

# History— The Maya



## Key vocabulary

civilisation	An organised society with its own culture and way of life, existing in a particular area over a particular
ritual	A ceremony, often religious, with set actions performed in a set order.
scribes	People paid to write things down, either as an official record or for someone else unable to write
maize	Another word for sweetcorn or corn on the cob. It can be made into a dough and baked into tortillas.
Maya/Mayan	The word Maya describes the civilisation and the people. The word Mayan describes the language.

## Key information

The Maya people lived between 2000BC and 1500 AD in Mexico and central America.

The Maya believed in and worshipped a number of different gods. They believed that the gods had a good side and a bad side and that the gods could help or hurt them. The Maya would dance, sing and sometimes make offerings of blood to the gods.

The Maya writing system, used to write several different Maya languages, was made up of over 800 symbols called glyphs.

Maize was a very important crop that formed up to 80% of the Maya people's diets. They believed that the first humans were made from maize dough by the gods. The Maya made a bitter chocolatey drink from cacao beans that was enjoyed by the rich and used for medicines ceremonies.



The Maya developed a complex number and counting system that advanced for their time.

They were one of only two cultures in the world to develop the concept of zero .

## Key questions

When was the Maya era?

Why was the Mayan Civilization so significant?

How does the Mayan Civilization compare with the Tudor era?

What are the similarities and differences between the Tudors and Mayan life?

