

Year 3/4 History The Ancient Mayans Learning Organiser

Key knowledge

The Maya were an ancient civilisation in Mesoamerica (Central America) that existed from 2000BC to approximately 1600AD. They were considered an advanced civilisation due to their many achievements.

How was the Ancient Maya society structured?

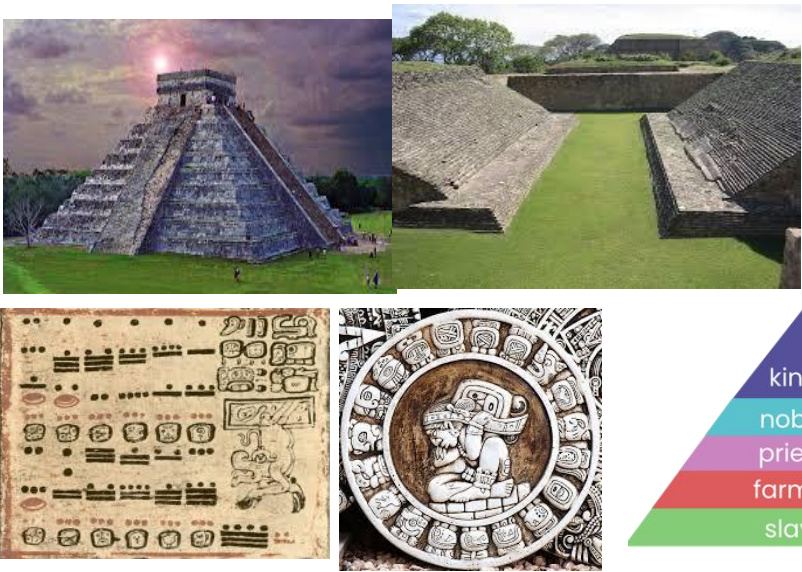
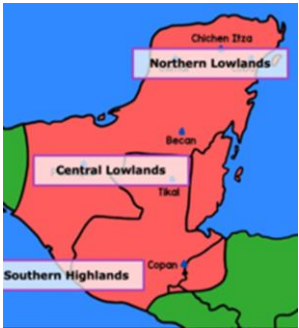
Like many ancient civilisations, a clear social hierarchy formed. The Maya lived in many city states and each city state had its own ruler.

History Skills

- use evidence to ask and answer questions about the past.
- explore archaeological evidence to build information about the past.
- place the Maya on a timeline alongside other key historical events and civilisations

What were their achievements?

The Maya were an advanced civilisation who communicated using their own language (Mayan), had a written form of communication (glyphs), developed one of the most advanced complex numerical systems of their time and invented their own calendar, among many other things.



Key Vocabulary

Agriculture	farming; growing crops or rearing animals.
Astronomy	the study of space, planets and stars
City State	a city and its surrounding area which has its own ruler
Temple	a building devoted to the worship of a god or gods.
Glyph	a symbol used in writing.
Hierarchy	a system that ranks things, often in order of power or importance.
Maize	a crop, known as corn
Sacrifice	giving up something as an act of worship

2000BC Civilisations first begin to emerge.	1100BC The hunter-gatherers begin to settle on the Pacific Coast.	800BC Farming begins and a basic trade system develops.	700BC Maya writing begins developing.	100BC The first pyramids/temples are built and cities begin forming around them.	250AD The Classic Era begins. Astronomy, mathematics and architecture are all developing.	800-925AD Chichen Itza becomes the most powerful city.	1000AD The Maya civilisation begins to decline and leave the cities. In the 1500s, the Spanish begin to colonise here.
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Chronology



1864

← ● ● ●	1600	1700	1800	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2025
The Ancient Maya 2,600 BC – 250 AD																	Now

Key Learning:

1

What was the Maya Civilization?

This lesson introduces the who, when and where of the Maya civilisation. Pupils will look at maps and timelines to place the Maya Civilization in context and then zoom in to find out more about the four distinct periods associated with the Maya civilisation, comparing them to synchronous periods from World and British history. Pupils will also engage with historical sources to find out clues about Ancient Maya lifestyles.

2

How did the landscape of the Maya area affect trade?

Pupils will learn how the Maya area was formed of distinct geographical regions and consider the challenge of living in different climates.

3

Why was maize so important to the Maya people?

This lesson allows pupils to find out about the importance of maize in Maya culture. Pupils will think about familiar foods made from maize and they will learn about how the importance of maize extended beyond its usefulness as a food staple - also impacting trade, culture and religion. Pupils will design a maize god statue.

4

The Maya Society and Hierarchy

Pupils will learn the different roles in the Maya society, they will make comparisons and present their learning in their chosen style. Pupils will consider hierarchy in todays society and compare similarities.

5

How did the Maya keep track of time?

Pupils will find out about the different calendars the Maya followed. They will consider their purpose for their survival. Pupils will interpret Maya numbers and glyphs and explore their Maya birthday.

6

Did the Maya invent football?

In this lesson, pupils will look at sources that give us information about the Maya ballgame pok-ta-pok. Children will learn about how the sport was played and how it linked to cultural, political and religious affairs. Pupils will have the chance to play the game and will choose a familiar modern sport for a comparison Activity.

Key People



King Palal

Jasaw Chan
K'awiil



Mayan Gods