B.C. AND A.D.
The Julian Calendar was developed by Julius Caesar and started counting years at the founding of Rome, but it was losing time. Therefore, in A.D. 1582 Pope Gregory XIII started the Gregorian calendar counting from the birth of Jesus. Today most of the world uses this calendar and it is based on the movement of the Earth around the sun.
Challenge: What does B.C. stand for?

- B.C. stands for Before Christ.
- It means the number of years before the time of Jesus Christ.
- The initials B.C. are written after the date.
B.C.

Challenge: What does B.C.E. stand for?

• Some people use B.C.E. instead
• It stands for Before the Common Era, and is used in order to avoid Christian references.
• The dates in B.C. run backwards from year 1.
A.D.?  

Challenge: What does A.D. stand for?

- Latin was the language used in the church, thus AD means Anno Domini (Medieval Latin: In the year of (the/Our) Lord)

- It was actually Anno Domini Nostri Iesu Christi meaning In the Year of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

- The non-Christian abbreviation for A.D. is C.E.

- B.C. is the English abbreviation for Before Christ, some people incorrectly conclude that A.D. must mean After Death. However, if we were to use AD as after death it would mean that 33 years would be missing from each calendar...
A.D.

Challenge: Are the dates for B.C. and A.D. written differently?

- The abbreviations A.D. are written before the date.
Calculating Dates across B.C. and A.D.

Challenge: How do you add and subtract positive and negative numbers?

• There was no year “0”
• That forces us to make an adjustment when we calculate dates that cross between B.C. and A.D.
Calculating Dates across B.C. and A.D.

You could find the time from, say, 5 B.C. to 7 A.D. by subtracting a negative number: $7 - (-5) = 7 + 5 = 12$ years.

That amounts to what you do: there are 5 years before 0, and 7 years after, making a total of 12.

But in fact there was no year zero, because the people who invented the B.C./A.D. system didn't know about the number zero yet. (That was, of course, long after the year zero, but still a long time ago!)
Calculating Dates across B.C. and A.D.

To make that, I just deleted one year's worth from a copy of the first version—and that's all you have to do to find the difference between dates.

After you subtract the first date from the second, you subtract one year if the non-existent year zero would have been between them. \((7 - -5) - 1 = 12 - 1 = 11\) years.