


River Bank Primary Knowledge Organiser	Year 6	Summer 1	The Mayas
Key Vocabulary		Important Facts	
<p>Civilisation – Human society which is organised.</p> <p>Mesoamerica - Modern day Mexico and Central America.</p> <p>Hieroglyphs - A system of writing using pictures and words.</p> <p>Sacrifice - An offering to keep the Gods happy.</p> <p>Maize - Also known as corn, is a cereal grain.</p> <p>Temple - A building used for the worship of a god or gods in some religions.</p> <p>Pyramid – A structure with a triangular or square base with sloping sides.</p> <p>Pok-A-Tok – A ball game</p> <p>Chichen Itza – a village in Yucatan state in Mexico: site of important Mayan ruins.</p> <p>Palaces – A large house where someone important lives.</p> <p>Ancestors – A person who was in someone’s family in past times.</p> <p>Popol Vuh – It is the ‘Book of the Community’.</p> <p>Bloodletting – The opening of a vein for the purpose of drawing blood.</p> <p>Worshipped – Religious beliefs.</p> <p>Polytheistic – Believe in many gods.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maya civilisation started around 2000BC. It developed in the South-East area of Mesoamerica. • They devised a solar calendar similar to the one we use today. • Ceremonial masks were used for many purposes but mainly funerals, to protect noblemen in the afterlife. • During the Maya civilisation mathematics, astronomy, architecture and visual arts thrived. They were known to create wonderful architecture such as pyramids, palaces and temples (Mayas cities usually contained all three types of buildings). • Maya cities were often found near trade routes and good farmland. • Mayas were deeply religious and worshipped many gods. 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 (Upperworld), Earth (Middleworld) and the Underworld. • The Maya people were also skilled farmers, weavers and potters. Maize and corn were the main food of the Maya people. Corn was also very important part of their creation story. • The Mayas were the first people to use cocoa beans to make chocolate drinks! • The Mayas’ writing systems made up of 800 glyphs. They wrote books called codices which were made from bark of fig trees. They used a base 20 number system. • The Ancient Mayas had a class society. At the top were the nobles and priests then the warriors, craftsmen and traders. At the bottom were the farmers, workers and slaves. • Pok-A-Tok a popular game with the Mayas. It was a ball game. Players were not allowed to use their hands or feet only their head, shoulders, elbows, wrists, and hips. Losers were sometimes sacrificed to the Gods. 	
			
Map of Mesoamerica			

Key People and Places

The brilliant ruins of Chichén Itzá. A famous archaeologist site, rich in history and is known as the “New Seven wonders of the World”



Useful Websites.

<https://www.dkfindout.com/uk/history/mayans/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/introducing-the-maya-civilisation/znk3cqt>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zq6svcw/articles/zqv6msg>

https://www.ducksters.com/history/maya/religion_and_mythology.php

Key Dates

2000 BCE	Mayan civilisation starts in Mesoamerica
500 BCE	Maya develops own hieroglyphics
100 BCE	Develop stone buildings
400 CE	Divided in States
900 CE	Collapse of Maya

What did the Mayas leave behind?

Astronomy: Very accurate charts of the Moon.

Sculpture: Mainly of the human form, highly advanced when compared to similar empires.

Architecture: Stepped temples providing a route into understanding their religion.

Medicine: many natural cures used by the Mayans still in use today.

The clothing of the Mayans depended on what class they belonged too. The elite wore colourful clothing made from animal skins. They also wore feather headdresses and fancy jewellery. Slaves wore simple clothing. The men often wore loincloths while the women wore long skirts.

The Mayan Number System

0	1	2	3	4
	•	••	•••	••••
5	6	7	8	9
	•	••	•••	••••
10	11	12	13	14
	•	••	•••	••••
15	16	17	18	19
	•	••	•••	••••



Quiz

1. Where did Maya civilisation begin?
A) North and South America B) Ancient Egypt C) Mesoamerica D) Ancient Greece
2. What was the special name for Maya's writing?
A) Runes B) Alphabet C) Hieroglyphs D) Arabic
3. What did Mayas make books from?
A) bark tree B) paper C) animal Skin D) silk
4. Circle three things that the Mayas excelled in?
A) History B) Astronomy C) Architecture D) Mathematics
5. How did the Mayas believe the world was divided?
A) Heaven and Earth B) Heaven and Hell and Underworld C) Heaven, Earth and Underworld D) Earth, water and moon
6. What buildings did the Mayas design? Circle two
A) Pyramids B) Schools C) Temples D) Churches
7. Place these people in order of where they would appear in Maya hierarchy (number 1-4)
A) warriors B) farmers C) priests D) slaves
8. What great inventions did the Maya's give us?
A) calendar B) clothing C) chocolate D) Roads
9. Mayas exchanged goods between cities. This is called....
A) buying B) trade C) selling D) stealing