

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Blizzard Bag Fifth Grade

	<b>Grade 5 Blizzard Bag Day 3</b>
Literacy and Social Studies	Read the article, “Aztecs, Incas, and Mayans: The Mayans.” Answer the questions.

## **Aztecs, Incas & Mayans**

### **The Mayans**

The Mayan civilization was the oldest of the three largest civilizations in South and Central America. The empire lasted from about 300 A.D. to 900 A.D.

While Europeans were in the midst of the Dark Ages, Mayans never stopped learning. They tried out new farming methods. They rotated their crops so the soil would last longer. They only farmed crops on the same field once every three years or so. Turkey and ducks were tamed and kept on Mayan farms. That way, Mayans wouldn't have to worry about hunting or trapping food.

The Mayans also learned to make paper out of the bark of the fig tree. They had an advanced writing system. In their system, word-pictures stood for different syllables and ideas. Mayan writing did much more than just record dates and information. The writing told stories about life. The Mayans were also good mathematicians. They came up with the principle of “0” as a number. They also studied the stars and had very advanced calendars. The Mayan farming calendar was based on the movement of the sun and the stars. It had 365 days just like ours!

The Mayan civilization was very organized. Each city had a king and everyone had his position, from stonecutter to nobleman. You were born into your position in life. If your father was a stonecutter, you would cut stone, too. Nobles lived in beautiful houses. Their architecture was splendid. White limestone covered the walls and the floors. The inside walls were painted with murals.

Most Mayans were **peasant**<sup>1</sup> farmers. They had to give more than half of their crops to the nobles and their king. They farmed corn and beans. Mayans also grew cacao, the basis of chocolate. The first hot chocolate actually came from the Mayans! They made their hot chocolate by mixing water, cacao (same as cocoa), and chili peppers. The Spanish people who later conquered the

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<sup>1</sup> **peasant** – a person who owns or works on a small farm

Yucatan **peninsula**<sup>2</sup> learned of chocolate from the descendants of the Maya. The Spanish took chocolate back to Europe. In the Mayan empire, chocolate wasn't just a food or drink. Cacao beans were used as currency, or money. People would trade their goods for cacao beans!

No one knows exactly why the Mayan civilization came to an end. By the time Europeans arrived in the New World, the civilization had already crumbled. One idea is that the kings started fighting against each other until all of the peace and wealth ended. Another thought is that the Mayan farms could no longer make enough food for everyone. In a time of extreme **drought**,<sup>3</sup> peasants might have refused to give the little food that they had to the nobles. Whatever happened, the Mayan empire was long past its peak by the time Europeans arrived. In its height, the empire was active and full of the spirit of learning that many countries in Europe experienced hundreds of years later.

### Day 3 - Math

1. A baker used 12 cups of batter to make muffins. Each muffin used  $\frac{2}{3}$ -cup batter to make one muffin. How many muffins did the baker make? Explain your thinking.
  
2. Students are running in a relay race. Each team will run 5 miles. Each team member must run  $\frac{1}{3}$  of a mile. How many students will each team need? Explain your thinking.
  
3. A baker is making chocolate chip cookies. Each batch needs  $\frac{3}{4}$ - cup of chocolate chips. The baker has 6 cups of chocolate chips. How many batches of cookies can the baker make? Explain your thinking.
  
4. Ashley's soccer league is having a pizza party. Each person gets  $\frac{1}{3}$  of a pizza. How many people can 24 pizzas feed? Explain your thinking.

Go to Khan Academy and practice solving division with fractions and whole numbers word problems.

<http://www.khanacademy.org/math/cc-fifth-grade-math/cc-5th-fractions-topic/cc-5th-dividing-fractions/e/division-with-fractions-and-whole-numbers>

Optional:

Log on to Fastt Math and work for 15 minutes. Use the Fastt Math link on the HCSD eSchool page:

<http://www.hilliardschools.org/elem/eschool.cfm?ID=Math&Pages=2>

**Day 3**

**Learning Target:** *Organisms perform a variety of roles in an ecosystem. Populations of organisms can be categorized by how they acquire energy.*

**Web link and Directions:**

Choose a biome, write a focused question, and do a mini-research project on that question.

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/biomes/>

<http://kids.nceas.ucsb.edu/biomes/index.html>

[http://www.blueplanetbiomes.org/world\\_biomes.htm](http://www.blueplanetbiomes.org/world_biomes.htm)

**What to bring back to school:** your mini-research project.