



Knowledge Organiser	Subject: History	Topic: The Maya	Year: 4
----------------------------	-------------------------	------------------------	----------------

Key Knowledge

Year Four will have the prior knowledge of key events and people from KS1 as well as knowledge about the Romans, Ancient Egypt and the Angles, Picts and Scots. From looking at Plants of the World, Year 4 should have an awareness of where the continents of South and North America are. Locational knowledge of Central America should be taught in order for Year 4 to have an understanding of place – this will also link to further units of The Windrush Generation, North America in Year 5 and the Atlantic Slave Trade in Year 6.

The Maya were an ancient civilisation in Mesoamerica (Central America) that existed from 2000BC to approximately 1697AD. They were considered an advanced civilisation due to their many achievements.

https://www.ducksters.com/history/aztec_maya_inca.php

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zqv6msg#z8pxxbk>

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Maya-people>

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/who-were-the-maya>

Being an Historian/Key Skills Developed

- begin to use a range of evidence to interpret events, linking this to factual understanding about the past;
- begin to understand the usefulness and reliability of primary/secondary sources;
- begin to address questions about change, cause, similarity and difference, and significance; (astronomical calendar, the possible creation of zero).
- begin to develop a chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of British history; (during the Mayan period, Britain had experienced the Bronze Age through to the Tudors).
- identify connections over time. (Look at similarities to Ancient Egypt and question why?)

Multi-Disciplinary Skills

The pupils begin to develop a sense of chronology through the use of timelines; children will use a visual representation to understand time. This will be their second look at an ancient civilisation – primary and secondary sources should have been taught in Year 3 for Ancient Egypt. The timeline should include Ancient Egypt, the Romans and the Anglo-Saxons as all have been taught by this stage. The pupils need to have an understanding of locational knowledge to understand where the Mayan civilisation was (Mesoamerica – now Central America).

Key Concepts

Time, Change, Chronology:

to create a sense of period and time, the sequence of when things happened; what changed and what continued; what we might see as prog

Reasons and Results:

how can we explain why things happened in history, how did people make a difference to what happened? What followed as a result of these events?

Historical Evidence:

what do we use to find out about the past? How can we use this material safely to produce the best history we can?

The Big Question

Who were the Mayans?



Key Vocabulary	
Generic Vocabulary	Agriculture, maize, settlement, jade, Ahau (main king of a city-state), Kin (a day in the Mayan calendar) Haab – the Mayan solar calendar with 365 days.
Astronomy	The study of space, planets and stars.
City state	A city and its surrounding area which has its own ruler.
Codex	A book written by the Maya using one long sheet of paper.
Glyph	A symbol used in writing.
Hierarchy	A system that ranks things, often in order of power or importance.
Sacrifice	Giving up something as an act of worship.
Temple	A building devoted to the worship of a god or gods.

Key Questions to Consider:

What did the Ancient Maya believe? Religion was very important to the Ancient Maya, evidenced by their impressive temples. The Ancient Maya worshipped their kings like they were gods but they also worshipped their ancestors and a range of different gods and goddesses.

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.

What was daily life like? Ordinary Maya citizens lived in one room houses built from mud and timber. Men were responsible for providing for their families, women would prepare food and clothes and the children would learn these skills from their parents. Maya people would eat meat as well as their own grown crops, but maize was their staple food. The cacao bean was used to make a drink for the ruling classes.

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.



Linking Thinking Across Our Learning Journey

Early Years	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Year Five	Year Six
All About Me – To begin to identify similarities and differences.	Homes in the past – Comparing homes in our local area, then and now – consider living conditions, the developing area.	The Great Fire of London. In this unit, Year 2 would have begun to look at primary sources, as well as understanding significant events.	Ancient Egypt - Understand the life of Ancient Egyptians, their practices and their lasting impact on the World today. Begin to understand sources in history.	The Maya – Continue from Year 3, understanding an ancient civilisation, their life, beliefs. Greater understanding of sources.	Ancient Greece - the legacy of Ancient Greece. By Year 5, children will have learned about the decline of past significant civilisations and should be able to suggest reasons why.	Transatlantic Slave Trade - The Mayan civilisation ended during this time as a result of Spanish invaders.

