

# 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 hardier 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 white 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. 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.

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

# English: week one

## Day one:

Read the Maya Creation Story then answer the challenge questions to secure your understanding of it.

Can you answer the questions in all three chilli challenges?

## Day two:

You are going to write a different version of a Creation Story this week (how the world came to be).

Your first task is to create your 'god'.

Write a short paragraph to tell me:

- What their name is.
- What they are in charge of (e.g. thunder, water, joy...).
- Do they have an animal associated with them?
- What do they look like?
- How do they move?
- What personality do they have (kind, angry, vengeful...)

Draw a picture of your 'god' and label it.

## Day three:

For your Creation Story, you will need to describe how your god made the world.

Write bullet point notes to explain how your god made:

- the earth
- the sea
- the sky
- people
- animals.

## Day four:

Today you are going to write a first draft of your story.

Remember to include:

- An introduction:  
Tell your reader about your god (describe them in detail) and any other characters in your story.
- The setting:  
Describe where it is set, include lots of imagery (can you include similes and metaphors?).
- The creation:  
Describe in detail the process that your god goes through to create the earth, sea, sky, people and animals.
- A moral:  
Is there a moral to your story? If yes, include it here.
- A conclusion:  
End your story with a paragraph that brings your tale up to the present.

## Day five:

Proof-read your story from yesterday:

- Check for spellings, punctuation, grammar and missing words.
- Have you written in the same tense throughout?
- Are you writing in the same voice (first, second or third person)?
- Can you add any extra detail or change vocabulary?

Finally, illustrate your story.



## Challenge

1. What were the names of the two Gods in this creation story?
2. What colours did the Gods glitter with?
3. How did the God's create the world?
4. Name four creatures that the Gods created.
5. What did the Gods command the creatures to do?
6. Why did the Gods stop the creatures trying to speak their names?
7. What happened to the first race of men?
8. What were the second and third race of men made from?



## Challenge

1. Why did the Gods create the first race of men?
2. How were the second race of men better than the first?
3. Name two ways that the wooden men were destroyed.
4. Why do you think the Gods wanted to stop the men from seeing and understanding the world clearly? Explain your answer
5. What do you think this tells us about what the Gods are like? Why?
6. If you had a to make a race of man, what material would you make them from and why?



## Challenge

1. What was the world like in the beginning?
2. Why did the Gods order the creatures to stop praising them?
3. The second race of men were stronger. Why were the Gods unhappy? Give three reasons.
4. How did the Gods come to make the third race of men?
5. The third race of men seemed perfect. Why were Tepeu and Gucumatz displeased?