

History Vocabulary

archaeology		The study of human history through the excavation and analysis of artefacts
agriculture		Farming – growing crops or rearing animals
offering		A thing offered, especially as a gift or a contribution
tribute		An act, statement, or gift that shows gratitude or respect
civilisation		A society with complex social structure, government, religion, and culture
city-state		An independent city that governs itself and the surrounding area.
hieroglyphs		A system of writing using pictures and symbols, used by the ancient Maya.
excavated		Remove earth in order to uncover historical ruins or remains
sacrifice		The act of giving up something valuable to a deity as an offering.
ritual		A set of actions or words performed in a certain way, often associated with religious beliefs.
culture		The lifestyle of a group of people or a society
temple		A building devoted to the worship of a god or gods
settlements		A place, where people establish a community
ancestor		A person you are descended from
corn/maize		The main cereal crop of an area, wheat is known as maize in the Americas
cocoa or cacao		A powder made from roasted and ground cacao seeds
decline		Become smaller, fewer, or less; decrease.

The Maya Civilisation

Maya Flag



Location of the Maya Civilisation C. 200-900 CE



The continent of North America.



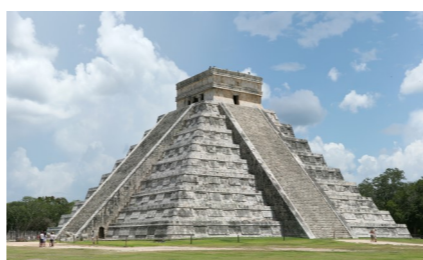
The modern day countries the Maya Civilisation lived in.



The location of some of the key city states.

The Maya civilisation was organised into city states. There no single ruler but leaders within each city.

Chichen Itza



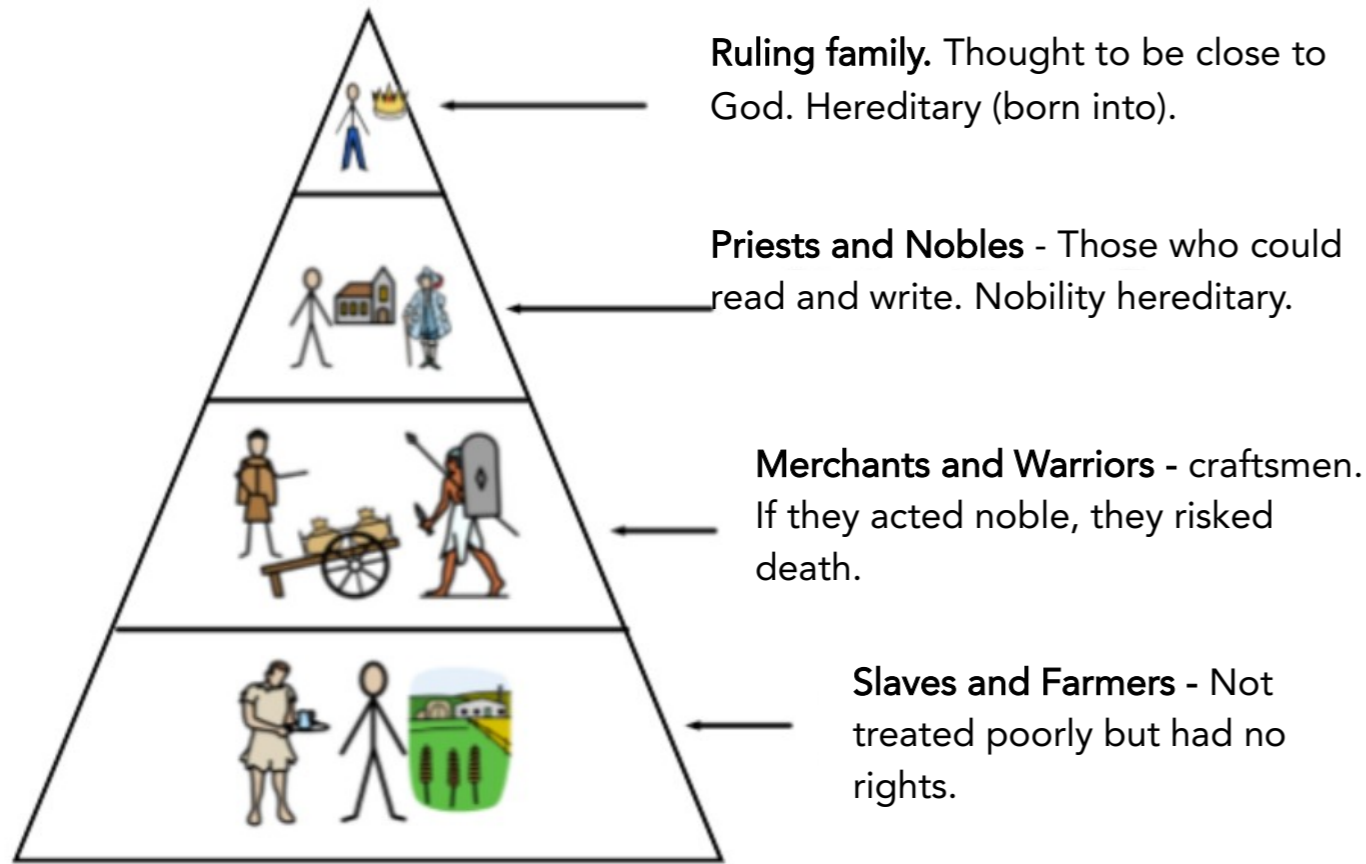
Tikal



Palenque



Maya Society Hierarchy



Key Facts

- The Maya were a civilisation who lived in Mesoamerica (now Central America) between approximately 2000 BCE and 900CE. They were the indigenous people of Yucatan and other areas of central America
- Mesoamerica is a region in today's Central America that was home to many civilisations, including the Maya.
- This period was the height of the Maya civilization in which they perfected mathematics, astronomy, architecture and the visual arts and also refined and perfected the calendar.
- Much of the Maya world remains underground. Major Maya sites, like Palenque and Chichén Itzá , have been largely uncovered and excavated.
- The Maya developed the concept of zero.
- The Maya produced highly detailed and realistic artwork, including pottery, jade carvings, and wooden sculptures.
- The Maya played a ball game called "pitz" , which had religious and political significance.
- The Maya cultures, who had developed highly advanced irrigation, agriculture, astronomy and building techniques, as well as intricate social structures, rapidly fell apart.
- By AD 1500, the Maya civilisation had largely disappeared.
- ⇒ Some think that they may have run out of food, as a result of climate change or eating mainly maize.
- ⇒ Others believe that ongoing conflicts and wars between city states and leaders may have caused a catastrophic decline.
- ⇒ Some historians think that an illness (such as smallpox) could have killed the Maya people.
- ⇒ Some historians believe that the arrival of the Spanish invaders led the Maya people to question their religion and king, causing them to move away.
- About 40% of Guatemala's 14 million people are Maya, and southern Mexico and the Yucatán Peninsula are home to many more predominantly Maya regions.

The Mayan solar calendar is astoundingly accurate, even more so than the modern calendar we use today.

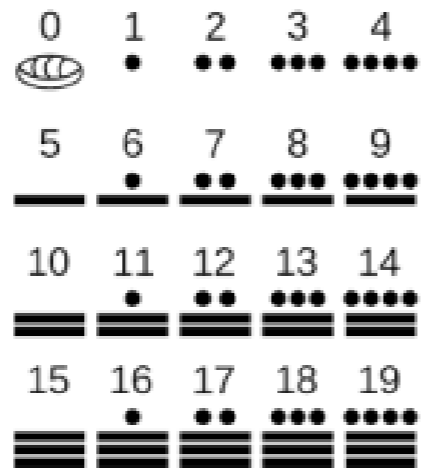
Tzolk'in
Sacred Round
Calendar



Haab Solar
Round
Calendar



Maya Number System



Timeline

2500 BC – 910 AD Start and end of the Classical Mayan civilisation—Period of Maya civilization, marked by the construction of large cities and advances in art, architecture, mathematics and astronomy.

2000 BCE	100 BC E	700 CE	250 CE– 900CE	800-925CE	900-1500 CE:	1521 CE
The Maya civilization begins to emerge in Mesoamerica.	The first Maya pyramids are built.	Maya hieroglyphic writing is developed	The Classic Era begins. Astronomy, mathematics and architecture are all developing	Chichen Itza becomes the most powerful city	The Post-classic period, marked by the decline of urbanism and political fragmentation	The Spanish, under Hernán Cortés, conquer the Maya and all of Mesoamerica.