

Name: _____ Period: _____ Date: _____

Unit 1: Ancient Civilizations **Telling Time**

Chronology is the **science of locating events in time**. There are many different methods of measuring the passage of time. Many civilizations throughout history have kept track of the years by remembering who the ruler was during a certain time period. In the United States today, we informally refer to the 1980s as the Reagan Era (1981-1989 AD) or the 1990s as the Clinton Era (1993-2001 AD). However, the formal chronological system we use to keep track of the passage of time is called the *Gregorian calendar*.

Julian

The Julian calendar was the calendar of ancient Rome proclaimed by the dictator Julius Caesar in 46 BC. The month of July is named after Julius Caesar and the month of August is named after his nephew, Augustus Caesar, the first Roman Emperor.

Gregorian

The Gregorian calendar was a chronological system proclaimed by the Roman Catholic Pope Gregory XIII in 1582 AD. The Gregorian calendar was a revision of the Julian calendar which fixed several inaccuracies with the Julian system. Some countries were still using the inaccurate Julian calendar until the early 20th century, less than 100 years ago. January 1, 2007 AD by the Gregorian calendar was December 19, 2006 AD by the Julian calendar.

The Gregorian calendar is a solar calendar where one year is based on the time it takes for the Earth to complete one full orbit around the Sun. This amount of time is roughly 365.25 days which is divided into 12 months of irregular lengths: January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, and December.

The Gregorian calendar is a Christian calendar. The Gregorian calendar falsely assumed the year 1 AD to be the birth year of Jesus of Nazareth, the central figure of the Christian religion. Historians know now that Jesus was most likely born in or around the year 4 BC but the exact date of his birth remains a mystery. The next year of the Gregorian calendar will begin January 1, 2009 AD.

Commonly Used Abbreviations in the Julian/Gregorian Calendar System

BC: "Before Christ" (the English translation of *Ante Christum Natum*, Latin for "before the birth of Christ.") Years BC are numbered descending from 1 BC back into prehistory.

AD: *Anno Domini Nostri Iesu Christi* (Latin for "In the Year of Our Lord Jesus Christ.") Years AD are numbered ascending from 1 AD forward to the present.

The Gregorian calendar is the most used chronological system on the planet due to five hundred years of European and American military, economic, and cultural domination of most of planet Earth starting around 1500 AD. It remains essential to the smooth operation of most global businesses and governments. However, there are several other major chronological systems in use throughout the world including the Hebrew and Islamic calendars.

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Part I: Basic Chronology

Directions: Answer the following questions *in complete sentences*.

1. What is chronology?

2. What is the formal system we use to keep track of the passage of time?

3. For whom are the months of July and August named?

4. What is the basis for one year in the Gregorian calendar?

5. The Gregorian calendar is supposed to begin with which historical personality's birth?

6. How are years BC numbered?

7. How are years AD numbered?

8. Why is the Gregorian calendar the most used calendar today?

Part II: Chronological Order

Directions: Number the following sets of years 1 through 5 in the order in which they occurred.

- | | | | | |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| 9. | 10. | 11. | 12. | 13. |
| _____ 410 AD | _____ 44 BC | _____ 7 AD | _____ 1776 AD | _____ 875 BC |
| _____ 1876 AD | _____ 8000 BC | _____ 201 BC | _____ 323 BC | _____ 876 BC |
| _____ 1688 AD | _____ 1700 BC | _____ 343 AD | _____ 1901 BC | _____ 877 AD |
| _____ 1492 AD | _____ 210 BC | _____ 409 BC | _____ 474 BC | _____ 878 BC |
| _____ 2006 AD | _____ 475 BC | _____ 589 AD | _____ 500 AD | _____ 876 AD |

Part III: Spans of Centuries

One year _____

Ten years _____

100 years _____

1000 years _____

Centuries are numbered from _____ to _____ for BC and _____ to _____ for AD.

Directions: Correctly name the century in which the following years fell.

Example: The 21st century AD runs from **2001 AD** to **2100 AD**.

14. The 20th c. AD runs from _____ to _____.

15. The 17th c. AD runs from _____ to _____.

16. The 2nd c. AD runs from _____ to _____.

17. The 1st c. BC runs from _____ to _____.

18. The 5th c. BC runs from _____ to _____.

Directions: Correctly name the century in which the following years fall.

Example: 2016 AD is in the **21st** century **AD**.

19. 1066 AD is in the _____ century _____.

20. 1776 AD is in the _____ century _____.

21. 1688 AD is in the _____ century _____.

22. 100 BC is in the _____ century _____.

23. 101 BC is in the _____ century _____.