

## History Knowledge Organiser: Year 6 Ancient Maya

### Key Knowledge:

A central temple/pyramid was the focal point of many Maya settlements.

Maya city states traded with each other - sometimes using cacao beans as money.

Maya temples were stepped to create a route to the heavens.

The Maya conducted human sacrifice as well as animal sacrifice.

The Maya used **hieroglyphs** to inscribe in stone slabs (called **stelae**) and in books (called **codices**).

The Maya observed the movement of the sun, moon and stars to create calendars.

The Maya created a logical and advanced number system.

### Key Vocabulary

**Astronomy** - the study of space, stars, planets and the universe.

**Civilisation** - the society, culture and way of life of a particular area.

**Hieroglyphics** - writing that is made up of pictorial symbols.

**Sacrifice** - an act of slaughtering an animal or person as an offering to a god or gods.

**Settlement** - place where people establish a community.

**Temple** - a building devoted to the worship of a god or gods.

### Sources and Artefacts



Temple of Kukulcan, Chichen Itza



Pok a Tok Hoop



A Maya Calendar



Death Mask of Pakal the Great

### Key Dates

**2,000 BC:** Cities, such as El Mirador, become large and powerful.

**AD 900:** Cities in the rainforest are abandoned due to an extensive 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:** 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 extensively document what they find, reigniting interest in the Maya civilisation. They go on to document other Maya cities, including Chichén Itzá.

**AD 2014:** The cities of Lagunita and Tamchén are rediscovered.

### Key Places

