

CENTRAL AMERICA

GUATEMALA, Pre-Columbian ;
Agriculture, race/ethnicity, lifestyle

LATIN AMERICA
Curriculum Materials for The Middle Grades

Center for Latin America
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Edited by Virginia G. Gibbs

© 1985 by The Center for Latin America, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.
Permission is granted for the reproduction of units for classroom use only.
This permission does not cover materials subject to separate copyright:
"Who Rules the Roost"; "Women in Caribbean Slavery"; "Panare Division of
Labor"; "The Two Souls of Peru." Revised 1989

CATEGORY: GUATEMALA: PRE-COLUMBIAN

CONCEPTS: AGRICULTURE, race/ethnicity, lifestyle

ACTIVITY: ILLUSTRATING THE QUICHÉ MAYA CALENDAR. The Quiché Mayas of Guatemala depended on the raising of corn for survival. Since their daily activities were closely related to this agriculture activity, they developed a calendar which organized time in direct relation to the milpa (corn field) cycle. The Quiché description of the ecology of each month provides a graphic view of corn production as practiced in pre-Columbian times. The calendar was divided into eighteen 20-day units, with five "empty days" at the end of each year, beginning in what we call March.

OBJECTIVES: While learning something of the pre-Columbian agriculture and life of the Quiché Mayas of Guatemala, students will also be introduced to the possibility of structuring time in different ways, according to the life styles of other cultures.

MATERIALS: Paper for drawing or painting
Paints, crayons, colored pencils

PROCEDURE: Explain the Quiché calendar to the students and give them the dates and month descriptions as follows. Students can then illustrate the months and present a wall display in chronological order, or make complete calendars to take home and share with family and friends. Students also enjoy identifying their birthdays and other special days on this different calendar.

The Quiché Solar Calendar

<u>Number</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Ecological Association</u>	<u>Correspondence</u>
1	Tequexepual (te-ke-she-pu-al)	first planting of corn	March 10-29
2	Q'uibapop (key-ba-pope)	period of rain	March 30- April 18
3	Sak	white flowers in the fields	April 19- May 8
4	Ch'ab	muddy fields	May 9-28
5	Jun Bix K'ij (hoon-bish-key)	first song to the sun	May 29- June 17
6	Nabe Mam	first old man: bad for planting	June 18- July 7
7	Ucab Mam	second old man: same	July 8-27

<u>Number</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Ecological Association</u>	<u>Correspondence</u>
8	Nabe Liquinca	soft earth	July 28- Aug. 16
9	Ucab Liquinca	time for weeding	Aug. 17- Sept. 6
10	Nabe Pach	hatching of birds	Sept. 7-26
11	Ucab Pach	casting for fish	Sept. 27- Oct. 16
12	Tz'ici Lakam (tsee-see-la-kam)	the corn sprouts	Oct. 17- Nov. 15
13	Tz'iquin K'ij (tsee-keen-key)	birds fly south	Nov. 16-25
14	Cakam	red clouds of heat	Nov. 26- Dec. 15
15	Nabe sij (na-bay-see)	burning of weeds and dry stalks	Dec. 16- Jan. 4
16	Ucab sij	planting in the mountains	Jan. 5-24
17	Rox Sij (rosh-see)	drought	Jan. 25- Feb. 13
18	Che'	trees, cold	Feb. 14- Mar. 5
	Batam (god of the Underworld rules)	5 unlucky days	Mar. 6-10

RESOURCES: Robert M. Carmack, The Quiché Mayas of Utitlán,
Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1981.

mythical Quiché
figure planting
corn in a milpa

