

Listening / Reading / Vocabulary / Sentences

End of the World!

2012 - Trailer

What do you think of this theory? Did you remember this event in 2012?

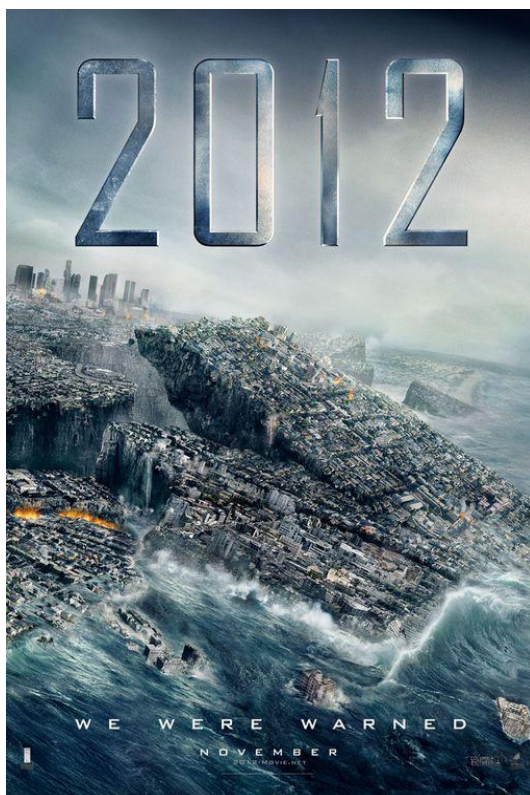
Do you know people who believe this?

What would you do if you knew that the world were going to end?

Read this text from from an English newspaper. (2009)

A TIDAL WAVE **engulfs** the Himalayas. A TSUNAMI **scoops up** a warship and dumps it on the White House. THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA **crumbles** and thousands of screaming TOURISTS **plummet** to their death.

Those who SURVIVE **flee** in terror, but to run is **futile** for this is the ultimate catastrophe - the end of the world - as predicted by Hollywood DISASTER movie 2012.



Is it nonsense or are we really **on the brink of** Doomsday? This belief is based on a calendar PRODUCED by the ancient Mayan civilisation, which lasted for around 2,000 years until its mysterious COLLAPSE in AD900.

Without telescopes or other EQUIPMENT to use, the Mayans managed to CALCULATE that a lunar month lasted 295,305 days, just 34 seconds away from what we know to be its actual LENGTH. They also **accurately** forecast the movements of planets including Jupiter and Mars, and the occurrence of both

solar and lunar eclipses for many CENTURIES to come. Doomsday theorists are worried that the "Long Count" Calendar, as it is known, APPEARS to end abruptly on a date they recorded as 13.0.0.0 or the date we know as December 21, 2012.

The only clue as to what the Mayans thought might happen on that day comes from an ANCIENT stone tablet, discovered during roadworks in Mexico in the 1960's. Carved upon it are hieroglyphics that refer to the year 2012 and an event that involves Bolon Yokte, the Mayan god of war and CREATION . Weathering and a crack in the stone have made the last part of the inscription illegible, but Mexican ARCHAEOLOGISTS have interpreted it as saying "He will descend from the SKY".

Scientists don't AGREE with this idea but say that the world will come to an end eventually. The good news is that it is UNLIKELY to happen for another 4 billion years. So since FATE isn't likely to happen for a long time, if at all, we are probably safe to get on with our plans for Christmas 2012.



What do these words from the story mean?

engulf

scoop up

crumble

plummet

flee

futile

on the brink of

Doomsday

accurately

Weathering

illegible

Answer these questions.

1. Do the scientists agree with the end of the world?
2. Did a Tidal Wave really engulf the Himalayas?
3. Why do some people believe in the Mayan calendar?
4. According to the Mayans, what may happen on 21st December 2012?
5. What do you think?

Discuss or debate the questions below. Remember to support your answers!

Do you worry about the fate of humans? Do you worry about the end of humans.

- I worry that
- I don't worry that

If scientists or politicians discovered that the world would soon end, should they tell everyone? Would you like to know?

- They should / shouldn't
- I would / wouldn't

What are the chances that a natural disaster of some kind will cause the extinction of humans?

- I think the chances are high / low

As improbable as it may be, what would you do if you woke up one morning and discovered that all of humankind had disappeared? Please explain.

- I would ...

What movies have you seen about the end of the world? Are any of these movies believable? Why/ not?

- I have seen ...

What wiped out (Killed) the dinosaurs? Do you think it will happen again?

- wiped out

What three things would you do if you knew the world was going to end in one week?

- I would ..., ..., and