

Name _____ Date _____

Directions: Read the passage. Then use the information from the passage to answer questions 1–5.

Calendars

The Western calendar that we use today began in Rome more than 2,000 years ago.

The Western Calendar

Around 45 B.C., Julius Caesar was the ruler of Rome. He called for a new calendar. It was called the Julian calendar. It was based on the lunar cycle, or the time it takes the moon to orbit Earth. It is also the time it takes the moon to go from a new moon to a full moon and back to a new moon again. That is about $29\frac{1}{2}$ days. A year in the Julian calendar measures the days by one orbit of Earth around the sun. That is about 365 days.

The Julian calendar was fairly accurate. But it lost one day every 128 years. By 1582, it was ten days off. Pope Gregory XIII corrected it by adding an extra day to the month of February every four years. This is what we call a “leap year.” This new system was called the Gregorian calendar.

Other Calendars

Different calendars are used by people around the world. They include the Chinese, Islamic, and Hebrew calendars. All three are based on lunar cycles.

The Chinese calendar has 12 or 13 months each year. The calendar goes for 60 years. Then it begins again.

The Islamic, or Muslim, calendar goes for three years and then begins again. It has 12 months. Each month has either 29 or 30 days.

The Hebrew calendar has 12 months each year. Each month has 29 or 30 days. In leap years, an extra month of 29 days is added.

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1. The first two paragraphs of this passage tell mostly about _____.

- Ⓐ how Earth travels around the sun
- Ⓑ why Julius Caesar was the ruler of Rome
- Ⓒ how the Julian calendar came to be
- Ⓓ what the moon looks like

2. Write one or two sentences summarizing the information in the first part of the passage, “The Western Calendar.”

3. The second half of the passage tells mostly about _____.

- Ⓐ Pope Gregory XIII
- Ⓑ holidays in the Chinese calendar
- Ⓒ Hebrew numbers
- Ⓓ examples of other calendars

4. Which is the best description of how the Islamic calendar works?

- Ⓐ It is a lunar calendar with 12 months in a year and 29 or 30 days in each month.
- Ⓑ It is sometimes called the Muslim calendar, and it is based on lunar cycles.
- Ⓒ It is similar to the Chinese and Hebrew calendars in that they are all lunar calendars.
- Ⓓ It is a three-year calendar with 29 or 30 days in each month.

5. Read the sentence from the passage. Write a paraphrase of this sentence in your own words.

“It is also the time it takes the moon to go from a new moon to a full moon and back to a new moon again.”
