

VMFA TAKE AND MAKE

Celebrate the Art of Pre-Columbia: Maya Vessel

The ancient Maya people had a writing system made up of over 500 different hieroglyphs! They wrote stories, about their beliefs and important people in their town, by drawing symbols in vertical columns that were read left to right. The Maya often drew such stories on clay vessels to decorate these useful objects. Use the symbols below or make new symbols to create your own story!

1. Think of what you would like to draw on your vessel. Look at the hieroglyphs on this page for ideas!
2. Draw your ideas on the rectangular shape to the left and color in your design. Consider using browns and reds to depict the natural pigments (colors) used on Maya vessels.
3. Cut along the solid line and glue the paper around a recycled tin can.
4. What will you store in your container?

Bottom

MAYA HIEROGLYPHS



bone



cloud



mountain



road



sun



shield



sky



flower



book



water



man, person



house



0



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10