

Grade 1: Domain 4

Rain Player



Story and Pictures by David Wisniewski



●●● QT: 690L

Read-Alouds with this rating may demonstrate sophisticated syntax and nuanced content.

●●○ QL: 2

These Read-Alouds may include some complexity in structure and purpose. The language may include some unconventional phrasing, idioms, or other specialized phrasing.

●●○ RT: 2

This unit's tasks and activities may contain some complexity; students will benefit from the knowledge they have built throughout the program.

Summary: Civilizations across the world developed over many thousands of years, each with their own beliefs, customs, rules, and ways of life. Still, these civilizations all had the same common features or elements. In *Rain Player*, the features of the ancient Maya civilization in what is now Mexico and Central America are illustrated in an original story based on Mayan history and legend. In the story, a young pok-a-tok player named Pik must earn forgiveness for insulting the rain god Chac. Pik challenges Chac to a game of pok-a-tok both to earn his forgiveness and to gain rain to end the drought. Pik uses his skill and the special gifts given to him at birth to win the challenge.

Essential Question

What are the key features of a civilization?

Remind students that stories from ancient times can tell us much about the civilizations from which they came. Use the chart below to discuss the key features of a civilization and review the book to find evidence of each.

Civilization Features	Evidence from <i>Rain Player</i>
Farming	corn
Cities	"The city lay in darkness . . ."
Writing	charts and calendars
Leaders	Ah Kin Mai (priest), supreme ruler, royalty
Religion	Lord Sun; Chac, the god of rain

Vocabulary Routine

Tier 2 Vocabulary Words

fate

torment

forgiveness

insulting

magnificent

Tier 3 Vocabulary Words

drought

cenote

whirlwind

temples

Performance Task

Write a brief paragraph describing the similarities and differences between a feature of Maya civilization and the same feature in today's world.

Students should be able to provide at least one similarity and one difference for one category below:

- farming
- cities
- writing
- leaders
- religion

Writing Prompt

Have students write a sentence or sentences based on the following prompts. Encourage students to write in complete sentences.

- My favorite part of the story is . . .
- Why did Pik become known as Rain Player?
- What would have happened if Pik had lost the game to Chac?