

Name _____

Maya Marvels: Art and Music of an Ancient Civilization

Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. Maya pottery served both practical and ceremonial purposes. While it was used for everyday tasks like cooking and storage, its intricate designs with motifs such as animals, mythological creatures, and geometric patterns made it significant in Maya culture, particularly in rituals and ceremonies.
2. Maya hieroglyphic writing, or Maya script, was a complex system used to record historical events, genealogy, and religious texts. It posed challenges for modern archaeologists due to its intricate symbols and the need for decipherment, which required the collaboration of scholars and the discovery of the Rosetta Stone of Maya script, the Dresden Codex.
3. Music played a multifaceted role in Maya society. In religious ceremonies, it connected participants to the divine and enhanced the spiritual experience. During cultural celebrations, music provided entertainment and facilitated communal bonding. Common Maya instruments included flutes, drums, rattles, and trumpets.
4. Maya sculpture and architecture showcased the exceptional craftsmanship of this civilization. Sculptures were detailed and depicted rulers, gods, and mythological beings. Stelae, in particular, were significant for commemorating rulers and events. Architecture, such as pyramids and temples, featured intricate stone carvings that reflected Maya beliefs and culture.

