

## Key knowledge



## Magnificent Mayans!

How does the Maya civilization compare to other civilizations?



## Key Vocabulary

glyphs	Symbols used in the Mayan writing system. Each symbol represents a word or sound.
codices	Books created by the Mayans. They were made of soft bark and folded like a fan.
Chichen Itza	The Mayans most well-known pyramid.
cacao	Seeds that the Maya used to make chocolate.
ahau or ahaw	The main king or lord of a Maya city-state.
batab	A lesser lord, usually ruling over a small town.
Itzamna	The main god of the Maya, Itzamna was the god of fire who created the Earth.
huipil	A traditional garment worn by Maya women.
Kin	Word representing a day in the Maya calendar.
Kukulcan	The serpent god of the Maya. One of the primary gods, especially to the Itza peoples of Chichen Itza.
Uinal	Word for a month in the Maya calendar. It was 20 days long.

- The Mayans were expert mathematicians and astronomers. They used this expertise to make calendars.
- The Mayans were situated in modern day central America and covered 5 modern day countries.
- Although the Mayans had metalworking skills, metal ores were scarce. Mayans used stone tools to carve the limestone that they used for their buildings.
- Mayan people originated in Asia.
- Mayan religion was extremely bloodthirsty, demanding human sacrifices and bloodletting rituals. The Mayans believed in an afterlife and that those who were sacrificed, as well as those killed in war and women who died in childbirth, went to 'the place of misty sky'.
- At the top of Mayan society was the king and royal family who were believed to be closely linked to the gods. An educated elite of scribes, priests and nobles formed the ruling class. They occupied the finest buildings in the city.
- Mayan society was formed of a number of city states each with their own ruler.

