

**Phase:** 3/4

**Subject:** History

**Focus:** The Mayans

**Term:** Autumn

**What I should already know?**

I know where some people and events fit on a historical timeline.  
 I know some facts about events in History e.g. the gunpowder plot, Fire of London.  
 I can use common words and phrases relating to the passing of time and some historical terms.  
 Identify similarities and differences between ways of life in different periods.

**Vocabulary**

<b>astronomy</b>	The Mayans were able to predict solar eclipses and used observatories and shadow-casting devices
<b>calendar</b>	These were circular and charted the movements of the sun, moon, stars and planets, with 365 days in a year
<b>chronology</b>	The order of events in time.
<b>hieroglyphs</b>	They used about 800 symbols to create writing, often on folded pages forming a book (codex)
<b>Kings/Queens</b>	The King/Queen was thought to be given the right to rule by the gods. Each city had a palace for them.
<b>maize</b>	The staple food of the Mayans which was so important that they even had a maize god.
<b>numbers</b>	Using a base 20 system, they used dots and bars to create numbers
<b>Pok-a-tok</b>	A game where large rubber balls were aimed at stone hoops. Losers were sometimes sacrificed to the gods!
<b>pyramids</b>	Built with a temple at the top to give sacrifices to the gods, others were built for the gods themselves
<b>sacrifice</b>	Humans and animals were used as a blood offering to gods, mostly war prisoners by decapitation or heart removal

**Knowledge**

**Religion** - The Maya believed in and worshipped a number of different gods. They believed that the gods had a good side and a bad side and that the gods could help or hurt them. The Maya would dance, sing and sometimes make offerings of blood to the gods. Priests were very important in Maya society as it was believed that they could communicate directly with the gods. They would perform different rituals during festivals or special ceremonies in order to appeal to the gods.

**Food** - Maize was a very important crop that formed up to 80% of the Maya people's diets. They believed that the first humans were made from maize dough by the gods. The Maya made a bitter chocolatey drink from cacao beans that was enjoyed by the rich and used for medicines and in ceremonies. The beans were highly valued and even used as a form of money.

**What happened to the Mayans?** Around 900, many cities in the southern lowlands were abandoned but states in the uplands of the Yucatan peninsula continued to flourish until the arrival of the Spanish in 1502. One belief is that the Toltecs and the Aztecs took over with their own empires but later, when the Spanish arrived, they brought disease and forced them to give up their gods and become Christians.

**Mayan Gods** - Some were in human form, others in animal but the most supreme god was Itzamna, the creator god, lord of day and night and ruler of the heavens. Many looked after the weather or crops such as Chac, the rain god and Kinich Ahau the sun god. Priests would perform ceremonies (including sacrifices) to please them and Kings were thought to turn into gods after they died. They believed the world was divided into three parts (Heaven, Earth and the Underworld), linked together by a giant world tree.

**Mayan Number System—The Mayan numeral system** was the **system** to represent **numbers** and calendar dates in the **Maya** civilization.



0	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19

**Historical skills & enquiry**

Explain how we know about the Mayans (e.g. artefacts, remains and historical accounts). Study Mayan artefacts/tools and explain what their uses were.  
 Compare the different periods of time you have studied so far.  
 Explain similarities and differences.

**By the end of the unit I should know...**

To understand terms such as 'empire', 'civilisation', 'parliament' and 'peasantry'  
 Develop the appropriate use of historical terms.  
 Understand how knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources.  
 To know and understand significant aspects of the history of the wider world: the nature of ancient civilisations.

**Timeline**

<b>1100 B.C.</b>	<b>800 B.C.</b>	<b>400 B.C.</b>	<b>300 B.C.</b>	<b>100 B. C.</b>	<b>600 A.D.</b>	<b>800 A.D.</b>	<b>900 A.D.</b>	<b>1502 A.D.</b>
The first hunter-gatherers on the pacific coast	Village farming and trade become established	First solar calendars invented	Cities become centres for trade and kings begin to rule	First pyramids are built	Cities start expanding quickly	Building of stepped pyramid of Chichen-Itza	Decline of Mayan cities	First contact with Europeans is made

Question 1— Place these people in order of where they would appear in Mayan hierarchy (number 1-4)	Start of Unit	End of Unit
warriors		
farmers		
priests		
slaves		
Don't know		



Question 2 - The Mayans exchanged goods between cities. This is called...	Start of Unit	End of Unit
buying		
trade		
selling		
stealing		
Don't know		

Question 3 - When did the Mayan civilisation begin?	Start of Unit	End of Unit
100 years ago		
Over 2000 years ago		
500 years ago		
200 years ago		
Don't know		

Question 4— Which of these foods formed the biggest part of the Mayans diet?	Start of Unit	End of Unit
Chocolate		
Maize		
Potatoes		
Don't know		

Question 5 - Which of these resources would help us to learn about an ancient civilisation?	Start of Unit	End of Unit
Artefacts		
Photos		
Maps		
Art Work		
Don't know		

Question 6 - What does the word Mesoamerica mean?	Start of Unit	End of Unit
South America		
North America		
Central America		
Argentina		
Don't know		

What I would like to find out?

Answers to my questions...