

Lesson 2: The Olmec and the Maya

The Olmec and Mayan civilizations were both similar and different.

Directions: In the blank beside each description, write an *O* if the phrase describes the Olmec, an *M* if it describes the Maya, or a *B* if it describes both the Olmec and the Maya.

- ___ 1. government was a theocracy
- ___ 2. also called the “Mother Culture”
- ___ 3. raised corn, beans, and squash
- ___ 4. were skilled mathematicians
- ___ 5. believed cenotes were a way to communicate with the gods
- ___ 6. developed a calendar
- ___ 7. constructed giant stone heads
- ___ 8. built more than 3,000 structures in Tikal
- ___ 9. lasted from about 1200 B.C. to about 300 B.C.
- ___ 10. divided into social classes based on wealth and power
- ___ 11. developed a system of writing
- ___ 12. built observatories, palaces, plazas, baths, reservoirs, and aqueducts
- ___ 13. may have disappeared as a result of invasion, crop failures, or civil war
- ___ 14. may have migrated east



Notes for Home: Your child learned about the civilizations of the Olmec and the Maya.

Home Activity: With your child, discuss the developments of the Olmec and the Maya. Ask him or her how those developments may affect his or her own life today.