

Why should we study the Maya?

Key Vocabulary

Agriculture: farming; growing crops or rearing animals.

Astronomy: the study of space, planets and stars.

City state: a city and its surrounding area which has its own ruler.

Code: a book written by the Maya using one long sheet of paper.

Glyph: a symbol used in writing.

Hierarchy: a system that ranks things, often in order of power or importance.

Maize: a crop, known as corn.

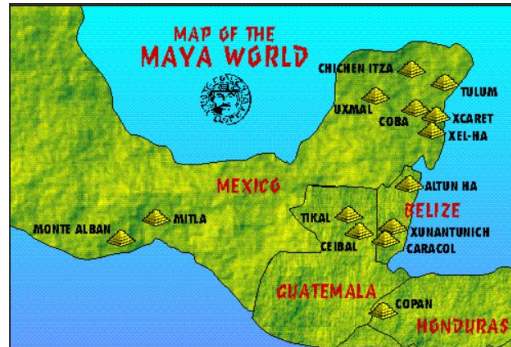
Sacrifice: giving up something as an act of worship.

Settlement: a place where people live and build homes.

Temple: a building devoted to the worship of a god or gods.

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

*Central America is in North America



The Maya World

Key Questions

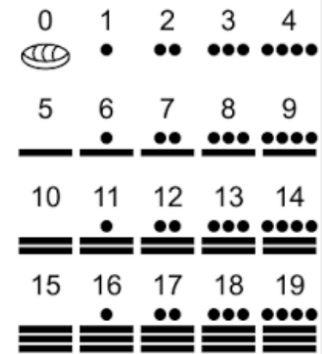
1. What do all the ancient civilisations have in common?
2. Where and when did the Maya live?
3. What made the Maya civilisation so successful?
4. How do we know about the Maya?
5. How were the Maya ruled?
6. What do we know about Maya city-states?
7. What was Maya writing like?
8. How did the Maya tell the time?
9. What numbers did the Maya use in Maths?

Golden Threads

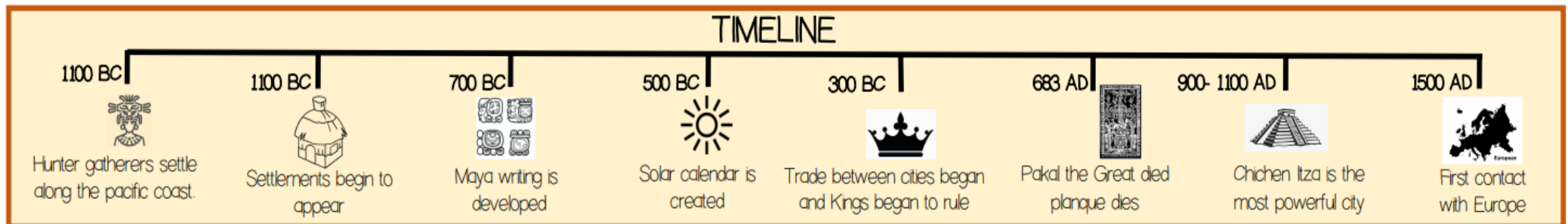
Civilisation
Trade
Settlement
Empire
Monarchy



Chichen Itza



The Maya Number System



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.



Glyphs



Tzompantli – Platform of the Skulls at Chichen Itza

Chichen Itza

Chichen Itza was the largest Maya city. Positioned in the Yucatan Peninsular, it appears to be a major centre containing many pyramids, temples and monuments. It is most famous for its large stepped pyramid, called El Castillo, which was built in dedication of Kulkulkan, the Plumed Serpent. Every spring and autumn, the sun hits the pyramid in a way that it creates the appearance of a snake climbing the steps of the pyramid- it also represents the equinox

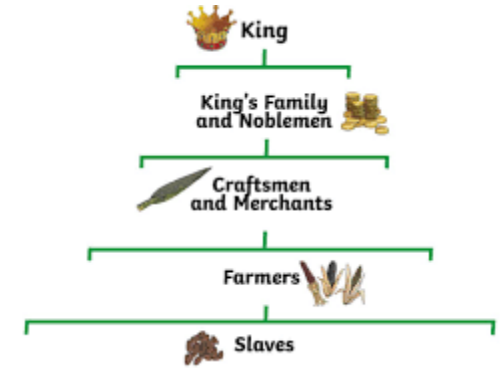


What did the Ancient Maya believe?

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.



The Maya Calendar

