UKS2: Mayan Civilisation

Subject Specific Vocabulary

civilisation	A human society with well-developed rules and government, often where technology and the arts are considered important.
drought	A long period of time with little or no rain.
jaguar	A big cat, heavier than a leopard, with yellowish fur and black spots.
scribes	People trained to write things down, either as an official record or for someone else unable to write.
codices	Ancient handwritten texts. Maya codices could be unfolded like a concertina. One text is called a codex.
maize	Another word for sweetcorn or corn on the cob. It can be made into a dough and baked into tortillas.
cacao beans	Cacao trees sprout pods directly from their trunks. When they are ripe, the pods can be broken open to reveal the beans, which can then be dried, roasted and ground.

Sticky Knowledge

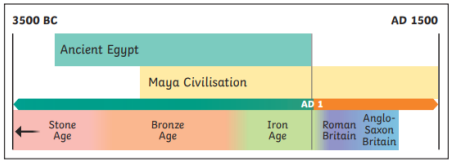
- To know the Maya built cities, pyramids and ornate sculptures in the rainforest.
- To know the Maya made a bitter chocolatey drink from cacao beans that was enjoyed by the rich. The Maya people mainly ate maize (corn). Maize was very important to them as they believed that the first humans were made from maize dough by the gods.
- To know the Maya writing system was used to write several different Maya languages. It was made up of many symbols called glyphs.
- To understand that Logograms are glyphs representing whole words.
- To understand that Syllabograms are glyphs representing units of sound (syllables).
- To know the glyphs were carved on stone buildings and monuments and painted on pottery.
- To understand the Maya developed an advanced number system for their time. They were one of only two cultures in the world to develop the concept of zero as a placeholder. The number system used three symbols in different combinations.
- To understand the Maya believed in many gods and goddesses. They thought that the gods/goddesses had a good side and a bad side and that they could help or hurt them.

Useful links

http://www.mayankids.com/mmkplaces/mapregion.htm

https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zq6svcw





Key Dates (c. stands for circa, which means approximately)	
c. 2000 BC	The Maya civilisation comes into being in Central America.
c. 300 BC	Cities, such as El Mirador, become large and powerful.
AD 900	Cities in the rainforest are abandoned due to a drought. People move north to the highlands of Guatemala and the Yucatán.
AD 1000	Cities like Chichén Itzá (which has two temple pyramids) are still thriving.
AD 1500s (16th century)	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 other cities including Chichén Itzá, reigniting interest in the Maya civilisation.
AD 2014	The cities of Lagunita and Tamchén are rediscovered.

