

Secrets in String

The Incan empire began to grow around 1438 and reached its peak around 1532. By that time, it stretched for 2,500 miles along the western coast of South America. This civilization came to an end in 1532 when the Incas were defeated by Spanish invaders.

The Incas did not have a written language. As a result, they left no books, letters, or tablets to describe their daily lives. However, we can tell from the ruins of the Incan empire that they were skilled workers. They built complex cities, roads, and bridges throughout Peru. In order to do this, they had to possess an excellent understanding of numbers and geometry.

Even though the Incas did not write things down, they were able to document their history and keep track of numbers. Scientists believe that the Incas recorded their songs and stories and made lists of births and deaths. They also kept accounts of how much grain was needed to feed their people. They were able to record a full language, not in letters, numbers, or symbols, but in a complex system called *quipus*.

Quipus are colorfully dyed cords. Attached to the cords are lengths of string that are tied in single, double, or triple knots. Every little detail of a quipu has meaning. The tightness and shape of the knot, the color and thickness of thread, and the direction in which the knot is tied all give meaning to what is recorded in the string. Scientists who study the Incas are learning more about these people as they unravel their secrets in string.

104

262

Name/Date _____

Teacher/Grade _____

1. MONITOR ORAL READING FLUENCY

To monitor fluency and accuracy, use two copies of the passage, one for you and one for the student. On your copy of the passage, record the student's oral reading behaviors and the minutes and seconds required for the student to read the entire passage.

Note expression, phrasing, and miscues.

INTRODUCE THE PASSAGE

Say: *This passage is titled "Secrets in String." Read aloud to learn how scientists believe the ancient Inca recorded songs, stories, and their history. You may begin now.*

RATE Use the student's oral reading time to circle the Words Per Minute (WPM) range. After the assessment, determine and record the student's exact WPM.

262 (Total Words Read) ÷ _____ total seconds = _____ × 60 = _____ WPM

Rate	1 INTERVENTION	2 INSTRUCTIONAL	3 INDEPENDENT	4 ADVANCED
Minutes:Seconds	3:07 or more	3:06–2:12	2:11–1:45	1:44 or less
WPM	84 or fewer	85–119	120–150	151 or more

ACCURACY Circle the number of miscues that are not self-corrected and record the percent of accuracy.

Accuracy	1 INTERVENTION	2 INSTRUCTIONAL	3 INDEPENDENT		4 ADVANCED	
Number of Miscues	12 or more	10–11	7–9	4–6	1–3	0
Percent of Accuracy	95 or less	96	97	98	99	100

If the student's percent of accuracy or rate is below the instructional range, reassess with a lower-level passage to determine an instructional reading level.

Check one: _____ Expression and phrasing are appropriate.

_____ Expression and phrasing need attention.

Name/Date _____

Teacher/Grade _____

2. MONITOR COMPREHENSION

Circle the descriptors that best reflect the student's responses. Possible Independent responses for Sections 2 and 3 are provided. Accept other appropriate responses. The student may use the passage when responding.

SUMMARIZE Main Ideas Say: *What are two important, or main, ideas about the Incan Empire in this passage?* (Possible responses: *The Incan Empire was located in South America and lasted about one hundred years. We know that the Incas were skilled workers because of the ruins they left behind. The Incas did not have a written language, but they recorded their history using cords and lengths of string in a system called quipus.*)

Comprehension	1 INTERVENTION	2 INSTRUCTIONAL	3 INDEPENDENT	4 ADVANCED
Summarize: Main Ideas	Does not identify main ideas or does not respond	Gives a partially correct response, such as identifies 1 main idea	Identifies 2 main ideas	Identifies 2 main ideas using specific vocabulary from the text

SUMMARIZE Details Say: *What are two details about the system called quipus?* (Possible responses: *Cords and string were used by the Incas to record songs, stories, births, deaths, and accounting of grain. Different kinds of knots and threads were tied in a variety of ways, telling about the history of the people.*)

Comprehension	1 INTERVENTION	2 INSTRUCTIONAL	3 INDEPENDENT	4 ADVANCED
Summarize: Details	Does not identify details or does not respond	Gives a partially correct response, such as identifies 1 of 2 details; may misinterpret information	Identifies 2 details	Identifies 2 details using specific vocabulary from the text

Name/Date _____

Teacher/Grade _____

3. IN-DEPTH PROGRESS MONITORING

The items below provide more in-depth progress monitoring of specific skills. The student may use the passage when responding.

COMPREHENSION Draw Conclusions

Say: **Give two examples of how we can tell that the Incas were an advanced civilization.** (Possible responses: *They used complex math skills to build cities, roads, and bridges. They created a complex system called quipus to record their history. They kept accounts of how much grain was needed to feed the people. They had an excellent understanding of numbers and geometry.*)

Comprehension	1 INTERVENTION	2 INSTRUCTIONAL	3 INDEPENDENT	4 ADVANCED
Draw Conclusions	Does not draw a conclusion or does not respond	Gives a partially correct response, such as draws a conclusion but does not provide an explanation	Draws 2 reasonable conclusions using information from the text	Draws 2 reasonable conclusions using information and specific vocabulary from the text

VOCABULARY Multiple-Meaning Words

- Point to the word *grain* in the third paragraph. Say: **What is the meaning of grain in this passage?** (Possible response: *a cereal crop*) **What is another meaning for the word grain?** (Possible response: *a small amount of something, such as a grain of sand*)
- Point to the word *left* in the second paragraph. Say: **What is the meaning of left in this passage?** (Possible response: *remained*) **What is another meaning for the word left?** (Possible response: *the direction opposite right*)

Vocabulary	1 INTERVENTION	2 INSTRUCTIONAL	3 INDEPENDENT	4 ADVANCED
Multiple-Meaning Words	Gives inaccurate meanings or does not respond	Gives a partially correct response, such as the intended meaning of 1 word	Gives the intended meaning of each word and an additional meaning for 1 word	Gives the intended meaning and an additional meaning for each word

- End the conference.

WORD READING Greek and Latin Roots *geo, sy, civ* Return to the Record of Oral Reading to determine whether the student read these words correctly: *system, geometry, symbols, civilization.*

Word Reading	1 INTERVENTION	2 INSTRUCTIONAL	3 INDEPENDENT	4 ADVANCED
Greek Roots <i>geo, sy, civ</i>	Does not read any words accurately or omits them	Reads 1–3 of 4 words accurately	Reads all 4 words accurately	Reads all 4 words accurately and automatically