



Y6-Knowledge Organiser -The Mayans

BIG QUESTION- Why were the Maya considered to be such an advanced civilisation?

Enquiry

Sources and Evidence

Interpretation

Key Skills

Cause and consequence

Similarity and difference

Chronology

Key Facts

- The ancient Mayans lived in what is now known as southern Mexico and northern Central America including Guatemala, Belize, Honduras, Yucatán Peninsula and El Salvador. Their descendants still live there today, and many of them speak the Mayan languages.
- **Mayan adults worked as farmers, warriors, hunters, builders, teachers and many other things.** Children from noble families could learn maths, science, writing and astronomy, but poorer children were only taught their parents' jobs.
- 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.
- **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.**
- Scholars have suggested a number of potential reasons for the downfall of Maya civilization in the southern lowlands, including overpopulation, environmental degradation, warfare, shifting trade routes and extended drought. ... What is certain is that the Mayans didn't disappear in the aftermath of the collapse.

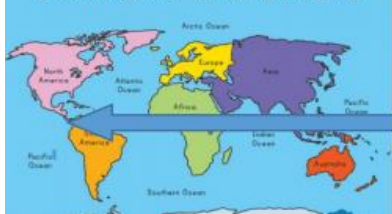
Key Concepts

- Agriculture- farming; growing crops or rearing animals.**
- Trade – buying and selling of goods and services.**
- Settlement- the action of people coming together to live in an area.**
- Afterlife-the state of being after death.**

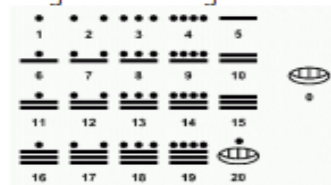
Key Vocabulary

- **cacao-** these are beans which come from cacao trees. The trees sprout pods directly from their trunks, which are used to make chocolate.
- **hieroglyphs** – symbols or pictures used to represent words.
- **irrigation-** supplying land with water.
- **maize** – a grain that made up 80% of the Maya diet.
- **Pok-a-tok-** a game where large rubber balls were aimed at stone hoops. Losers were sometimes sacrificed to the gods!
- **sacrifice-** to kill an animal or person in a religious ceremony.
- **Vigesimal** – number system based on 20s used by the Maya people.

Continents and Oceans



Maya number system



Cacao pod

Maize



The Long Count Calendar



Timeline of events

- 2000BC – Farming villages appeared.
- 1000BC – Larger settlements were created.
- 700BC – Maya writing began developing.
- 600 BC - Large buildings were built in the city of El Mirador.
- 600 BC - The Maya began to farm to support larger populations.
- 400BC – First Maya calendars are carved into stone.
- 100BC – First pyramids are built.
- 400AD – Many people live in a capital city.
- 925AD – Chichen Itza becomes capital city.
- 1517AD – The Spanish arrive and begin their Colonisation of Central America.

