



Maya Writing Comprehension Answers

1. The earliest examples of Maya writing were found in San Bartolo, Guatemala.
2. A logogram represents words whereas a syllabogram represents a unit of sound.
3. The Maya people often has several syllabograms to represent the same sound so people could vary how they spelled words and be creative when writing.
4. Diego de Landa was a Catholic priest who ordered the mass burning of a number of Maya codices because he believed they were the work of the devil.
5. The breakthrough in understanding Maya writing was when a Russian linguist called Yuri Valentinovich Knorosov found that at least a part of the Maya writing system was phonetic.
6. Three of the codices are named after the places they are kept in today; Madrid, Paris and Dresden.
7. Expect various answers, such as:
 - The Madrid Codex contains information about religious beliefs and rituals which can help us to understand more about Maya culture and belief.
 - The Paris Codex contains information about Maya astronomical signs, through animals and birds. It helps us to understand more about how Maya people understood the world, what they believed in, and the animals and birds that they saw.
 - The Dresden Codex contains information about planetary movements and lunar and solar eclipses. It helps us to understand more about Maya scientific knowledge and understanding of the world.
8. The Madrid Codex is the longest Codex and the Dresden Codex is the most complete.
9. The evidence that suggests that the Grolier codex is authentic is that the fig bark paper on which it has been written dates back to AD 1250. The evidence that suggests that the Grolier Codex is authentic is that it does not contain the same reference to predictive omens that the other codices refer to.
10. It is difficult to prove the authenticity of the Grolier codex because it is different from the other codices and academics are still researching and discussing it. It is from a very long time ago, which makes it complicated to find evidence to prove or disprove its authenticity.



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1. The earliest examples of Maya writing were found in San Bartolo, Guatemala.
2. A logogram represents words whereas a syllabogram represents a unit of sound.
3. The Maya people often had several syllabograms to represent the same sound so people could vary how they spelled words.
4. Maya writing was written in paired columns and read left to right down the page in a zig-zag fashion.
5. Diego de Landa was a Catholic priest who ordered the mass burning of a number of Maya codices because he believed they were the work of the devil.
6. Diego de Landa helped us to understand Maya writing because he wrote detailed records which helped us to understand the system and a guide to some of the glyphs which became known as Landa's alphabet.
7. Three of the codices are named after the places they are kept in today; Madrid, Paris and Dresden.
8. The Madrid Codex is the longest Codex and the Dresden Codex is the most complete.
9. The codices can help us to learn about the Maya people because they contain information about religious beliefs, rituals, planetary movements, animals and Maya culture.
10. Expect various answers, based on the children's own opinion. Children should provide a reason for their opinion, based on evidence gleaned from the text.



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1. The earliest examples of Maya writing were found in Guatemala.
2. The name of the symbols the Maya people used to write with were called hieroglyphs or glyphs for short.
3. Maya writing has been found carved in wood, on pottery, on stone monuments and in codices (books). They have also been found carved in temples.
4. Diego de Landa was a priest who ordered the burning of many Maya codices (books).
5. Yuri Valentinovich Knorosov helped us to understand Maya writing better because he discovered that a lot of the Maya writing was based on sounds.
6. Some of the Maya codices get their names from these places; Grolier, after the Grolier club in New York, Madrid, Paris and Dresden.
7. The Dresden Codex is the most complete.
8. The Grolier Codex may not be real.