

History – Ancient Mayans

Chronology Historians place events in chronological context.	Questioning Historians ask and answer historical questions.	Change Historians explore change and describe its causes and consequences.	Sources Historians gather evidence from sources.
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What should I already know?

- Ancient Egyptian period was from 3100 BC to 332BC.
- Ancient Egyptians had a writing system using hieroglyphics.
- Ancient Egyptians built pyramids that were sacred tombs.
- Ancient Greek period was 800BC to 31 BC. Roman period was 800BC to 500 AD.



What am I going to learn?

The Maya were an ancient civilisation in Mesoamerica (Central America) that existed from 2000BC to approximately 1697AD. They were considered an advanced civilisation due to their many achievements.

What did the Ancient Maya believe?

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.

How was the Ancient Maya society structured?

Like many ancient civilisations, a clear social hierarchy formed. The Maya lived in many city states and each city state had its own ruler.

What was daily life like?

Ordinary Maya citizens lived in one room houses built from mud and timber. Men were responsible for providing for their families, women would prepare food and clothes and the children would learn these skills from their parents. Maya people would eat meat as well as their own grown crops, but maize was their staple food. The cacao bean was used to make a drink for the ruling classes.

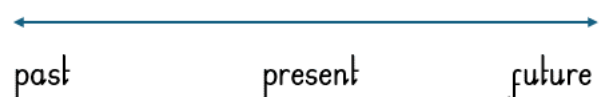
What were their achievements?

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.

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Key Vocabulary	Definition
Mesoamerica	A historical region and cultural area in North America. It extends from approximately central Mexico through Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and northern Costa Rica
Civilisation	An advanced organisation of people who live in a town.
Hieroglyphics	Writing consisting of symbols or pictures.
Pyramids	a monumental structure with a square or triangular base and sloping sides that meet in a point at the top
Rituals	A religious or solemn ceremony consisting of a series of actions performed according to a set order.
Sacrifice	An act of slaughtering an animal or person or surrendering a possession as an offering to a deity (ruler or god)
Settlements	a place, typically one which has previously been uninhabited, where people establish a community
Chronological	following the order in which they occurred – 'in time order'
Temple	a building devoted to the worship of a god or gods.
Maize	a crop, known as corn

2000BC	1100BC	800BC	700BC	100BC	250AD	800-925AD	1000AD
Civilisations first begin to emerge	The hunter-gatherers begin to settle on the Pacific Coast.	Farming begins and a basic trade system develops.	Maya writing begins developing.	The first pyramids/ temples are built and cities begin forming around them.	The Classic Era begins. Astronomy, mathematics and architecture are all developing.	Chichen Itza becomes the most powerful city	The Maya civilisation begins to decline and leave the cities. In the 1500s, the Spanish begin to colonise here.



Huastec Goddess Sculpture

Sources



Double-headed serpent mosaic



Yaxchilan Lintel 24

