

**Medium Term Plan: Supporting Implementation of LTP/Progression Grid**

Subject: History

Year: UKS2 Year 5

**NC/PoS: The Mayans**

- Changes in Britain from the Stone Age to the Iron Age.
- The Roman Empire and its impact on Britain.
- Britain's settlement by Anglo-Saxons and Scots.
- The Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle for the Kingdom of England to the time of Edward the Confessor.
- A local history study.
- A study of an aspect or theme in British history that extends pupils' chronological knowledge beyond 1066.
- The achievements of the earliest civilizations – an overview of where and when the first civilizations appeared and a depth study of one of the following: Ancient Sumer, The Indus Valley, Ancient Egypt, The Shang Dynasty of Ancient China.
- Ancient Greece – a study of Greek life and achievements and their influence on the western world.
- A non-European society that provides contrasts with British history – one study chosen from: early Islamic civilization, including a study of Baghdad c. AD 900; Mayan civilization c. AD 900; Benin (West Africa) c. AD 900-130.

**Prior Learning (what pupils already know and can do)**

- Know early civilizations formed when people began living together in larger organized settlements.
- Know historians use archaeology to interpret the past.
- Know the four ancient civilizations all built cities and had their own writing systems.
- Know the Egyptians believed in many gods and the afterlife.
- Know the Ancient Egyptians had social classes including the pharaoh, priests, farmers and slaves and only pharaohs and priests were mummified.

**End Points (what pupils MUST know and remember)**

- Know the Mayans were a civilisation who lived in an area known as Mesoamerican.
- Know the Mayans had many gods and believed in an afterlife.
- Know Mayan society was organised into city states (settlements) and each city was ruled by a different king or queen.
- Know there were many conflicts between the city states.
- Can make comparisons with other civilizations studied e.g. settlements and religious beliefs.
- Know the Mayan civilization began in the ancient period and ended in the early modern period due to invasion.
- Know historians use archaeology to interpret the past.

**Key Vocabulary**

civilization, society, city state, archaeology, civilization, ancient, social class, Meso-America, power, conflict, agriculture, polytheistic, gods, goddesses, creation, afterlife

**Enquiry question: – How were the Ancient Mayans similar to the Ancient Egyptians?**

Workshop Opportunity - <https://www.mayaarchaeologist.co.uk/>

Suggested website for subject knowledge, including common misconceptions - <https://www.mayaarchaeologist.co.uk/school-resources/maya-world/maya-timeline/>

**Session 1: Where and when did the Maya live?**

Review prior learning and build a chronological timeline of previous units (Stone Age, Iron Age, Bronze Age, Ancient Greece, Romans, Anglo-Saxons, Vikings)

Recap the terms 'ancient' history, 'civilization' and BC/ AD. Ensure children understand that sometimes the terms BCE/CE are used instead of BC/AD.

Introduce the Maya Civilisation (pronounced My-a), which started to develop around 2000BC (The Maya were a Stone Age society). Discuss – where would this civilisation fit on the timeline?

The Maya civilization had many periods and existed at the same time as the Egyptians and later the Romans.

Look at what was happening in prehistoric and ancient Britain and compare.

Locate Mesoamerica on a world map and name modern day countries.

- Mesoamerica is a classification that is not defined by geography or languages, rather by the presence of **cultural traits**.
- These traits included forms of a game with a rubber ball in a rectangular court, codices, which are books made of sheets of bark paper or deerskin and a common diet of maize, beans and squash.
- The ancient Maya lived in a region that today includes Guatemala, Belize, the Yucatán Peninsula (Mexico) and the western portions of Honduras and El Salvador.

**Suggested videos:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q6eBJjdca14>

**Suggested website:**

<https://www.mayaarchaeologist.co.uk/>

**Key Vocabulary:** civilization, society, Meso-America

Session 2: **What did the Mayans believe?**

Discuss what animals and plants can be found in Mesoamerica (including corn and cocoa)

Introduction to what Mayans believed. Many gods, creation story and the afterlife. They also worshipped their ancestors (like the Shang Dynasty).

Introduce the idea of animism – the belief all things including animals, plants, rocks, rivers were alive and had a soul.

Tell or investigate some of the main gods in Ancient Maya including Itzamna (the creator god), Hunab Ku (the one god), Kukulcan (the serpent god), Ix Chel (Moon Goddess), Hun Hunahpu (maize god).

How do Mayan beliefs compare to other civilizations? e.g Ancient Egypt.

**Suggested videos:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jb5GKmEcJcw>

**Suggested website:**

<https://www.mayaarchaeologist.co.uk/>

**Key Vocabulary:** Polytheistic, gods, goddesses, creation, afterlife

Session 3: **How did the ancient Maya farm?**

Discuss what a rainforest environment is like and show clips, pictures of the types of wildlife and plants that live there.

Tell or investigate how the Mayans fed themselves using different farming techniques depending on the time of year (based on their calendars like Shang Dynasty and Ancient Egypt) and gathering items from the rainforests.

They ate maize, beans, squash, tomatoes, chillies, cocoa and vanilla.

Early Maya settlements began in the lowland areas, where they created simple farming cultures to take advantage of the corn, bean and maize in the area. Over several centuries, these farming societies grew into the earliest Mayan geographic location in the Northern and Southern lowlands.

**Suggested website:**

<https://www.mayaarchaeologist.co.uk/>

**Key Vocabulary:** settlement, agriculture, gathering

#### Session 4: **What were Mayan settlements like?**

Tell the children there were many cities in the Mayan civilization and each city was ruled by a different king or queen.

Look at city states such as Chichen Itza, Palanque, Copan and Tikal.

- The Maya built huge amounts of temples, palaces, causeways, schools and marketplaces.
- The temples and palaces were mainly made of stone.
- Wood was used for beams and poles, and thatch for huts, covered with adobe, which was mud strengthened straw.
- Most Mayan cities had ball courts where they played the game pitz

How similar and how different are they to Stone Age Britain?

#### **Suggested videos:**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=212\\_i8f6YtY&t=242s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=212_i8f6YtY&t=242s)

#### **Suggested website:**

<https://www.mayaarchaeologist.co.uk/>

**Key Vocabulary:** settlement, agriculture, temple, social class

#### Session 5: **Who were the leaders in ancient Maya?**

Recap what a city state is, and each city was ruled by a different king or queen.

- The Maya believed these rulers had to keep the gods happy.
- To achieve this, the rulers offered sacrifices (sometimes human), conducted mass prayers and held parades through their cities.

Investigate or tell pupils the Mayans traded many items such as salt, quetzal feathers, flint, obsidian, coloured shells, honey and cacao.

Tell the children there were many conflicts between the cities for more land, food, control over trade and even people for sacrifices.

Investigate prominent leaders including: Pakal the Great (longest ruling leader, Yohl Ik'nal also known as Lady Kan Ik and Yax K'uk' Mo' (first recorded leader of Copan).

Compare to leaders in Ancient Egypt

#### **Suggested website:**

<https://www.mayaarchaeologist.co.uk/>

**Key Vocabulary:** city state, trade, power, conflict

#### Session 6: **How were the Ancient Mayans similar to Ancient Egyptians?**

Recap prior learning on Ancient Egypt focusing on religious beliefs, farming, pyramids (the first were step pyramids) and pharaohs.

Children to compare to Ancient Mayans.

- Both built cities included large pyramidal structures but in Egypt they were tombs and in ancient Maya used for religious ceremonies
- Both Egyptian and Mayan cultures were polytheistic with rulers that represented gods on earth
- The Mayans believed in human sacrifices, but no evidence suggest the Ancient Egyptians did
- Both civilizations farmed using calendars, but the climate and vegetation were different
- Both civilizations were destroyed by invading peoples

Tell the children from around 1517 - 1697 Spanish invaders (conquistadores) started to destroy the Maya cities and people as they were armed with guns whilst the Mayans had spears. The Spanish conquistadors nearly destroyed all evidence of Maya writing in the 16th century which meant historians had to interpret artefacts to understand how the Mayans lived.

Explore Maya people today.

#### **Suggested website:**

<https://www.mayaarchaeologist.co.uk/>

**Key Vocabulary:** duration, religious beliefs, farming, pyramids

Future learning this content supports:

- Ancient Greece UKS2