Teacher's notes and answer key

The Hero Twins of the Popol Vuh

Subjects: English · History · Religious Studies | recommended from age 12 (B1) | Video: 8:31 min

Answers B

1. The sacred book of the K'iche' Maya (Guatemala); written down only in colonial times and preserved only in a copy made by the priest Francisco Ximénez in the early 18th century.

2. Their ballgame was so loud that it disturbed the lords of the underworld.

3. They faked the torch and cigars with the light of fireflies and red macaw feathers.

4. Xbalanqué had a gourd carved as a replacement head. During the ballgame with the real head a rabbit distracted everyone, and he swapped the head back.

5. They rose into the sky and became the sun and the moon.

Answer C

Correct numbers from top to bottom: 4 – 7 – 1 – 6 – 2 – 8 – 3 – 5

Notes on D and E

E: Father – invited because of the noise / fails the tests / is sacrificed, head hung in a tree / leads to the twins' birth. Sons – invited because of the noise / see through the tricks and survive every house by cunning / defeat One Death and Seven Death / Xibalba loses its power over the living, the twins become sun and moon.

D2: The twins let themselves be burned, their bones are ground and they come back – like maize that dies and grows again.

Content note and age

Recommended from age 12. The video describes sacrifices, a severed head and ritual human sacrifice at the ballgame. Please preview the video.

Source of the retelling: Popol Vuh (copy by Ximénez, early 18th century).

The narrator's voice and the illustrations in the video are AI-generated; the script follows the established tradition. You are welcome to copy and share this worksheet for classroom use.

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