thought they were unlucky.

One of the most unusual Mayan calendars was actually a pyramid. Around AD 1050, the Maya built the Pyramid of Kukulkan (KO-KUL-kan) at Chichén Itzá (chee-CHEN eet-SAH). The pyramid had a stairway on each of its four sides. Each stairway had 91 steps. Counting the platform at the top, there were 365 steps, the same number of days in the calendar year.

**STRATEGY PRACTICE**

List one or two words you found confusing and describe how you figured out their meanings.

SKILL PRACTICE

Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

- What is the second paragraph mostly about?
 - The Maya were a very hardworking people.
 - The Maya had different kinds of calendars.
 - Mayan months consisted of 20 days.
 - The Maya built a pyramid that was a calendar.
- What does the map show?
 - how far Mayan culture spread
 - locations of Mayan calendars
 - where the Maya lived
 - where people can visit Mayan ruins
- Which detail supports the idea that the Pyramid of Kukulkan was a calendar?
 - The pyramid had 365 steps.
 - The pyramid had four sides.
 - The pyramid was very unusual.
 - The pyramid was built around AD 1050.
- Which of these would a Mayan probably do during the last five days of the year?
 - make a dangerous trip
 - take a risk or a chance
 - stay home
 - have a wild party

READ THE PASSAGE

Read slowly and think about the main idea of each section.

Ancient and Modern Chinese Characters**In the Beginning**

When people write in English, they use letters of the alphabet. People who write in Chinese, however, use characters that stand for words or ideas. Historians believe Chinese writing began as early as 1500 bc. The earliest forms were called "oracle bones." These were animal bones marked with pictures and symbols. In addition to writing on bones, the Chinese also made marks on turtle shells. By 1400 bc, the Chinese writing system had become more complex. It had more than 2,500 characters. Around 200 bc, Chinese characters became standardized. This means that everyone used the same characters.

Then and Now

Many modern Chinese characters are similar to those from 2,000 years ago. For example, the character that means *man* in the Lishu system from 200 bc is similar to the character that means *man* from the Jiantizi, or modern simplified system, of the twentieth century.

A Simpler System

People have made efforts to change Chinese characters over the centuries. The most important changes happened in the twentieth century. The Chinese government simplified many characters so that more people could learn to read. This simpler system is used in mainland China and Singapore. Traditional characters are used in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau. Even with these changes, Chinese writing from 2,200 years ago is still understood today.

STRATEGY PRACTICE

Did you understand the main points the writer makes? Why or why not?

SKILL PRACTICE

Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

- What do the headings tell?
 - the topic of each section
 - a list of important Chinese characters
 - important events in the development of the Chinese language
 - how Chinese characters changed
- Which detail supports the idea that ancient and modern Chinese characters are related?
 - Animal bones were used for writing.
 - There were once more than 2,500 characters.
 - The ancient Chinese wrote symbols and characters on bones and turtle shells.
 - Most of the characters from 2,200 years ago can still be read today.
- What is the main idea of the passage?
 - Modern Chinese characters are nothing like those used in ancient China.
 - Modern Chinese characters were developed from symbols used in ancient China.
 - Chinese writing uses an alphabet.
 - Few people in ancient China could write.
- Which of these would be another good heading for the third paragraph?
 - "Provinces in China"
 - "The Language of Singapore"
 - "Twentieth-century Changes"
 - "A Language for Everyone"

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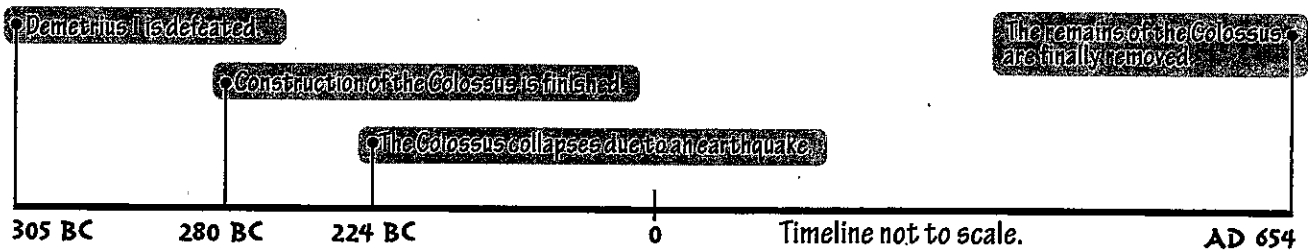
Read slowly and pause after each paragraph.

Colossus of Rhodes

The Colossus of Rhodes, a giant bronze statue, was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Other ancient civilizations also built large statues, but the Colossus of Rhodes was one of the tallest. At more than 105 feet (32 meters) tall, it was twice as big as most of the other colossi (kuh-LOSS-eye), or giant statues, of ancient times. The Statue of Liberty, its modern counterpart, is only slightly taller.

The Colossus of Rhodes was designed and built by the sculptor Chares (CHAR-eez) of Lindos. It showed the sun god Helios. The people of the Greek island of Rhodes had it built to celebrate the defeat of Demetrius I in 305 bc. Chares and the artists in his workshop began building the statue in 292 bc. The Colossus was completed twelve years later. It welcomed friends and warned foes as they approached the island's harbor.

Unfortunately, the statue stood for only 56 years. In 224 bc, a powerful earthquake hit Rhodes. The quake damaged the Colossus, and it fell to the ground in giant pieces. The statue's parts lay on the ground for hundreds of years, and travelers came from all over to see these impressive ruins.

**STRATEGY PRACTICE**

List two important facts about the Colossus of Rhodes.

SKILL PRACTICE

Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

- Which best describes what the passage is about?
 - the harbor in the ancient city of Rhodes
 - how Rhodians defeated Demetrius I
 - a giant statue built in ancient Greece
 - building the Statue of Liberty
- Which detail explains why the Colossus was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World?
 - It watched over the Mandraki Harbor.
 - It showed the sun god Helios.
 - It was built by Chares of Lindos.
 - It was twice as big as most ancient statues.
- What does the timeline tell you that the passage does *not*?
 - when the remains of the Colossus are removed
 - the reason why the Colossus collapsed
 - when the Colossus's construction was finished
 - when Demetrius I was defeated
- Which of these would most likely become a wonder of the modern world in the future?
 - a life-size statue of a mayor of Chicago, Illinois
 - a building in Dubai that is over 2,600 feet tall
 - a recording of the most popular song of 2011
 - a trophy from a twenty-first century World Series

**Lesson
1**

Context Clues

Teaching

You often can figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word from **context clues**, or information in the same or nearby sentences. In the following example, learning that the hikers found the waterfall by hearing, not sight, helps you understand the meaning of the word *invisible*—"unable to be seen."

Deep in the forest, the waterfall was *invisible*, but the playful sound of rushing water led us to it.

A. Context Clues in Action

In the sentences below, use context clues to help figure out the meaning of the word printed in italics. Then write the meaning of the word on the line.

1. The squirrel hid in the tree and did not *emerge* until the people had left the park.
meaning: _____
2. The second crash of thunder was much louder and closer than the *previous* one.
meaning: _____
3. "That's *obvious*," he said angrily. "Anyone can see that it's raining."
meaning: _____
4. Marta has excellent *posture*; she never slouches.
meaning: _____
5. The sun and rain caused the dying plants to turn green and *flourish*.
meaning: _____
6. The first time he skied down the hill without falling, José felt great *satisfaction*.
meaning: _____
7. After the *truant* had missed six days of school, the principal called her parents.
meaning: _____
8. The elevator stopped with a *jolt*, throwing everyone against the walls.
meaning: _____
9. Learning the shape of the leaves is a good way to *identify* a tree.
meaning: _____
10. When the four-year-old began composing music, people realized he was a *genius*.
meaning: _____

Context Clues

More Practice

B. Vocabulary Words in Action

Review the meanings of the words in exercise A. Then read the following sentences. Write **T** if the sentence is true and **F** if it is false.

- ___ 1. The ending of an exciting mystery story is obvious.
- ___ 2. People usually feel satisfaction after finishing a hard job.
- ___ 3. A genius is less intelligent than other people.
- ___ 4. The previous page comes right after this one.
- ___ 5. Graceful dancers always land with a jolt.
- ___ 6. It may be hard to identify a person wearing a mask.
- ___ 7. A living thing that does not flourish may die soon.
- ___ 8. When a rabbit emerges from its hole, it disappears below ground.
- ___ 9. A truant never misses a day of school.
- ___ 10. Standing up straight and tall leads to poor posture.

C. Vocabulary Challenge

Use context clues to figure out the meanings of the words in italics. Then circle the word from the three choices next to the sentence that has a similar meaning.

1. Marla was *absolutely* sure that she had been asleep, because the alarm woke her. accidentally/completely/constantly
2. The doctor assured him that the results of the tests were completely *normal*. confusing/unexpected/average
3. After reading the story, answer the questions on the *reverse* side. opposite/front/related
4. "I won't accept that *feeble* excuse," her father said sternly. believable/weak/funny
5. It's natural to *grieve* when someone you love dies. eat sweets/sing softly/be sad

Restatement Context Clues

Teaching

Some context clues restate the meaning of a word in another way. **Restatements** are often introduced by commas or dashes and by words and phrases such as *or*, *that is*, or *in other words*. In the following sentence, the words between the dashes—*really, really angry*—restate the meaning of *indignant*.

Anya was *indignant*—really, really angry—that the bus left without her.

A. Restatement Clues in Action

In each sentence below, use the restatement clue to help you discover the meaning of the italicized word. Underline the word or phrase that is a restatement clue. Then write the meaning of the italicized word on the line.

1. Martin knew he could *accomplish*, or do, whatever he set his mind to.

meaning: _____

2. The field trip to the *poultry* farm—with its chickens, turkeys, and ducks—was fun.

meaning: _____

3. The heavy *pulse*, or beat, of the rock music gave Sabine's mother a headache.

meaning: _____

4. You have to be really *wealthy*—rolling in money—to have a private tennis court.

meaning: _____

5. The decoration was so *elaborate*, that is, complicated and detailed, it made me dizzy.

meaning: _____

6. Please *shred* the cabbage for the cole slaw by cutting it into long strips.

meaning: _____

7. Thank you for doing such a *thorough*—really complete and careful—job.

meaning: _____

8. Luis's father teaches *economics*, the science of money and what it buys.

meaning: _____

9. It's easy to shop using a *catalog*, that is, a list of items for sale.

meaning: _____

10. The race cars were so *rapid*—or fast—that they passed in a blur.

meaning: _____