

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Reading Comprehension Passages

Read the text below and answer the questions!

### The History of Chocolate

Chocolate is one of the world's most beloved treats, but its history goes back thousands of years. The ancient Maya and Aztec civilizations in Central America were among the first to cultivate cacao plants. They used cacao beans to create a bitter, frothy drink mixed with spices, which was often consumed during rituals and celebrations.

When Spanish explorers arrived in the Americas in the 16th century, they brought cacao beans back to Europe. Over time, Europeans began sweetening the bitter drink with sugar and milk, transforming it into the chocolate we know today. By the 19th century, new inventions made it possible to create solid chocolate, paving the way for the chocolate bars and candies we enjoy.

Today, chocolate is a global industry, with millions of tons produced every year. However, the growing demand for chocolate has also raised concerns about sustainable farming and fair treatment of cacao farmers. Efforts are being made to ensure that the chocolate industry supports ethical practices while continuing to bring joy to people worldwide.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Which ancient civilizations were among the first to cultivate cacao?

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Answer: The Maya and Aztec civilizations)

2. What kind of drink did the Maya and Aztecs make with cacao beans?

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Answer: A bitter, frothy drink mixed with spices)

3. Who brought cacao beans to Europe?

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Answer: Spanish explorers)

4. How did Europeans change the way cacao was consumed?

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Answer: They sweetened the drink with sugar and milk)

5. What invention in the 19th century changed the chocolate industry?

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Answer: The invention of solid chocolate)

6. What are two concerns about the modern chocolate industry?

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Answer: Sustainable farming and fair treatment of cacao farmers)