

Teacher's Guide For

Ancient History: The Maya

For grade 7 - College

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Executive Producer
William V. Ambrose

Teacher's Guide by
Mark Reeder

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145 West 45th St., Suite 1115
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1-800-526-4663
24-Hour Fax 212-768-9282
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MATERIALS IN THE PROGRAM

Teacher's Guide -This Teacher's Guide has been prepared to aid the teacher in utilizing materials contained within the program *Ancient History: The Maya*. In addition to this introductory material, the guide contains the following for the program:

- *Suggested Instructional Notes*
- *Student Learning Goals*
- *Blackline Masters Quiz, for duplication and handout to students*
- *Timeline of Events in ancient Mayan history*
- *Slide Shows*
- *Maps*

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

It is suggested that you preview the individual program or programs that you will be teaching and read the Student Goals and Teacher Points. By doing so, you will become familiar with the materials and be better prepared to adapt the program to the needs of your class. Please note that the program is set up to be played continuously and you will probably find it best to follow the program in the order in which it is presented, but this is not necessary. *Ancient History: The Maya* can be divided into chapters accessed through the DVD's Menu Screen under Chapter Selects. In this way the program's chapters can be played and studied separately. A proposed Lesson Plan based on chapter headings accessed through the DVD menu screen is presented in this Teacher's Guide. It is also suggested that the program presentation take place before the entire class and under your direction. As you review the instructional program outlined in the Teacher's Guide, you may find it necessary to make some changes, deletions, or additions to fit the specific needs of your students. After viewing the program, you may wish to copy the **Blackline Master Quiz 1A** and distribute it to your class to measure students' comprehension of the events.

LINKS TO CURRICULUM STANDARDS

The design for each program was guided by the National Center for History in the Schools, United States History curriculum Era 3: Revolution and the New Nation- Standards 1 and 3 for grades 5-12, Era 9 Postwar United States -Standard 4 for grades 5-12, and the California Public School Standards for Historical Content, Grade 8 - Standards 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3 (#4 - #7), Standard 8.8 (#1) and Grade 11, Standards 11.1 (#2, #3), 11.3 (#5), 11.5 - (#3, #4) and 11.10 (#2, #3) and Grade 12, Standards 12.1, 12.4 and 12.5.

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF ANCIENT HISTORY: THE MAYA

Ancient History: The Maya is an exciting reassessment of the western hemisphere's most amazing civilization, the Maya of the Yucatan Peninsula and Central America. The program is designed to present *Ancient History: The Maya* in a way that promotes successful student learning. The program begins with an overview of the Mayan

homeland and its distinctive geography and rainforest ecosystem. It then continues with a brief history of the early Mayan settlements 4000 years ago a more extensive examination of the network of Mayan city-states that began around 200 A.D. and lasted until the arrival of the Spanish 1300 years later. These city-states were unequalled anywhere in North America. A discussion of the unique Mayan culture follows with emphasis on its lack of warfare and bloodthirsty sacrifice, nothing like the sensational fiction produced by Hollywood. The program then looks into the how the Mayan civilization sustained itself by becoming one of the world's first environmentalist agricultural communities. Finally, the Maya's amazing achievements in art, architecture, science, mathematics and writing are shown.

Student Goals - In this *Ancient History: The Maya* program the students will learn:

- The Maya were brilliant architects, engineers and botanists
- The Maya built monumental architecture and art equal to any in the ancient world without the use of metal tools, the wheel, and domesticated beasts of burden
- The Maya developed mathematics, including the concept of zero, before Europe did
- Mayan astronomy was extremely exact
- As environmentalist farmers, the Maya were able to create and sustain an incredible civilization on the poorest land in Central America – the rainforest
- The Maya were not the blood thirsty culture people depicted in movies

SUGGESTED LESSON PLAN

Ancient History: The Maya is laid out so that the program can be viewed in its entirety, or, by selecting the DVD Menu Screen, Chapter Selects, individual chapters can be viewed separately to create a lesson plan. Each chapter presents a part of the uniqueness of the Maya. In addition, historical themes and concepts are clearly presented, using state of the art visuals.

Below is a list of the program and its chapters. Using these chapters, teachers can create a lesson plan to cover the specific issues, themes and the historical figures mentioned.

Ancient History: The Maya

- Introduction
- Homeland and Geography
- Network of City States
- Culture – Ceremonial Warfare
- Environmental Agriculturalists
- Art and Architecture - Grand Architecture of Their Ceremonial Centers
- Mathematics, Astronomy and Writing

Chapter One: Introduction

Student Goals - In this *Ancient History: The Maya* chapter the students will learn:

- The Maya were a cornerstone civilization of the ancient world, rivaled only by the Greeks and Chinese
- The Maya built a network of city-states
- Maya architecture is one of the world's great architectures
- The Maya created mathematics, a written language and astronomy
- The Maya accomplished their feats by becoming the world's first environmentalists

Chapter Two: Homeland and Geography

Student Goals - In this *Ancient History: The Maya* chapter the students will learn:

- The Mayan homeland encompasses Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula, the country of Belize and parts of Central America's Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador
- The homeland is bounded by the Caribbean Sea, the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific Ocean
- The homeland is covered by a dense tropical rainforest
 - The rainforest is dominated by hardwoods and palms and has mangrove swamps
 - There is a rich bird life, reptiles and crocodilians
- The terrain is flat except in the south where there are hills and low-lying mountains
 - The terrain is covered with limestones that have been fundamental in shaping the Mayan civilization
- The soil is poor

Chapter Three: Network of City States

Student Goals - In this *Ancient History: The Maya* chapter the students will learn:

- A city-state is a sovereign geographical area controlled politically by a city or urban area
- Maya city-states retained their own sovereignty but traded with each other
 - They shared sophisticated cultural values, intricate artistic styles and a complex, philosophical worldview
 - The earliest Maya settlements began in the southern part of what would become the Mayan homeland around 4000 years ago
 - By about 200AD, what is known as the Classic Period in Mayan history began
 - Around the time of Columbus's first voyage to North America, the complex urban centers would all but be abandoned
 - A first wave of settlement and building occurred during the pre classic period, from 500 B.C. to around 200 A.D
 - It was followed by the classic period or Golden Age, which lasted to around 900 A.D. The last stage of urban development, known as the post classic period, ended around 500 years ago
- Geographically, at any one point in time, perhaps between a dozen and two dozen individual Maya city-states functioned

- Each city-state had its own monumental architecture, including pyramids, palaces and ball courts
- The elite lived in the center of the urban areas near the pyramids
- The best-known Maya city-state is Chichen Itza
 - The central structure is a pyramid known as the Temple of Kukulcan
 - It is actually a giant Mayan calendar
 - Another of the temples is a large stepped pyramid, the Temple of the Warriors
 - The second most impressive structure at Chichen Itza is called *El Caracol*, a celestial observatory
- Maya city-states had vast open spaces

Chapter Four: Culture – Ceremonial Warfare

Student Goals - In this *Ancient History: The Maya* chapter the students will learn:

- The Maya were the most brilliant of all the Meso and North American cultures
 - They built monumental architecture, developed mathematics, created exact sciences, such as astronomy, and produced art equal to any in the ancient world
 - The Maya did everything without the use of metal tools, the wheel, and domesticated beasts of burden
- The Maya city-state was well organized
 - Commoners did the basic work of collecting firewood, growing crops, building cities
 - An intermediate class of people were full-time specialists - artisans, architects, painters, keepers of records
 - At the top, was the elite class – the rulers, the people who were in charge of major decisions
- The Maya city-states were complex and sophisticated societies dominated by strong family values
 - Mayan Justice is not just for people, but is for the entire world the Maya live in
 - If the Maya want an agricultural field to grow food for them for the harvest, they need to give something right at the beginning, including burning incense or ritualistic bloodletting
- Warfare is also ritualistic
 - When two cities agree to go to war they choose a spot; send in equal numbers of warriors and fight until each side captures a soldier
- The idea that Maya performed massive human sacrifices, as portrayed by Hollywood, and in fact done by the Aztecs in central Mexico, is an unsupported fiction

Chapter Five: Environmental Agriculturalists

Student Goals - In this *Ancient History: The Maya* chapter the students will learn:

- One of the most significant aspects of the Mayan culture was the organization of their society around the concept of the cyclical nature of time

- Everything is always in a cycle - beginning and ending and then beginning again
- The cyclical worldview goes against the idea that the Maya would clear-cut the rain forest
- Instead they learned to live with the rainforest
- The Maya were forest gardeners who managed the rainforest as environmentalists
 - If they cut down a tree, they planted a tree
 - They did not pollute a stream because people down stream used the water

Chapter Six: Art and Architecture - Grand Architecture of Their Ceremonial Centers

Student Goals - In this *Ancient History: The Maya Republic* chapter the students will learn:

- Nothing captures the imagination more than the monumental architecture of the Maya city-states
 - There is a commonality to the Maya city-states' ceremonial centers, such as a central pyramid, but each had its own stylistic forms
 - Ceremonial buildings were erected from limestone
 - Some limestone were made into stelae - standing stones on which the stories of important events for each city-state are carved
 - The Maya did not engineer true arches, they made corbel vaults
 - Like the Greeks and Romans, the Maya included columns in their architecture
- Many of the Mayan buildings had beautiful three-dimensional carvings
- The Maya created many ceramics, depicting animals, humans and mythical figures
- The Maya were advanced painters and muralists

Chapter Seven: Mathematics, Astronomy and Writing

Student Goals - In this *Ancient History: The Maya Republic* chapter the students will learn:

- The Maya were astronomers and abstract mathematicians
- The Maya passed on their knowledge through a written language and an advanced numerical system
 - Mayan mathematics was based on a base 20 system
 - This numerical system allowed the Maya to do the elaborate calculations needed to make precise astronomical predictions and develop their calendars
- The Maya recorded events on a screen-fold book called a codex

Answers to Blackline Master 1A Quiz

1-a; 2-d; 3-b; 4-b; 4-d; 6-c; 7-b; 8-d; 9-c & d; 10-a; 11-c; 12-a; 13-b; 14-c