

# Summer 1- Central America and The Maya

Key Vocabulary	Definition
Civilisation	Comes from the Latin word <i>civis</i> which means 'someone who lives in a town'. It refers to a <b>society</b> that has reached an advanced level e.g. having laws.
Scholars	Someone who knows a great deal about one or more subjects.
Society	A community or group of people.
Maize	Maize, or corn, is one of the most widely grown food plants in the world. It belongs to the grass family.
Codex	An ancient book. A codex has separate pages, whereas a scroll is one continuous long document.
Mesoamerica	Literally means 'central America' and refers to a geographical region.
Temple-pyramid	The Maya built temples in the form of large pyramids (a large structure with 4 sides that usually slope upwards and meet at a point).
Chronology	Means 'the study of time'. To put events in chronological order means to list them in the order in which they happened.
Archaeology	The study of the things that people made, used, and left behind. The goal of archaeology is to understand what people of the past were like and how they lived.
Monument	A structure (as a building, stone, or statue) made to keep alive the memory/ act as a reminder of a person or event.
Stelae	An upright stone slab or column decorated with figures or inscriptions.



Fun Links to help with my learning:

<http://mayaarchaeologist.co.uk>

<http://www.nga.gov/kids/mayakids.pdf>

<http://www.maya-3d.com/reconstructions/>

<https://kids.britannica.com/kids/article/Central-America/352936>

<https://artsandculture.google.com/project/exploring-the-maya-world>

Key Questions

Piecing Together the Past:  
How do we know about the Maya?

A Journey Across the Atlantic,  
to Mesoamerica:  
Where did the Maya live?

Plazas and Temples: Why were  
temple-pyramids important to  
the Maya community?

For Richer, For Poorer:  
How did childhood differ  
according to class?

Past to Present:  
What is life like for modern day  
Maya people living in Central  
America today?



## Key Dates

# Ancient Maya Timeline



**1100BC**

The first hunter gathers settle along the Pacific Coast and then expanding into the central highlands.

**700BC**

Mayan writing is developed in Mesoamerica

**300BC**

The social structure in Maya adapts to include Nobles and Kings as rulers.

**AD683**

Pakal the Great of Palenque dies and is buried in the Temple of Inscriptions.

**AD1502**

First contact with Europeans made.

1,000BC

500BC

1BC

1AD

500AD

1,000AD

1,500AD

**800BC**

Village farming and trade becomes established throughout the Maya Region.

**400BC**

Earliest solar calendars are carved in stone.

**100BC**

The first pyramids are built.

**AD450**

The city-state of Tikal dominates the tropical lowland of the central region.

**AD800**

Sites in the rain forests and tropical lowlands are abandoned whilst northern lowland sites flourish.



Places to visit to enhance your learning:



British Museum,  
London



Kohunlich Virtual Tour,  
<https://www.youvisit.com/tour/kohunlich>

## Key Facts:

- The Maya civilisation began long ago in a place called 'Mesoamerica'. This huge area is made up of Mexico and part of Central America.
- The Maya were experts at reading the stars and even built their cities as a map of the sky! They were also inspired by the creatures of the forest and shared many legends about animals, plants and nature spirits.
- The Maya were scholars. They developed a system of writing which used picture symbols, called hieroglyphs.
- The Maya developed a system of counting using numbers.

