



Unit of work
The Ancient Maya

Year group
6

Prior learning

- South America is a continent
- The climate in south America is different to the UK
- The chronology of British History

National Curriculum

- NC strand: A non-European society that contrasts with British history

Knowledge/ Skills

- Examine a variety of sources and use these to make inferences about the past – in particular Mayan economy, culture, religious beliefs and society
- Describe how the Mayan civilization has had an impact on modern society
- Compare what was happening in the Mayan civilization and what was happening in Britain at the same time
- Place key events on a timeline
- Compare the Greeks, Mayans and Egyptians on a Venn diagram

Where did the Mayans live?



Famous Mayan cities include Palenque and Chichen Itza, which are found in Mexico.

Vocabulary and definitions

archaeologist	someone who studies the past by exploring old remains
architecture	the art of planning, designing and constructing buildings
Chichen Itza	a village in Yucatan state in Mexico: site of important Mayan ruins. A UNESCO World Heritage Site
chronology	the order of events in time
circa	Latin meaning 'around'. c. 800 BC means around 800 BC.
civilisation	a human society with its own social organisation and culture.
climate	the general weather conditions that are typical of a place
continent	a very large area of land that consists of many countries. South America is a continent.
culture	activities such as the arts and philosophy, which are considered to be important for the development of civilisation
deforestation	if an area is deforested, all the trees there are cut down
deities	a god or goddess
demise	something or someone is their end or death
drought	a long period of time during which no rain falls.
economy	the wealth that a society or country gets from business and industry
erosion	the gradual destruction and removal of rock or soil
fertile	rich in nutrients to support the growth of many plants
hierarchy	a system of organising people into different ranks or levels of importance, for example in society
indigenous	people or things belong to the country in which they are found of, relating to, or characteristic of the Maya or any of their languages
Mayan	
merchant	a person who buys or sells goods in large quantities
Mesoamerica	Central America - the countries consist of Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Belize; and the western sections of Honduras and Nicaragua, and northern Costa Rica
plaza	an open square in a city.
polytheists	the worship of or belief in more than one god
society	people in general, thought of as a large organized group
trade	the activity of buying, selling, or exchanging goods or services

The Mayans did not have 'great' historical figures, but each city had important people

- The Priest: Held the regular rituals surrounding the temple possibly including sacrifice.
- The Pharmacist : provided natural medicines which kept the people very healthy.
- The Farmer: irrigated fields and provided food for the city

