

# Year 6 Knowledge Organiser - The Maya (Ancient Civilisation)



## Curriculum Objectives

I can explore who the Maya were and when and where they lived.

I can explore Mayan religion and gods.

I can study the Mayan number and writing systems.

I can explore the diet of the Maya.

I can compare and contrast the Maya with British history.

## Key Knowledge: Chronology (approximate dates)

2000 BCE	The Mayan civilisation emerges in Central America
100 BCE	First city states appear
<b>Classical Period Begins</b>	
300 CE	Mayan settlements become centres for trade across the region. Goods such as stone and chocolate are traded with neighbouring states.
600 CE	Mayan settlements support an increasing population, growing at a fast rate due to plentiful food supply.
650 CE	Caracol, one of the main Mayan cities, is increasingly populated and expands over a large area becoming an important centre.
900 CE	Mayan centres become less important, perhaps because of a widespread drought, but no clear reason has yet emerged.

## Important Historical Figures

**The Mayans didn't have important historical figures, but each city had important people.**

<b>The Priest</b>	Held regular rituals around the temple, possibly including sacrifices.
<b>The Pharmacist</b>	Provided natural medicines to keep the body healthy.
<b>The Farmer</b>	Irrigated fields to provide food for the cities.

## Selected Vocabulary and Definitions

<b>Civilisation</b>	An organised society with its own culture and way of life, existing in a particular area over a particular period of time.
<b>Drought</b>	A long period with very little rain.
<b>Ritual</b>	A ceremony, often religious, with set actions performed in a set order
<b>Jaguar</b>	A big cat, heavier than a leopard, with yellowish fur and black spots
<b>Scribes</b>	People paid to write things down, either as an official record or for someone else unable to write
<b>Codices</b>	Ancient handwritten texts. Maya codices could be unfolded like a concertina. One text is called a codex.
<b>Maize</b>	Another word for sweetcorn or corn on the cob. It can be made into a dough and baked into tortillas.
<b>Cacao Beans</b>	Cacao trees sprout pods directly from their trunks. When they are ripe, the pods can be broken open to reveal the beans, which can then be dried, roasted and ground.

## Key Questions

Where in the world did the Maya live?

What are the countries called?

What was happening in Britain then?

What are the similarities between the religious beliefs of the Maya and some religious beliefs today?

How did their number system work? How does it compare to ours?

What did the Maya eat? How do you think their diet was different to what we eat today? Why?

## What did the Maya do for us?

<b>Astronomy</b>	Accurate charts of the moon.
<b>Medicine</b>	Many natural cures they used are still used today.
<b>Number system</b>	Developed independent of the Arabic system, more advanced and logical.
<b>Architecture</b>	Stepped temples, providing an insight into their religious beliefs.
<b>Sculpture</b>	Highly advanced compared to other empires.