



Maya Civilisation

What I should already know

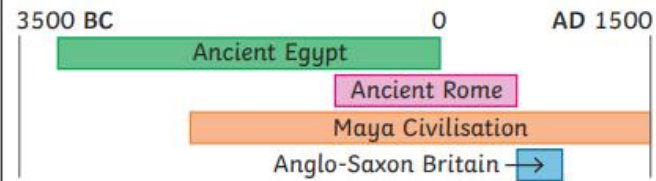
- Ancient Egyptians worshiped different Gods
- Ancient Egyptians built pyramids as tombs for their pharaohs and queens
- Ancient Greeks valued democracy and education
- Ancient Greeks trained soldiers for battles

Key Vocabulary

astronomy	The Mayans were able to predict solar eclipses and used observatories and shadow-casting devices
calendar	These were circular and charted the movements of the sun, moon, stars and planets, with 365 days in a year
hieroglyphs	They used about 800 symbols to create writing, often on folded pages forming a book (codex)
Kings/Queens	The King/Queen was thought to be given the right to rule by the gods. Each city had a palace for them.
maize	The staple food of the Mayans which was so important that they even had a maize god.
numbers	Using a base 20 system, they used dots and bars to create numbers
Pok-a-tok	A game where large rubber balls were aimed at stone hoops. Losers were sometimes sacrificed to the gods!
pyramids	Built with a temple at the top to give sacrifices to the gods, others were built for the gods themselves
sacrifice	Humans and animals were used as a blood offering to gods, mostly war prisoners by decapitation or heart removal
stelae	Stone monuments glorifying Kings and record his deeds, although early examples were of mythical scenes

- bias
- reliability.

Timeline



Knowledge

Mayan Dress

Commoners and slaves wore plain loincloths, but the elite added feathers, animal skins or gems. Noblemen covered their lower half with a colourful garment and wore large, elaborate headdresses. Women wore skirts and tunics. Footwear was simple, usually being barefoot or sandals.

Trade

Merchants drove their human caravans along roads, down rivers and around coasts to trade with fellow Mayans and other Mesoamericans. The geography was so varied that they relied on trade to get the things they needed off each other, from maize, fish and salt to stingray spines (used for bloodletting) and valuable stones such as jade and obsidian.

What happened to the Mayans?

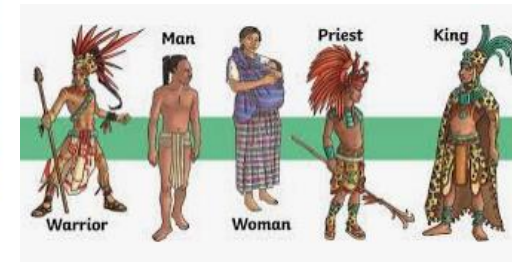
Around 900, many cities in the southern lowlands were abandoned but states in the uplands of the Yucatan peninsula continued to flourish until the arrival of the Spanish in 1502. One belief is that the Toltecs and the Aztecs took over with their own empires but later, when the Spanish arrived, they brought disease and forced them to give up their gods and become Christians.

Mayan Gods

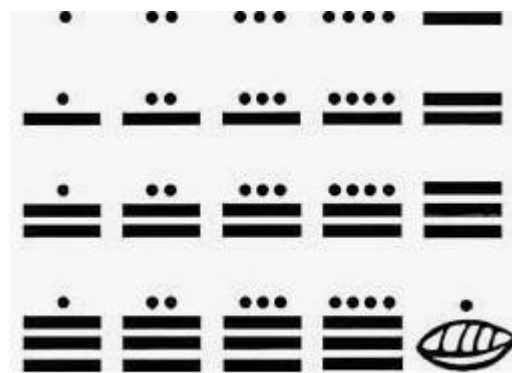
Some were in human form, others in animal but the most supreme god was Itzamna, the creator god, lord of day and night and ruler of the heavens. Many looked after the weather or crops such as Chac, the rain god and Kinich Ahau the sun god. Priests would perform ceremonies (including sacrifices) to please them and Kings were thought to turn into gods after they died. They believed the world was divided into three parts (Heaven, Earth and the Underworld), linked together by a giant world tree.

Palenque Rulers

Archaeologists can name 17 rulers of the citystate of Palenque from 431-800. The most famous was Pakal I, also known as Pakal the Great, who ruled from 615-683. He began his rule at the age of just 12 and constructed some of Palenque's finest buildings and founded a great dynasty. His funeral mask was carved from stunning Jade



Maya Gods



The Maya Civilization, Maya Numerals ...