



# Maya Civilization Knowledge Organiser



## Summary

Centres around the country now known as Guatemala, the Maya Empire was at its most powerful around 600 A.D. They Maya are known for their skilled agriculture, pottery, hieroglyphic writing, calendar making and mathematics. They left behind an impressive amount of architecture and symbolic artwork. The Maya were deeply religious and worshiped various gods. They performed elaborate religious rituals and ceremonies in order to please them.

## Top 5 Maya Facts

1. The Mayans predicated that the world would end in 2012.
2. Flat foreheads were fashionable so they would put baby's heads in a press to squash them.
3. It was considered beautiful to be cross-eyed so parents would hang balls in-between their children's eyes to make them look inwards.
4. Mayans sacrificed humans for religious and medical reasons. It was an honour to be sacrificed!
5. Noblewomen would file their teeth into sharp points.

## Vocabulary List

Ancient	Belonging to the very distant past and no longer in existence.
Astronomy	The branch of science which deals with space and the physical universe as a whole.
Cacao	Seeds that they Maya used to make chocolate.
Cenote	A sinkhole or pit filled with water, cenotes were sources of water for the Maya.
Chichen Itza	Chichen Itza is a well-preserved example of a Mayan city, located in what would have been Mesoamerica. It is a popular tourist destination as it shows a series of Mayan sculptures, pyramids and natural water sources through sinkholes.
City State	An independent state made up of a city and the farmland and villages around it
Civilisation	The society, culture and way of life of a particular area.
Classic Period	The golden age of the Maya civilization.
Code	A book written by the Maya that was created by one long sheet of paper.
Glyphs	A symbol that has a worded meaning, read like our graphemes.
Sacrifice	A slaughtering of an animal or human as an offering to please the gods.
Settlement	A place where people have come to live and have built homes.
Temple	A building devoted to the worship of god or gods.
Mesoamerica	The region in which the Maya lived, spanning over Mexico and parts of Southern America.
Jade	A hard stone that is usually green. The Mayan often used jade to make jewellery.

Hello: Ba'ax ka wa'alik

Welcome: Kilmak 'oolal

Goodbye: Taak ulak k'iin

Thank you: Dios bo'otik

Language



Map

## Timeline

### 1,100 BC

The first 'Mayan' settlements begin to appear in Mesoamerica along the pacific coast.



### 800BC

Instead of foraging, maize farming begins and trade between villages begins.



### 700BC

Mayan writing begins to develop through the form of hieroglyphs.



### 100BC - 450AD

Maya constructs its first pyramids and developing cities, prompting the rapid rise of Tikal in the tropical lowlands.



### 638AD

Pakal the Great (King of Palenque) dies. His death mask made of jade is created.



### 800AD - 1,502AD

Mayan civilization begins to decline and vanish. The Mayan ruins are found by a Spanish expedition lead by Francisco Hernández de Córdoba.

