

## Sort and Predict: Defining Characteristics of Ancient Societies

Divide a large piece of paper into five columns with the following headings:

- Ancient China
- Persian Empire
- Ancient Greece
- Roman Empire
- Mayan Civilization



Cut out and sort the following characteristics into one of the five civilizations.

The first Olympic Games (776 BCE) began here: held every four years at Olympia.

This civilization is modern-day Iran.

The Circus Maximus, with gladiators and other competitions, began in this society.

This civilization began building a Great Wall to protect its borders from invaders (700–500 BCE).

This civilization's scribes recorded teachings in a painted book called a Codex, which is folded into an accordion shape. Only four still exist today.

Their gods, whose leader was Zeus, were said to live on Mount Olympus.

This civilization adopted much of the Greek culture, religion, and myths.

They invented paper about 200 CE.

Pericles, a leader of the city-state of Athens, established citizenship laws about 450 BCE.

They collected heavy taxes from the peoples they defeated.

They had large cities with temples of many stories at the centre of each city.

This empire built a Royal Road as a safe trade route from Asia Minor to the Mediterranean Sea.

The Dragon Boat Festival commemorated the death of a great poet during the period of the Qin (pronounced CHIN) dynasty.

This society began to decline because of corruption, war, and divisions between rich and poor.

Their counting system was based on 20.

This was one of the first societies known to use "zero" as a placeholder in mathematics.

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### Defining Characteristics of Ancient Societies

During the Period of the Warring States (475 BCE–221 BCE), this region was divided into nine states.

A long period of peace and prosperity called the *Pax Romana* took place from 27 BCE–180 CE.

They had a polytheistic religion (many gods), and many myths that were used as teachings about the gods and about the fate of humans.

Peoples of this civilization originally settled between the Persian Gulf and the Caspian Sea.

Their civilization grew to its height from 250–900 CE.

The First Emperor of the Qin (CHIN) Dynasty united the warring states in about 221 BCE.

This civilization is known for its decorative designs and motifs.

Their language was Latin; it became the basis for French, Italian, Spanish, and other languages.

Its "Golden Age" was from 487–404 BCE; many of its philosophers (thinkers), mathematicians, and writers continue to be influential.

Known as *K'ung fu-tzu*, or "the Master," Confucius traveled and taught about the life of virtue (551 BCE–479 BCE). Many Eastern religions were influenced by his teachings.

This civilization was made up of many self-governed city-states (the city or "polis").

Two city-states—Sparta and Athens—went to war from 431–404 BCE, leading to the decline of this civilization.

Darius the Great (522–486 BCE) extended this Empire further into Asia Minor and Egypt.

This civilization built a very long Silk Road to carry goods for trade in large caravans from the East to the West. They traded silks, spices, and other goods.

A major city was Teotihuacán, with large structures built in a pyramid-like formation but with a flat, rectangular top.

This empire was at its largest in about 300 CE, controlling the lands around the Mediterranean and much of Europe, including Britain.

This empire allowed defeated peoples to keep their own religions, cultures, and laws.

The Goddess of Corn was one of their main gods; they also had other gods associated with elements of nature.

Buddhism began to spread from India to this empire during antiquity.

These people often went to large outdoor theatres to watch plays.

This people's most important crop was maize (corn).

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This society was founded by King Cyrus (580-529 BCE), who defeated Babylon and dominated Mesopotamia.

The Han Dynasty defeated the Qin Dynasty. They were emperors for many years, developing trade and continuing to build the Great Wall.

This empire had large cities, the largest being Rome, and an elaborate system of roads, public buildings, baths, and aqueducts to carry water.

This civilization grew out of an ancient agricultural society called the Olmecs.

This civilization developed the idea of democracy and citizenship.

Their writing (calligraphy) became a form of art that exists to this day.

The famous philosophers Socrates and Plato lived and taught in this society.

This society went to war with Greece (499 BCE-449 BCE) but was defeated when the Greek city-states combined to form a league to defend themselves.

Their written language used glyphs or pictograms.

At first the Emperors of this culture persecuted Christians, but Christianity continued to spread.

In 393 CE the Emperor became a Christian.

A famous archeological find from this society is the Terracotta Army, a collection of sculptures placed in the tomb of the First Emperors in 246 BCE.

This civilization developed the use of coins as money.

Their alphabet became the basis for the western world alphabet.

Many words from this language are the root of English words today.

This empire was defeated and its capital (Persepolis) was burned by Alexander the Great in 330 BCE.

They lived in Central America in the area now called Mexico, Guatemala, and Belize.

This empire grew rapidly to control many areas and had a very strong military and an elaborate system of roads.

They developed a beautiful, formal style of architecture, with graceful columns and symmetrical design that influenced all later Western architecture.

They were excellent astronomers and developed a 260-day calendar based on the Sun.

Its first Emperor called himself Caesar Augustus; later emperors also took the title Caesar

In 476 CE, this empire was defeated by invading Germanic tribes from the north.