

Maya – Grade 9-12

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Lesson Plan Summary:

After completing this lesson plan, students will be able to describe the lifestyle, culture, scientific and mathematical advancements, government and architecture of the Maya. Students will also create a National Geographic cover suitable for a “Special edition” on the Maya. This lesson will take approximately five 50-minute long class periods (one day for notes, almost a full day for pictures, 2 periods for the project, and 1 period for presentations).

Objectives:

History. The student understands traditional historical points of reference in world history. The student is expected to identify the major eras in world history and describe their defining characteristics. **§113.33. World History Studies(c)(1)(A)**

History. The student understands the major developments of civilizations of sub-Saharan Africa, Mesoamerica, Andean South America, and Asia. The student is expected to summarize the major political, economic, and cultural developments of civilizations in Mesoamerica and Andean South America. **§113.33. World History Studies(c)(6)(B)**

Citizenship. The student understands the significance of political choices and decisions made by individuals, groups, and nations throughout history. The student is expected to:

- evaluate political choices and decisions that individuals, groups, and nations have made in the past, taking into account historical context, and apply this knowledge to the analysis of choices and decisions faced by contemporary societies;
- describe the different roles of citizens and noncitizens in historical cultures, especially as the roles pertain to civic participation.

§113.33. World History Studies (c)(17)(A,B)

Culture. The student understands the relationship between the arts and the times during which they were created. The student is expected to:

- identify significant examples of art and architecture that demonstrate an artistic ideal or visual principle from selected cultures;
- analyze examples of how art, architecture, literature, music, and drama reflect the history of cultures in which they are produced;
- identify examples of art, music, and literature that transcend the cultures in which they were created and convey universal themes.

§113.33. World History Studies (c)(20)(A,B,C)

Science, technology, and society. The student understands how major scientific and mathematical discoveries and technological innovations have affected societies throughout history. The student is expected to:

- give examples of major mathematical and scientific discoveries and technological innovations that occurred at different periods in history and describe the changes produced by these discoveries and innovations;
- summarize the ideas in astronomy, mathematics, and architectural engineering that developed in Mesoamerica and Andean South America.

§113.33. World History Studies (c)(23)(A,C)

Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of sources including electronic technology. The student is expected to

- identify ways archaeologists, anthropologists, historians, and geographers analyze limited evidence;
- locate and use primary and secondary sources such as computer software, databases, media and news services, biographies, interviews, and artifacts to acquire information.

§113.33. World History Studies (c)(25)(A,B)

Procedure:

1. Students will be given an overview of Mayan civilization including, but not limited to: government, scientific and mathematical advancements, social structure, culture and architecture. Attached are VERY basic notes that were supplemented with materials from a textbook, handouts, and various websites including http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maya_civilization and <http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~dee/CIVAMRCA/MAYAS.HTM> as well as National Geographic magazines over the Maya, including the August 2007 edition. These can also be obtained from www.nationalgeographic.org.
2. Next, project pictures from [TIDES](http://tides.sfasu.edu) (<http://tides.sfasu.edu>) depicting the archaeological sites Monte Alban and Uxmal as well as Oaxaca, Mexico. Images may be found by searching the database using “[Mayan ruins](#)” and “[Monte Alban](#)” as keywords. As students view the pictures, point out the detail of various animals, the purposes of the buildings, including the cenotes, and the architectural style.
3. Conclude discussion with students’ hypothesis on the uses of buildings beyond what archaeologists have concretely discovered.
4. Assign the project “Special Edition” which is attached. Modify the project for the individual needs of your classroom. Allow one day for presentations.

Extension:

As your discussion of Mesoamerican cultures continues, have students compare the government, culture and architecture of the Maya with that of the Inca and the Aztec. I used this as my final assessment over this unit. Students created and filled in a chart comparing those three civilizations.

Bray's Brief Class Notes:

Maya:

- Southern Mexico into Northern Central America
- Land of Highlands and Lowlands
- Emerged about 200 BC

250-900 AD – Mayan Classical period

- Built cities of Tikal, Copan, Chichen Itza, and Uxmal
 - o Cities contained large pyramids, temples, and ball courts

Cities linked by trade – traded honey, cotton, jade; grew maize and squash using terrace farming

Developed wealth and social classes with kings at the top

Religion: Polytheistic; gods of sky and underworld

- Made offerings of flowers, food, even humans

Developed calendars, math and astronomy, as well as a written language known as glyphs

800 – Maya left their cities – Toltec moved in, and the culture changed

“Special Edition”



The editors of National Geographic Magazine have asked you to design the cover of their next Special Edition. The topic will be the Maya. For your cover you must include the following:

- * Illustration(s) representing Mayan culture and architecture – these must be hand drawn and colored. Use pictures from [TIDES \(www.tides.sfasu.edu\)](http://www.tides.sfasu.edu) for inspiration
- * Include at least 3 article titles that would be found in a special edition over the Maya. Your titles would be the launching point for an entire article over some aspect of Mayan culture. For example, one title might be: Maya really put their ‘hearts’ into their ball games. This title would indicate that some findings show sacrifice as part of ball games.
- * Authors (group members)
- * Date and edition number (date and class period)

You will have a full class period to complete your cover, and you will share these with the class the following day. You may work with a partner for this assignment.