

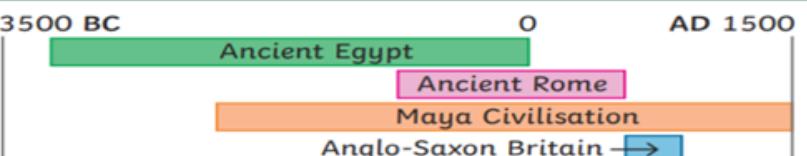
What I should already know:

- South America is a continent.
- The climate of South America is different to that of the UK.
- Human and physical geographical features of a region in South America.
- Other civilisations include the Egyptians and the Greeks and their chronology.
- The chronology of British history to 1066
- What England was like during the Anglo Saxon & Viking struggle for power



THE MAYA Y6

Timeline



Key Knowledge

- The Maya were a civilisation who lived in Mesoamerica (now part of Central America) between approximately 2000 BCE and 900CE.
- 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.
- They are known for being the first Mesoamericans to develop writing.
- They also had a sophisticated culture in which they lived in city-states.
- They built spectacular monuments and stepped pyramids – some (e.g. Chichen Itza) have become world tourist destinations in the modern day.
- They were well known for their advanced maths and calendars.
- Around 900AD, many cities in the southern lowlands were abandoned and no-one knows quite why this happened.
- However, states in the uplands of the Yucatan peninsula continued to flourish until the arrival of the Spanish in 1502.



Mayan Society

- Mayan cities had similar layouts to each other. They would have a palace for the ruler, a plaza for the marketplaces and temples, in the form of pyramids.
- Mayan cities were often found near trade routes and good farmland.
- Mayans were polytheists, believing in many nature gods or deities.
- Priests were considered the most important people in the Mayan culture. Warriors, craftsmen and traders were next in the hierarchy. Farmers, workers and slaves were at the bottom of the hierarchy.
- Mayan merchants traded many goods including salt, cotton, honey and jade.
- The Mayan calendar (Tzolkin) consisted of 260 days and 13 months.
- The demise of the Mayan civilisation came about because of a mixture of deforestation, land erosion and drought.

Key Events

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| 2000 BC | The Maya civilisation comes into being in Central America. |
| 300 BC | Cities, such as El Mirador, become large and powerful. |
| AD 900 | Cities in the rainforest are abandoned due to an extensive drought. People move north to the highlands of Guatemala and the Yucatán. |
| AD 1000 | Cities like Chichen Itza (which has two temple pyramids) are still thriving. |
| AD 1500s | The Spanish arrive in South America and set out to destroy the remaining elements of Maya civilisation as part of their conquest. |
| AD 1839 | American explorer and writer, John Lloyd Stephens, and British artist, Frederick Catherwood explore Copán and extensively document what they find, reigniting interest in the Maya civilisation. They go on to document other Maya cities, including Chichen Itza. |
| AD 2014 | The cities of Lagunita and Tamchén are rediscovered. |

Vocabulary

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| cacao beans | Cocoa beans before they are fermented |
| Chichen Itza | One of Ancient Maya's most famous temple cities |
| city state | A usually small, independent settlement consisting of a single city with its own rulers and laws |
| civilisation | An organised society with its own culture, existing in a particular area. |
| jade | A semiprecious stone, generally green or white in colour |
| maize | Sweetcorn. A crucial crop to Ancient Maya. |
| mass abandonment | Where all the people leave a place together, leaving it to ruin and neglect |
| Maya | Mesoamerican indigenous people occupying a nearly continuous territory in southern Mexico, Guatemala, and northern Belize. |
| MesoAmerica | Area of Central America |
| natural resources | Things from nature and used with few modifications e.g. wood, minerals, stone |
| pok-ta-pok | The ball game was sometimes used to settle disputes instead of going to war. |
| pyramid temple | Similar to Egyptian pyramids, but these have flat tops (many with temples on the top) and stairs ascending their faces |
| source of Information | Sources of information or evidence are often categorized as primary, secondary, or tertiary material. |
| stelae | Carved stone monuments or slabs with glyphs or hieroglyphs |
| trade | The action of buying and selling goods and services |
| Yucatan Peninsular | A large peninsula in southeastern Mexico jutting out into the Atlantic Ocean |