

History Overview

Maya



Civilisation

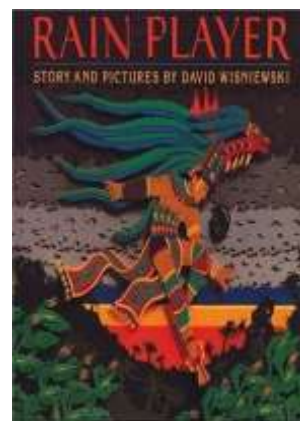
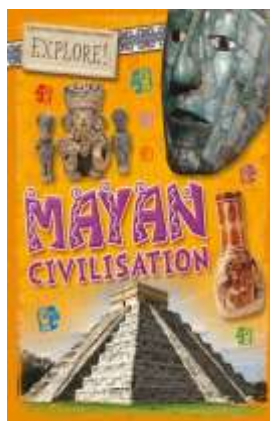
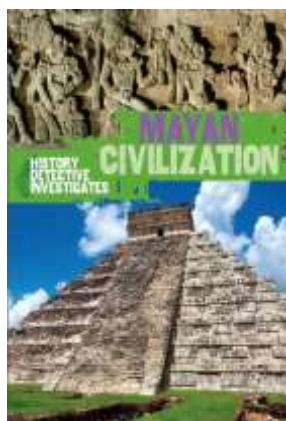
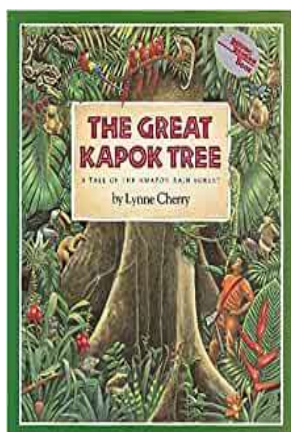
Rationale: (Intent) In this unit the pupils will learn about the remarkable achievements of the ancient Maya. Through a range of activities the children will learn about the Maya perspective of time, their calendar system, writing, maths and the environment in which they lived. In doing so they should begin to see the contrast between their own history and that of the Maya. This unit will encourage pupils to move away from the tendency to apply one's own cultural values in judging the behaviour and beliefs of people raised in other cultures. Instead pupils will be aware of the different (though not inferior) ways of doing things and the complexity of human life. We judged this to be appropriate for year 5 pupils.

Pre-Unit tasks: Show a range of images related to the unit of work. Ask children to discuss and write a word or a phrase to show their knowledge beside images.

Attention Grabber: Play rainforest sounds. On each table have an arrangement of sticks, cacao beans (or pebbles) and shells to represent a variety of Maya numbers (don't divulge this.) What do the children think the Maya might have used these for? Can they recognise any pattern(s)? Explain that the Maya used these objects as part of their number system. Can they suggest what numbers are being represented? Look at a selection of pages from The Ancient Maya e-book (twinkl.)

Enrichment activities / visits: Make a 'Maya' chocolate drink. After looking at images design and make a mosaic Maya mask. Design and make a Maya headdress. Re-enact a Mayan myth.

Key Class book(s) linked to history study:



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Learning Objectives:

- *To understand the significance of the Maya Civilisation (Why are we studying this ancient society?)
- *To know when and where the Maya are located in time and place. (Indigenous peoples of Belize, Guatemala and South eastern Mexico)
- *To be able to describe feature(s) of Mayan life.
- *To understand the design of Maya cities and the social order within them (hierarchy.)
- *To investigate who the Maya gods were and what they represented.
- *To explore the legends and stories of the Maya.
- *To understand the importance and types of food in Maya culture.
- *To investigate how the Maya calendar works.
- * To understand the importance of the calendar to the Mayan people.
- *To identify the Maya number system as a place value system.
- *To identify the symbols used in the Maya number system.
- *To discover the significance of music and musical instruments in Maya society.
- *To investigate the Maya ball game Pok-a-Tok / Pok-ta-Pok
- *To find out about the decline of the Maya civilisation.



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Examples of Key Questions:

- Why do we study the Maya in history? (What was so magnificent about the Maya?)
- When and where in the world would you find the Maya civilisation?
- How did the Maya civilisation grow so strong when the odds against it were so huge? (i.e. the land was mountainous and covered by a jungle)
- What was life like at the height of the Maya civilisation? (produce a tour guide)
- How was their society organised?
- Would you rather be: a member of the Mayan nobility, the priesthood, a craftsman, a farmer or a slave? Why?
- What did the Maya believe?
- Which gods did the Maya believe in?
- If the Maya were so civilised why did they carry out human sacrifice?
- How important were stories to the Maya people?
- What was Maya writing like? What does it tell us about the society?
- What numbers did the Maya use in their maths?
- How did the Maya tell the time?
- Did the Maya play football like us?
- What do Mayan artefacts tell us about their lives?
- How did Maya civilisation change over time?
- Why were so many Maya cities abandoned around AD900?
- Can we solve the riddle of the decline of the Maya?
- What is their legacy?

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Vocabulary:

abandon	absolute ruler	AD/CE	
administrator	afterlife	ahau (ahaw)	ah kin
alliances	ancestors	aqueduct	archaeologist
architect	architecture	artefact	astrology
astronomy	atlatl	authority	Bacabs
baktun	barter	batab	BC/BCE
cacao	calendar	causeway	ceiba
cenote	ceremony	city state	civilisation
Chichen Itza	codex (codices = plural)		conquistadors
craftspeople	fresco	glyph	hero twins
hotun	huipil	Ilzamna	jade
Kin katun	Kukulcan	logogram	manta
maize	merchant	nobility	noble
obsidian	ocarina	Pahuatun	pok-a-tok
pyramid	quetzal	sacbe	sacrifice
scribe	settlement	stela	trance
tun	tzolkin	warrior	Xibalba





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Impact/Assessment:

Most children will: (secure)

Explain different ritual elements of the ancient Maya religion and describe some of the main gods in greater detail.

Read and write larger numbers, combining some syllabograms to create glyph blocks and write some words.

Research and provide some of their own ideas about the significance of corn and chocolate.

Describe the different features of Maya cities and be able to appreciate what it would have been like to live there, answering questions to demonstrate their understanding of different aspects of the Maya civilisation.

Less able children (developing)

Say where the ancient Maya people lived, naming some major cities and the features in them.

Know some of the main Maya gods and what they represented.

Read and write some basic Maya numbers, explaining what syllabograms and logograms are.

Know that corn and chocolate were important foods and be able to identify some reasons for this.

More able pupils will: (greater depth)

Demonstrate a full understanding of ancient Maya culture and history by composing their own historically valid accounts about different aspects of the Maya civilisation, through asking and answering questions.

Explain how the number and writing systems work in more detail, be able to use Maya numbers to complete sums and write words using the Mayan syllabary by choosing suitable syllabograms to create their own glyph blocks.