

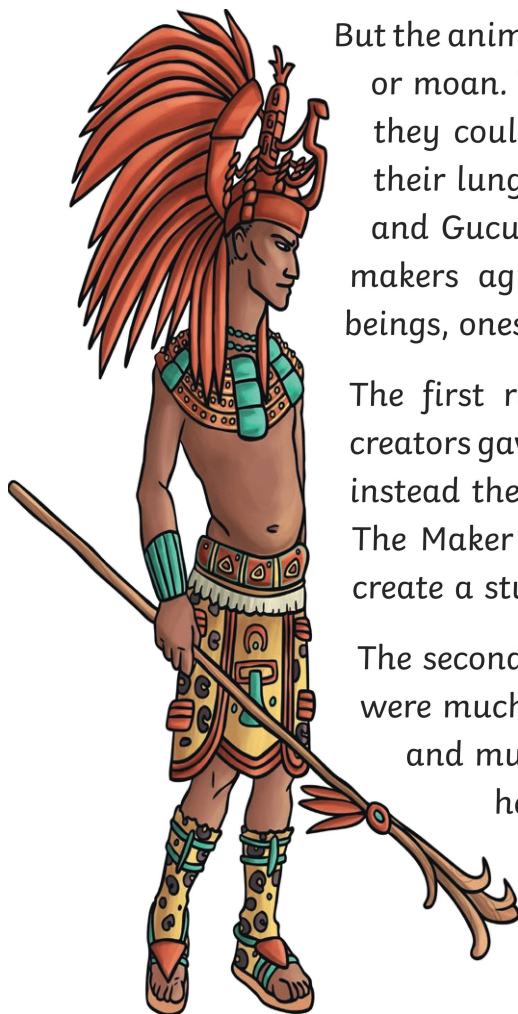
Maya Creation Story

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.

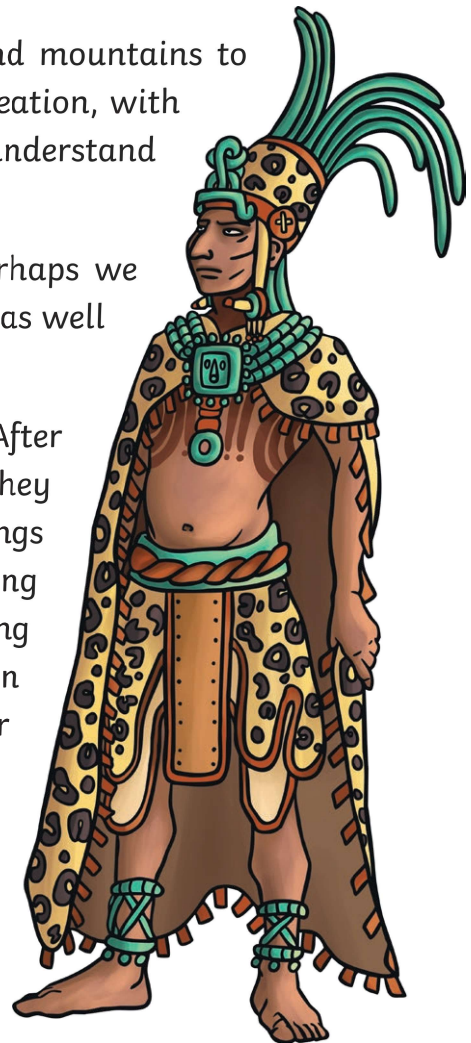
The new beings seemed perfect. They were sturdy enough to last and their minds were rich with thoughts and feelings. Their first act after their creation was to immediately worship Tepeu and Gucumatz, and thank them for their lives. Tepeu and Gucumatz were pleased. "What do you see?" they asked the corn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

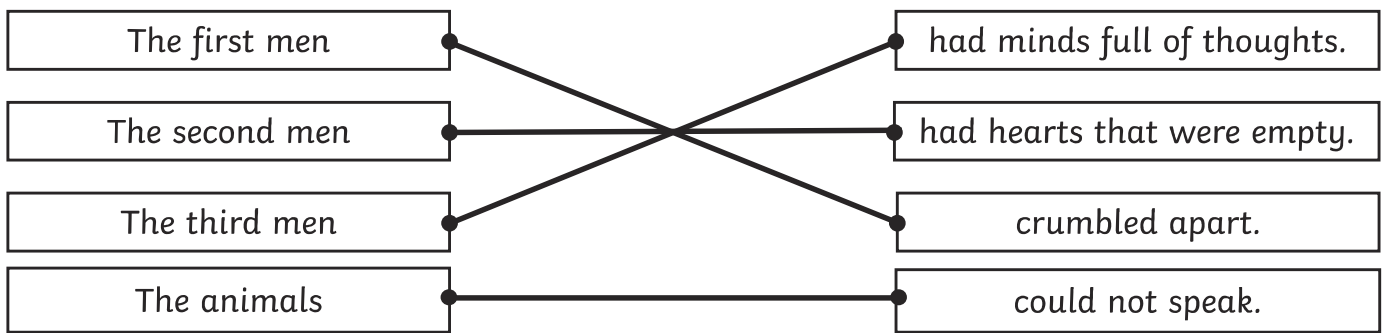
Answers

1. What are Tepeu and Gucumatz also known as?
They are known as the Maker and the Feathered Spirit.
Also accept 'the creators'

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

- 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.



4. Explain in your own words how the first and second set of men were different.
 Give 3 differences.

Pupils own response, that lists the similarities and differences mentioned in the text, such as: The first men and second men were different because the first men were made from clay while the second men were made from wood. This made the second men stronger than the first men who crumbled when they tried to speak. The second set of men were able to speak, but their words were empty and meaningless.

5. How were monkeys created?

Monkeys were created by accident – they were the second set of men who survived the floods and the animals, they were kept alive as an example to the next set of men.

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

They removed some of their vision.