Hieroglyphs is a type of writing with pictures or signs, but Mayan was also Phonetic.

*balam*, is the Maya word for jaguar. The first is pure picture writing because it looks like a ferocious jaguar's head.

The second uses phonetic, or "sound," symbols, much like our alphabet. The Maya wrote both ways and sometimes combined them.
- Classic Maya spoke: Quichen, Kanjobalan, Tzetlan, Cholan, Mam.

- Today, there are over 31 dialects that descend from the original 5 languages.
ART

- Precious works of Jade, Jars, statues
- Massive carved stone sculpture
- Wood carvings
- Stucco modeling
ARCHITECTURE

- AHAU and aristocrats lived in city centers.
- Ceremonial centers had platforms, courtyards, palaces, ballcourts, etc..
- Heavy use of stucco covering
- Peasants lived in simple huts
RELIGION

- Complex Pantheistic religion.
- Connected with ritual blood sacrifice to the Gods.
- In Mayan society blood needed to be shed on a daily basis in honor of the gods.
Different kinds

Most important sacrifice was by fertility sacrifice of the Ahau/Queen.

Human sacrifice
- Heart extraction, arrows, beheading, etc..

Ballgame sacrifice

Self sacrifice by cutting