

Time and Dating

In ancient calendars, years were generally numbered according to the year of a ruler's reign. For example, this year would be the 2nd year of President Trump and back in 2008 it would have been the 8th year of President Bush. The dating system that we use, however, comes from a monk named Dionysius Exiguus. In the year 532, he started a Christian system of dating events beginning with the most important event in Christianity – the year he believed Jesus Christ was born (he was a little off...). He called the years after this event **Anno Domini** or **AD**, which is Latin for "in the year of our Lord." Therefore, an event that occurred in 500 AD was said to have taken place 500 years after the birth of Christ.

The years before the birth of Christ are called **Before Christ** or **BC**. The events of 249 BC took place 249 years before Christ was born. BC dates are numbered backwards, like negative numbers on a number line. For example, the 5th year before the birth of Christ would be 5 BC.

Some historians use the **BCE/CE** notation for historical events. **BCE** means **Before the Common Era** and **CE** means **Common Era**. The CE/BCE notation has been adopted by some authors and publishers because it does not explicitly make use of Christian titles for Jesus, such as "Christ" and *Dominus* ("Lord"), which are used in the BC/AD notation.

If you do not designate BC, BCE, AD, or CE, then it is assumed the date is AD/CE. Example: 2017 = 2017 CE.

Often, groups of years are viewed together for historical or other purposes. Note how many years are included in the following terms:

Decade _____

Century _____

Millennium _____

The first century begins with the year 1 AD and extends to 100 AD. Then, the years numbered 101-200 AD are the 2nd century AD. The same principle applied with BC. The 3rd century BC includes the years 201-300 BC.

A.

B. In which centuries would you find the following years?

1. 301-400 AD _____

2. 3401 BC _____

3. 1799 AD _____

1. The second half of the 17th Century

2. The first quarter of the 6th Century

D. How many years are between the following dates?

1. 100 BC and 300 AD _____

2. 4100 BC and 1450 BC _____

3. 1 BC and 2014 AD _____

C. What years are contained in the following centuries?

1. 6th Century _____2. 10th Century BC _____3. 1st Century BC _____

B. What years are contained within the following time periods?

Name: _____

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E. Put the following dates in order from the earliest to the most recent.

145 AD

67 BC

1434 BC

2003 AD

1434 AD

4 BC

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____