

Knowledge Organiser: Ancient Maya

Topic Background

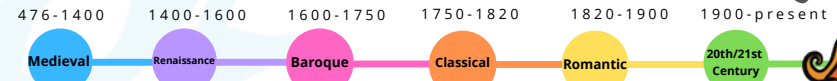
The Mayan civilisation began long ago (it is believed as early as 1500 BCE), in a place called 'Mesoamerica'. This very large area is made up of Mexico and part of Central America where there is the Maya rainforest. The Mayans built amazing cities. They were experts at reading the stars and even built their cities as a map of the sky.

The Mayans worshiped various gods related to nature and had ceremonies and rituals, including human sacrifices, that would have been filled with music and dancing.

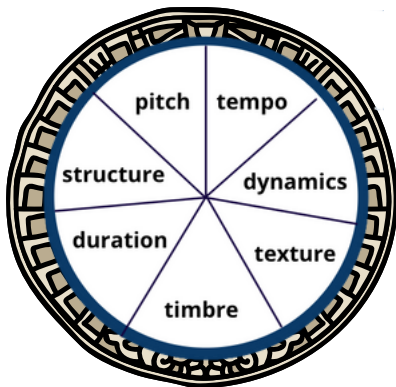
The Mayan civilisation certainly included lots of music but since there was no way of recording music at the time and because the Mayans didn't use musical notation, almost all of it has been lost.

Listening Pieces

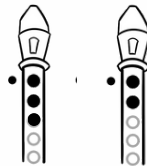
- Cleansing Rain Song for Mother Earth, Xavier Quijas Yxayotl, 2006
- Cry of the Morning Dove, Xavier Quijas Yxayotl, 2006
- Song of our Ancestors, Xavier Quijas Yxayotl, 2006



Musical Knowledge



G A



recorder notes:

- left hand at the top
- thumb hole at the back



ocarina notes



glockenspiel notes



Key Vocabulary

duration: how long or short a note is

graphic score: images or a mark used to write music down that is not traditional music notation

inter-related dimensions: pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture, structure

melody: the tune of the music made up of high and low pitches

notation: a way of writing down music so that anyone can play it

ostinato: a musical phrase or rhythm which is repeated

pitch: how high or low a sound is

pulse: the steady heartbeat of the music

rhythm: patterns of sound consisting of shorter and longer notes

stave: the five lines that notes are placed on to indicate pitch

structure: how a piece is organised

timbre: the unique sound of an instrument or piece of music



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