



The Mayans



Timeline

1100BC	1100BC	700BC	100BC	900-1200AD	250AD	1000AD	1502AD
Hunter gatherers settled along the Pacific coast.	Settlements begin to appear.	Maya writing is developed.	The first Maya pyramids are built.	El Castillo (Chichen Itza) is built.	The beginning of the Classic period.	Chichen Itza becomes the most powerful city.	First contact made with Europe.

Key Vocabulary	
Artefact	An object that is made by a person, such as a tool or a decoration, especially one that is of historical interest.
Calendar	A printed table showing all the days, weeks and months of the year.
Civilization	Human society which is organised.
Dynasty	A series of rulers or leaders who are all from the same family, or a period when a country is ruled by them.
Empire	A group of countries ruled by a single person, government or country.
Hieroglyphics	A system of writing using pictures not words.
Kingdom	A place ruled by a king, queen or important person.
Maize	Also known as corn, is a cereal grain.
Temple	A building used for the worship of a god or gods in some religions.
Toom	A large stone structure or underground room where someone, especially an important person, is buried.
Worship	To have or show strong feeling or respect and admiration for a God or Goddess.



History knowledge and skills

- The Maya were a civilisation who lived in Mesoamerica (now Central America) between approximately 2000 BCE and 900CE.
- They are known for being the first Mesoamericans to develop writing.
- They also had a sophisticated culture in which they lived in city states.
- They built spectacular monuments and stepped pyramids – some (e.g. Chichen Itza) have become world tourist destinations in the modern day.
- They were also well-known for their advanced maths and calendars.
- Around 900CE, Maya cities became abandoned. It is not clear why this happened.

Top Maya Facts

1. Some people believe the Mayans predicted the world would end in 2012.
2. Flat foreheads were fashionable so they would put baby's heads in a press to squash them.
3. Mayans sacrificed humans for religious and medical reasons. It was an honour to be sacrificed!
4. Noblewomen would file their teeth into sharp points

Did you know?

It was considered beautiful to be cross-eyed so parents would hang balls in-between their children's eyes to make them look inwards.