

Year 5 Knowledge Organiser Summer Term

Ancient Maya

TERMS Key Vocabulary

Civilisation	A developed society.
City-state	A city and its surrounding land.
Temple	A place to worship gods.
Pyramid	Tall stone temple.
Archaeologist	Studies the past.
Glyphs	Maya writing.
Codex	Book made from bark.
Maize	Main Maya crop.
Calendar	System for days/years.
Sacrifice	Offering to the gods.



COMPARE Similarities and Differences

- Houses: Maya wooden homes similar to Anglo-Saxon ones.
- Food: Maya ate maize and chocolate; Anglo-Saxons ate wheat/meat.
- Writing: Maya had glyphs; Vikings had runes.
- Beliefs: both had many gods.
- Buildings: Maya built stone temples; Vikings built wooden halls.
- Calendars: Maya had two calendars; we use one.

SOURCES How We Know About the Maya

- Maya glyphs recorded important events.
- Codices tell us about beliefs and daily life.
- Archaeologists study temples, pottery and carvings.
- Stone carvings show kings and ceremonies.
- Some Maya cities were hidden in jungles for centuries.





Extra Facts

- The Maya invented an early form of chocolate.
- They studied the stars and were skilled astronomers.
- Maya pyramids were for ceremonies, not tombs.
- Many Maya people still live in Central America today.
- They used rubber before Europeans did.

CHRONOLOGY When Did the Maya Live?

- The Ancient Maya civilisation began around 2000 BC.
- The Maya were strongest between AD 250–900.
- They lived in Central America (Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, Honduras).
- They lived at the same time as the Anglo-Saxons and Vikings
- Important Maya cities included Chichén Itzá, Tikal and Palenque.

