



What has changed and stayed the same for Maya civilisation over time?

Key Vocabulary

Archaeologists—a person who learns and discovers history by excavating sites and examining artefacts.

excavate —the method of digging something up carefully

glyphs— symbols on the Maya writing system.

jade—a precious green metal, used decoratively by the Mayans

Chichen Itza— large pre-Columbian city built by the Maya people.

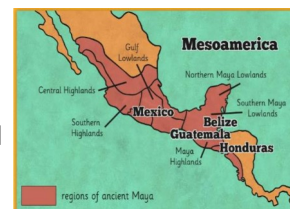
Sacrifice—killing in the name of a god

Reincarnation—to be born again

Afterlife—life after death

Where and when did the Maya live?

- The ancient Maya lived in a region that today includes Guatemala, Belize, the Yucatán peninsula (Mexico) and the western portions of Honduras and El Salvador.
- The Mayan people lived in an area known as Mesoamerica. By 1000 BCE, their culture was established and remained until 1697CE.



How do we know about the Maya now?

Most of what historians know about the Maya comes from what remains of their architecture and art, including stone carvings, inscriptions on buildings, and the books they wrote.

What did the Maya believe in?

- The Maya believed in many gods, each representing a different part of life. They were closely tied to the calendar and astronomy and their importance changed according to the **movement of the stars, moon and sun**.
- Maya communities made regular **offerings** to them, in the form of animal (and sometimes human) **sacrifices**.
- Ancestor worship** was important similar to the Ancient Egyptians, at around the same time (1500 BC).

How did the Maya Communicate?

The Maya used a form of writing called hieroglyphics. Each **symbol** represented a word or a sound. **Glyphs** were used to record events on stone slabs called **stelae**. The

How did the Maya tell the time and use numbers?

The Maya were expert **mathematicians** and **astronomers**.

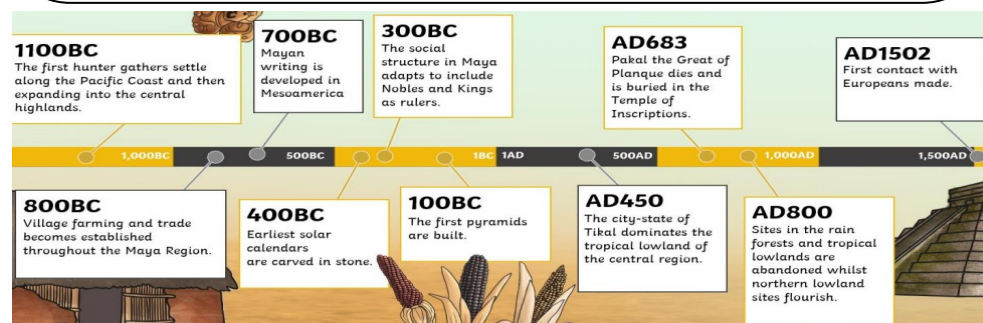
- They created their own **number system** using a few **symbols** to represent numbers.
- They devised **calendars** using the sun, moon and stars.

What did the Maya do for recreation?

- A lot of their entertainment was centred around religious ceremonies.
- They played music, danced, and played games such as the Maya ball game.

POK-TA-POK

The Maya played the earliest team sport in the





Mayan Meanings

chan sky	winik person	witz mountain	k'in sun	b'alam jaguar
bak bone	way spirit	juun book	ja' water	ajaw lord
ix woman	ch'am to grab	k'uk' quetzal	chan snake	ch'ul holy

