

Name: _____

The following is an excerpt from the book *History of the World*. There are questions on the right side of the paper. Please answer these questions on the very back of this packet. Please look for the most important information (single word or short phrase) of each paragraph and write it next to the hashtag below the paragraph. Finally, if you are more of a visual learner, you may draw a picture representing each paragraph in the left column.

	<p>Maya: Taking it Higha</p> <p>The <u>boundary</u> between Olmec civilization and the Maya is fuzzy, but the Maya definitely got rolling by 300 BCE, when their first cities emerged in the lowlands of Guatemala and the Yucatan Peninsula. Much of the space for these settlements, and the farms supporting them, was hacked out of Central American rain forests.</p> <p># _____ # _____</p> <p>Thousands of years after <u>they</u> were abandoned, these early Mayan cities stand out from the jungle (literally) because of the giant pyramids the Maya built. The Maya took this Olmec tradition to the “next level” by constructing stepped pyramids, some over a hundred feet tall, at cities such as Calakmul, Cival, and Nakbe. These cities had as many as ten thousand inhabitants.</p> <p># _____ # _____</p> <p>The growth of these cities was closely related to the rise of an <u>aristocratic</u> elite, including kings who doubled as high priests. According to the Mayan creation myth, the world was created by the children of the maize (corn) god, who ruled as an all-powerful king at the center of the cosmos. The Mayan kings linked their authority to his divine rule, symbolized by elaborate headdress made of maize leaves and priceless ornaments, including jade breastplates and jewelry made of jade, shell, bone, and pearl, which were buried with them when they died. Mayan kings assumed ceremonial names with religious meaning, such as K’ahk ‘Yipyaj Chan</p>	<p>What does the word “boundary” mean as used in the first sentence?</p> <p>What noun is “they” (underlined in text) attached to in the sentence that it is in?</p> <p>What does “aristocratic” mean? What evidence in the sentence proves the meaning?</p>
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K'awiil (Fire is the Strength of the Sky God) and K'Inich Yax K'uk Mo' (Sun Green Quetzal Macaw).

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The kings and nobles carried out important ceremonial duties, and their doings were recorded with an elaborated pictorial writing similar to ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, often on the long staircases leading to the temples atop the pyramids. As priests, the king and nobility would fast and possibly ingest hallucinogenic plants to enter divine trances that would reveal the will of the gods. They also honored the gods through human sacrifices (always some other poor guy, never themselves).

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Sore Losers

While we don't know as much about Pok-a-tok -- the popular ball game played by the ancient Maya and other Meso-American people -- as we do, say, baseball, it's highly likely that the players were too nervous to eat before the big game.

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Just how it was played is unclear, but archaeologists have figured out it involved a rubber ball, which could vary in size from that of a baseball to that of a beach ball. Its composition also varied, from solid rubber to hollow, to containing a human skull.

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Pok-a-tok was played on large walled fields that could be longer than modern football fields, although narrower. Side walls sported stone rings as much as twenty feet above the ground, and the object of the game was to touch the ring with the ball, or pass the ball through the ring. Players, who could number from one to four per side, couldn't use their hands to

What does it mean “never themselves”?

	<p>accomplish the feat, which meant mathes could take a really long time to complete.</p> <p># _____ # _____</p> <p>Which is just as well if you were on the losing side. Often, although not always, the losers were decapitated and their blood drained as an offering to the gods. And you thought the sports fans in Philadelphia were tough.</p>	
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Questions	Connections

