

The Mayans KS2 knowledge mat

Key vocabulary

El Castillo, Chichen Itza	This is an ancient Maya temple that is still standing today. It has a total of 365 steps.
Tikal	One of the largest Maya city-states. At one time more than 100,000 people lived there.
Mesoamerica	The Maya lived in Mesoamerica which is now made up by the following countries- Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Belize, El Salvador, 9 states in Mexico.
Stelae	Tall, stone, engraved monuments made by the Maya.
hieroglyphics	For the Maya script, also known as hieroglyphs, they used pictures as their writing system.
Pok-ta-pok	This was a popular sport sometimes used to settle disagreements.
Xocolat	A drink made from beans, maize, squash, chilli peppers and cacao beans.
Atole	The is a porridge made from maize, avocado and quinoa.
sacrifice	This was a religious activity that involved the killing of animals during a ritual held by priests to please the Gods.

Sticky knowledge

The start of the Ancient Maya civilisation was around 2500 BC.

The Ancient Maya believed in rituals. They believed that the priests were in touch with the spirit world of the Gods.

The divine kings were the most important people in Mayan society. The more important you were the bigger the headdress.

The Mayan Society was made up of kings, priests, merchants, farmers and slaves.

The end of the Ancient Maya civilisation was in AD 900

Important places



The Maya built cities, pyramids and ornate sculptures in the rainforest.

The Maya Empire was based in what is now called Guatemala.



2000 BC

The Maya civilization comes into being in Central America

300 BC

Cities such as El Mirador become large and powerful

AD 900

Cities in the rainforest are abandoned due to a drought. People move north to the highlands.

AD 1000

Cities like Chichen Itza (which has two temple pyramids) are still thriving.

AD 1500s

The Spanish arrive in South America and try to destroy the remaining elements of the May civilization.

AD 1839

Copan and other cities are explored which reignites interest in the Maya civilization.