

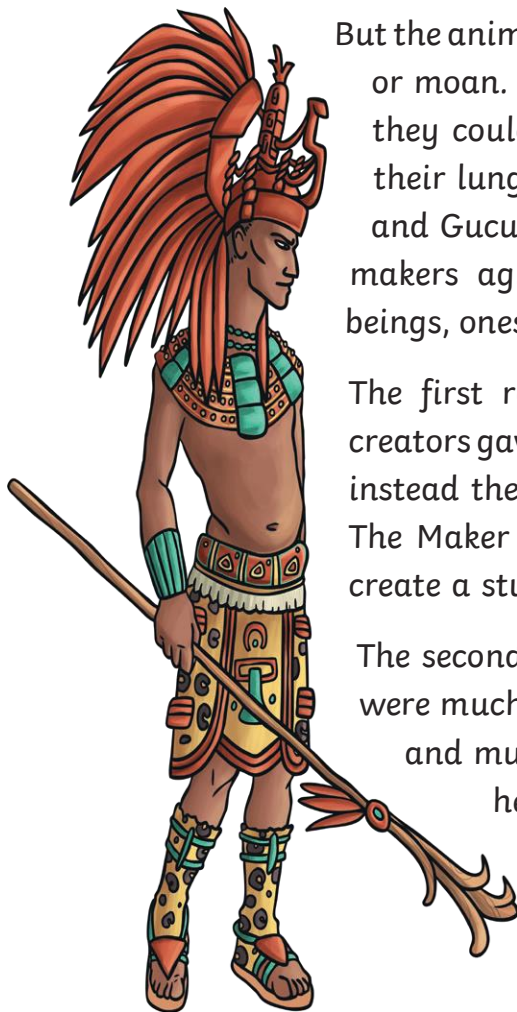
Maya Creation Story

Before the world had a true form, there were two gods. These gods were Tepeu, the Maker and Gucumatz, the Feathered Spirit. While the world around them was dark, the two gods glittered with brilliant blue and green feathers. They came together to create the world.

Whatever they thought came into being. When they thought "Earth", land formed in the darkness. They thought of mountains and valleys, pine trees and sky. All of these things appeared the instant they thought them, and thus the Earth was formed.

Tepeu and Gucumatz decided that they needed beings there to look after their vast creation, and to praise their names as the creators. So they created deer and birds and panthers and serpents, all the creatures that roam the Earth today.

"Now praise us! Say our names!" commanded the creators.



But the animals could only roar or howl, bleat, bark, twitter or moan. They tried as hard as they could to speak, but they could not. They chirped and mewed at the top of their lungs until the noise was so deafening, that Tepeu and Gucumatz ordered them to stop. Disappointed, the makers agreed that they would have to create better beings, ones who would be able to worship them properly.

The first race of men were made from wet clay. The creators gave them life, and the first men tried to speak; but instead they crumbled apart soon after they were made. The Maker and the Feathered Spirit were determined to create a sturdier race of men.

The second race of men were carved from wood. These were much stronger and were able to walk and talk and multiply. But these men had no minds and their hearts were empty. They had no memories of their creation and when they spoke, their words were just as empty and meaningless. They could not praise their gods.

Tepeu and Gucumatz sent a great flood down to destroy them. They commanded the animals to attack the survivors and tear them to pieces. The few who managed to escape fled to the woods and became monkeys. The creators left them there as an example to the next race of men.

The Maker and the Feathered Spirit thought for a long time about how they should make the race of men they wanted. There seemed to be no perfect material to build them. Finally, some animals brought the gods a stack of corn which grew on the far side of the Earth. Tepeu and Gucumatz ground this into a paste and from this formed four individual men.

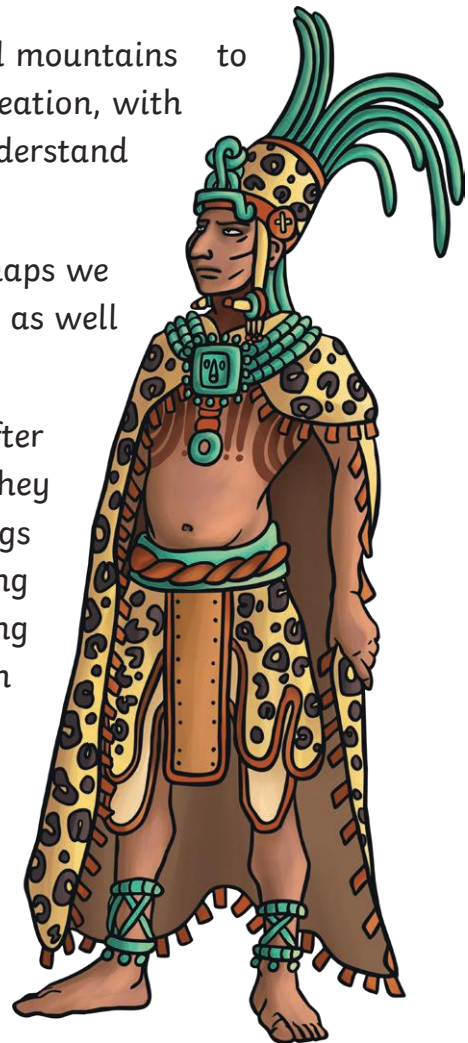
The new beings seemed perfect. They were sturdy enough to last and their minds were rich with thoughts and feelings. Their first act after their creation was to immediately worship Tepeu and Gucumatz, and thank them for their lives. Tepeu and Gucumatz were pleased. "What do you see?" they asked the corn men.

"We can see forever, through rocks and trees and mountains to the edges of the Earth. We can see your entire creation, with all of its animals and plants. We can see and understand everything!"

Tepeu and Gucumatz looked at each other, "Perhaps we made these beings too well... they should not see as well as WE do!"

The makers removed some of the men's vision. After that they could only see things close to them and they were no longer able to see through or above things that they should not. As such, their understanding of the world was weakened. But the men still sang their creators' praises and settled down to live on the new land. Tepeu and Gucumatz made four women to be their mates.

These eight men and women were the ancestors of all Quiche men and women today. Even today their sight and understanding of the world is not perfect.



Questions

1. What are Tepeu and Gucumatz also known as?

2. How did they make Earth? Tick **two**.

- They moulded it from clay
 They made it out of wood
 They thought of it and it appeared
 They made it out of corn paste

3. Draw lines to match the different creations and their features.

The first men	had minds full of thoughts.
The second men	had hearts that were empty.
The third men	crumbled apart.
The animals	could not speak.

4. Explain in your own words how the first and second set of men were similar or different.

5. How were monkeys created?

6. What did the two gods remove from the third set of men?

7. Why do you think they did this?

8. Who are the eight men and women said to be ancestors of?

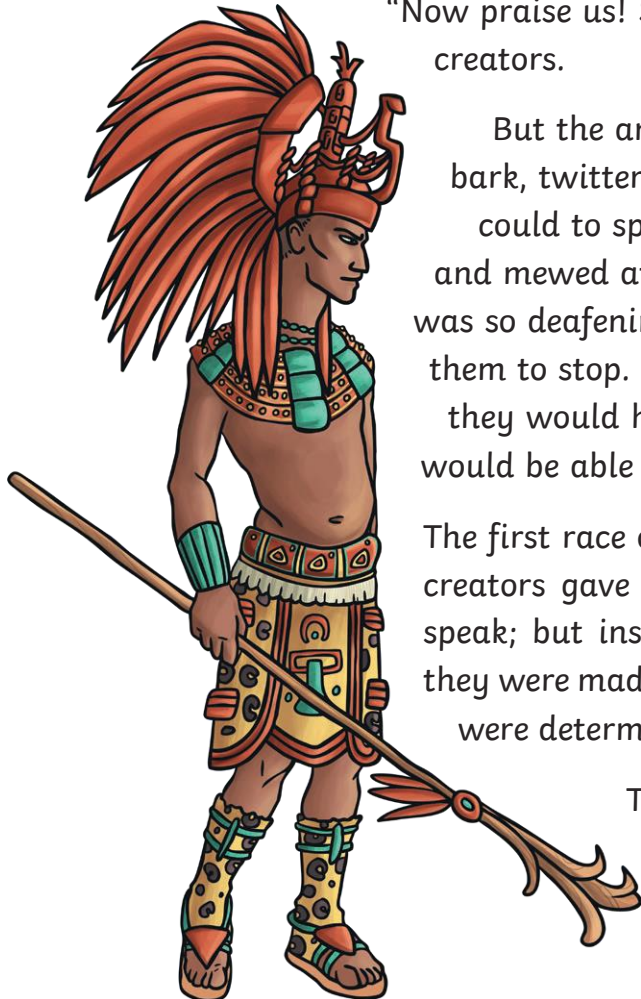
9. Do you think the gods were kind? Explain your answer fully, using evidence from the text.

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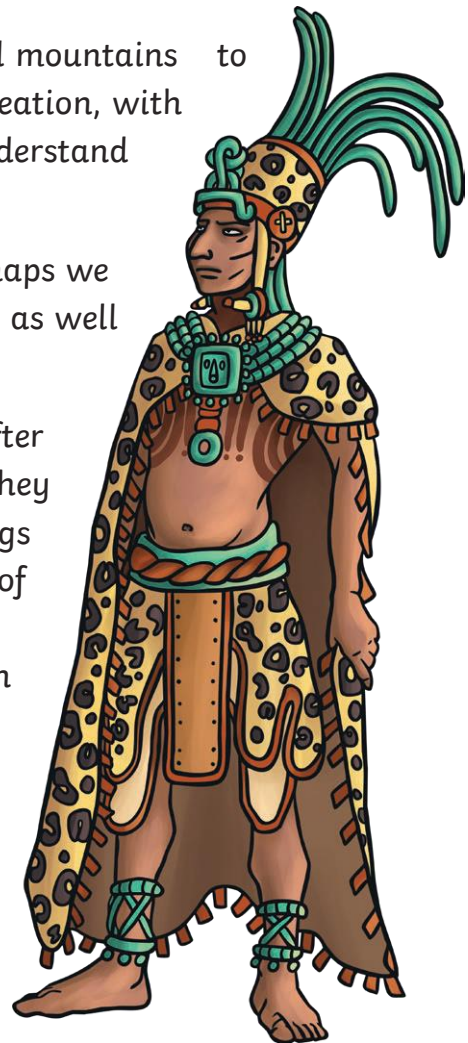
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The makers removed some of the men's vision. After that they could only see things close to them and they were no longer able to see through or above things that they should not. Thus, their understanding of the world was weakened. But the men still sang their creators' praises and settled down to live on the new land. Tepeu and Gucumatz made four women to be their mates.

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Questions

1. How did the creators make Earth?

2. Read the following statements and tick **True** or **False**.

Statement	True	False
Tepeu was also known as the Feathered Spirit.		
The first set of men were made from wet clay.		
The gods wanted beings on Earth to praise them and nothing more.		
Before they created the world, everything was dark.		

3. Why were the gods disappointed with the animals?

4. Look at the **paragraph that begins 'The first men...'**.

Find and **copy** one word which means **stronger**.

5. How were the first and second set of men different? Explain your answer fully using evidence from the text.

6. What do you think might have happened to the third set of men if Tepeu and Gucumatz had not been happy with them? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

7. 'Thus, their understanding of the world was weakened.'

The word **thus** is similar in meaning to... Tick **one**.

- additionally
- therefore
- and
- because

8. Why do you think the third set of men still praised the gods after they took away some of their vision?

9. Why do you think Tepeu and Gucumatz didn't want the beings to see as well as they do?

10. Do you think the gods were kind? Explain your answer fully, using evidence from the text.

2.

8.

9.

3.

4.

10.

5.

6.