

History—Year 5—Who were the Maya?

Key Knowledge



The Maya were the indigenous people of Mexico and Central America in the past. Descendants of the Maya still live in areas of Central America today.

The period of the Maya lasted from around 2000BC to 900AD, but Maya culture really began around 250 AD and ended in 900AD (the Classic Period). This period of time ran alongside the Bronze Age to the Anglo-Saxon and Viking Age in Britain. Although they occurred at a similar time period, their lives were very different.

They developed their own writing and number systems, stone pyramids and invent chocolate! The Maya were also great astronomers who studied the sky to develop their own calendar.

The Mayan civilisation ended with collapse of Southern lowland cities around 900AD.



Key People



The great city states had a social structure of priests, nobles, rulers, craftsmen, farmers, warriors and slaves.



Because the Maya were very religious who worshipped their own gods and goddesses, **the priest** had an important position in the social structure. They held regular rituals surrounding the temples (including sacrifices).

Key Places



The Maya were located in

Mesoamerica which means 'Middle

America'. It extended from southern **Mexico** down through **Central America**.

Tikal – One of the largest, great cities during the classic period (250 -900AD) with monumental structures.



Vocabulary



century	civilisation	agriculture
BC	hypothesis	trade
AD	hierarchy	astronomy
archaeology	descendent	ritual
source	Mesoamerica	ceremony
research	Tikal	nobles
evidence	calendar	nobility
artefact	hieroglyphics	craftsman
compare	sacrifice	ruler
contrast	Pok-ta-pok	warrior
ancient	priest	farmer
		slaves

Themes— Legacy and Change. Monarchy. Trade. Diversity and Equality.

Timeline of key events

The Maya civilisation begins.

2000BC

Mayan writing is developed

700BC

Settlements at Tikal are formed.

500BC

Solar calendars are carved in stone.

400BC

The social structure develops in the cities with kings as rulers.

300BC

The first pyramids are built.

100BC

Tikal becomes one of the greatest cities.

250AD

Classic period of Maya history ends with collapse of southern lowland cities.

900AD

Pre-classic Maya period 2000BC - 250AD

Classic Maya period 250 AD - 900 AD

Bronze Age in Britain

Iron Age in Britain

Romans in Britain

Anglo-Saxons in Britain

Ancient Greece

Ancient Egypt