

NEWS BREAK

Sunday's News Break selects an article from Sunday, January 3, 2016 of The Seattle Times e-Edition for an in-depth reading of the news. Read the selected story and answer the attached study questions.

Find offer hope of untangling Incas' ancient accounting tool (Main, page A6)

Pre-Reading and Vocabulary

1. Read the title of this article. Do you know who the Incas are? Look at the photo accompanying the article. What do you see in the photo? How do you think it might have been used as an accounting tool?

2. **Vocabulary: Match the words to the numbered definitions below.**

- A. accounting
- B. agricultural
- C. artifacts
- D. conveying
- E. decipher
- F. duplicate
- G. excavator
- H. preserved
- I. provenance
- J. provisions
- K. remnant
- L. ruins
- M. scribe
- N. signifiers
- O. strands
- P. tenacious

- 1. the configuration of sound elements or other linguistic symbols representing a word or other meaningful unit in a language
- 2. to find the meaning of (something that is difficult to read or understand)
- 3. the remaining pieces of something that was destroyed
- 4. the origin or source of something
- 5. a simple object (such as a tool or weapon) that was made by people in the past
- 6. continuing for a long time
- 7. exactly the same as something else
- 8. of, relating to, or used in farming or agriculture
- 9. a supply of food and other things that are needed
- 10. a person in the past whose job was to copy manuscripts and books
- 11. to keep (something) in its original state or in good condition
- 12. to make (something) known to someone
- 13. a thin piece of thread, wire, hair, etc.
- 14. a person who digs up things that have been buried for a long time
- 15. the skill, system, or job of keeping the financial records of a business or person
- 16. the part of something that is left when the other parts are gone

Comprehension

1. Khipus are knotted string records that were kept by what ancient civilization?
2. Khipus are made of a series of strings made from _____ or _____ and hanging from a main cord. **(Fill in the blanks)**
3. Each string may have several knots. According to the article what do the knots represent?
4. Some of the khipus that were first found in 2013 at the Incahuasi excavation site were buried under remnants of what?
5. Before the discovery of the khipus at the Incahuasi site archaeologists had only previously found khipus where?
6. Khipus were created and used by _____. **(Fill in the blank)**
7. Researchers have been unable to identify the meaning of any possible non-numerical _____ in khipus; as a result they cannot read any nonmathematical words or phrases. **(Fill in the blank)**
8. Researchers are hoping that by studying the khipus found with agricultural products, such as peanuts, chili peppers, beans and corn, they will be able to compare them with others in a large database and be able to do what?
9. The Incahuasi excavation turned up what are essentially duplicate sets of khipus tied together. What do researchers believe these duplicate sets could have been made for?
10. According to the article, one khipu found had its knots untied, suggesting what?

Additional Activities

1. **Answer the following questions about the article you just read:**
 - A. Who or what is this article about?
 - B. Why do you think this article is important?
 - C. What is the most important or interesting fact you learned from this article?
2. Watch this video about the Inca civilization/empire from History.com and then write down two new facts you learned about the Incas. <http://www.history.com/topics/inca>

News Break is posted to the Web on Wednesday and Friday. Please share this NIE News Break program with other teachers. To sign-up for the electronic edition for your class, please register on-line or call 206/652-6290 or toll-free 1-888/775-2655.

Answer Key to Vocabulary

- A. 15
- B. 8
- C. 5
- D. 12
- E. 2
- F. 7
- G. 14
- H. 11
- I. 4
- J. 9
- K. 16
- L. 3
- M. 10
- N. 1
- O. 13
- P. 6

Answer Key to Comprehension Questions

1. The Incas.
2. cotton, wool
3. The knots represent numbers.
4. They were found buried under remnants of centuries old produce.
5. In graves.
6. scribes
7. signifiers
8. They are hoping they can identify a color, knot or some other signifier that will identify that product or that differentiates it from other khipus and they can build some kind of sign vocabulary. **(Answers may vary)**
9. Researchers believe they could have been made when the same products was counted twice (perhaps to guarantee accurate bookkeeping).
10. Suggesting that the information stored there had been “erased” by the accountant so the khipu could be reused.