



“Counting”

Reading Comprehension – Informational Passages ⁽⁶⁾

Directions: Read the passage. Then answer questions about the passage below.

Archaeologists believe that counting large quantities began about 10,000 years ago. Early farmers had to account for communally stored crops. Early counting systems involved small **tokens** which represented farmers’ stores. In the area which is now southern Iraq, little figures shaped like discs, balls, and pyramids were used in about 7500 B.C. to represent various holdings. Later, marks which represented the figures were **inscribed** on clay tablets by use of a blunt reed to cut into the wet clay. Still, the symbols were always connected with specific merchandise. Around 3000 B.C., people began using clay tablets and a new **accounting** system which they perfected over the next 4,000 years. A writing system called cuneiform, which consisted of wedge-shaped symbols, was also invented. At the same time, other cultures were independently developing numbering and writing systems. Soon philosophers began to discover that nature was **subject to** laws which could be expressed with numbers.

Questions:

1) When did counting large quantities start?

- A. 10,000 B.C.
- B. 10,000 years ago
- C. 7,500 B.C.
- D. 7,500 years ago

2) People wrote on _____ tablets.

- A. paper
- B. wooden
- C. clay
- D. stone

3) Tokens represented ...

- A. crops
- B. merchandise
- C. people
- D. Both A and B are correct.

4) ... consisted of wedge shaped symbols.

- A. Counting
- B. Cuneiform
- C. Clay tablets
- D. None of the above

5) What shape tokens were found in Iraq?

- A. discs
- B. balls
- C. pyramids
- D. All of the above

Vocabulary:

1) **Archaeologists** study ...

- A. ancient history.
- B. mathematics.
- C. pottery.
- D. Both A and C are correct.

2) **Tokens** are ...

- A. symbols
- B. crops
- C. numbers
- D. stores



3) Marks that were **inscribed** were ...

- A. painted
- B. carved
- C. counted
- D. represented

4) An **accounting** system is a system of ...

- A. raising crops
- B. writing
- C. keeping records
- D. None of the above

5) Something which is **subject to** laws is ...

- A. free from laws
- B. ruled by laws
- C. above the laws
- D. None of the above.