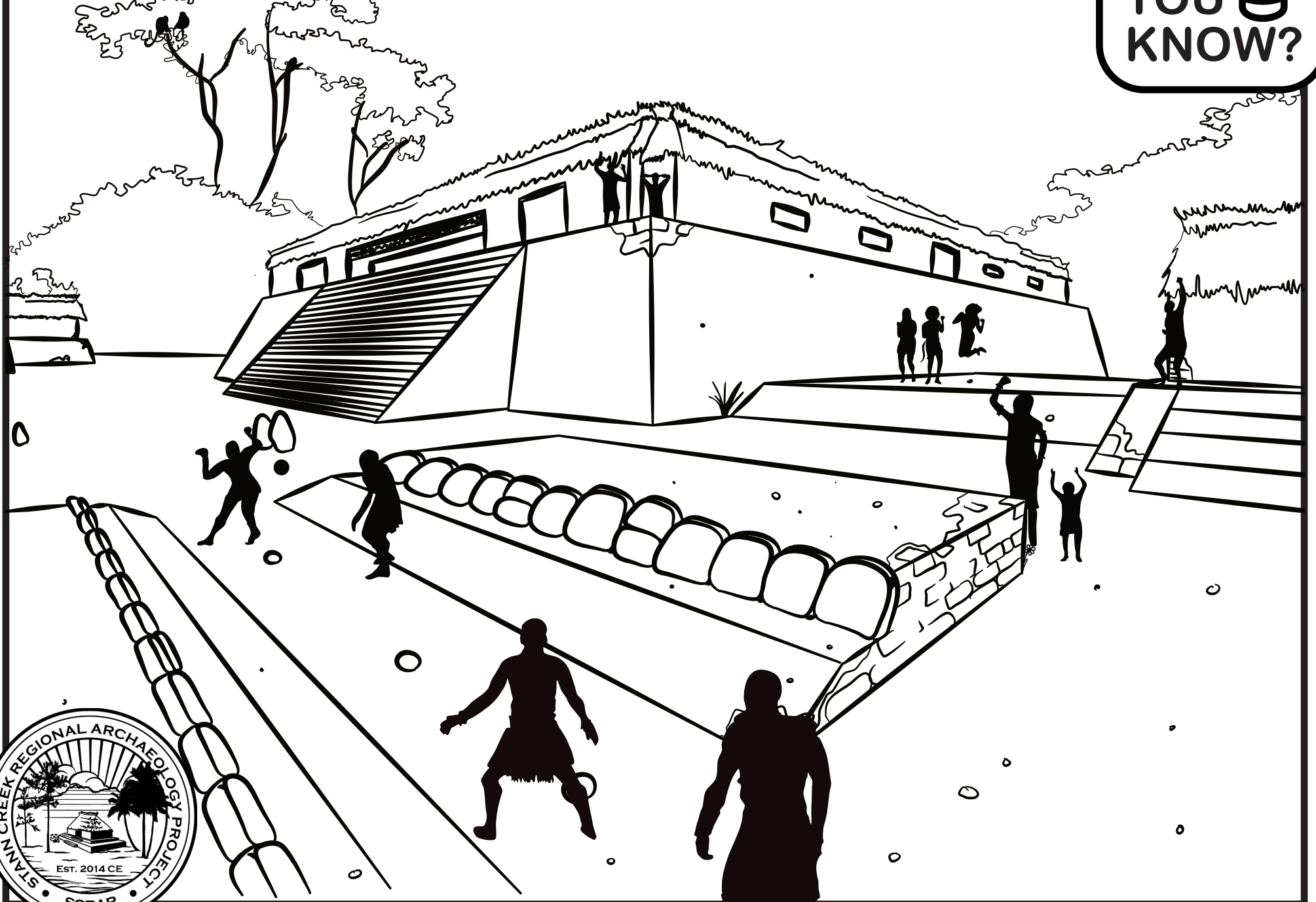


ALABAMA HAS A BALL COURT!

DID YOU KNOW?



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**DID
YOU
KNOW?**

- Ball courts are special buildings made by the Ancestral Maya people. You could usually find them at the biggest or most important places. A ball court has two long walls with sloped sides, making a flat space to play in the middle. The sloped sides helped the ball bounce back to the middle and kept the game fun and exciting.
- Ball courts could look very different depending on where and when they were built. The ball court at Alabama is special because it was made from big blocks of granite stone. The people who built it fit the stones together, leaving the tops a little rough.
- In the 1500s, the only game in the whole world that used a bouncy rubber ball was the Mesoamerican ballgame. Thanks to the Ancestral Maya, we have fun games like basketball and football today!
- In the 1980s, a group of archaeologists and local people studied Alabama's ball court to learn more about it. Today, it is the only building at Alabama that has been rebuilt to show what it looked like long ago.
- When people dug in the middle of the ball court, they found three simple stones that marked the centre line. There were no treasures or special objects under them, just the rocks themselves.
- The ball court at Alabama is right in the centre of the town, with the palace and the biggest temple nearby. This special place was where people came together for games, gatherings, and important ceremonies.
- Archaeologists think the main ball courts, like the one at Alabama, were very important and probably weren't used for everyday games. But everyone has to learn somewhere! The best players might have practiced on the big court, while other people—kids and adults—probably played for fun on smaller courts in their neighbourhoods, just like we do today.