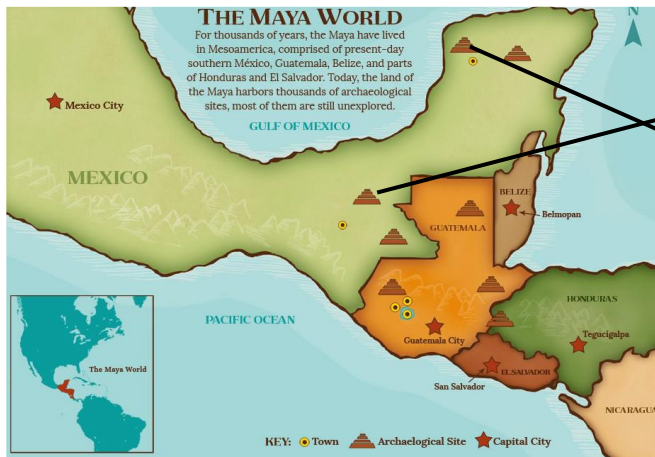




What I should know already:

- South America is a continent.
- The climate of South America is different to that of the UK.
- Human and physical geographical features of a region in South America.
- Other civilisations include the Egyptians and the Greeks.
- What erosion is and what impact it can have on land.

Where did the Mayans live?



Famous Mayan cities include **Palenque** and **Chichen Itza**, which are found in Mexico.

Vocabulary and People

archaeologist	someone who studies the past by exploring old remains
architecture	the art of planning, designing and constructing buildings
Chichen Itza	a village in Yucatán state in Mexico: site of important Mayan ruins. A UNESCO World Heritage Site
civilisation	a human society with its own social organisation and culture.
culture	activities such as the arts and philosophy, which are considered to be important for the development of civilisation
deities	a god or goddess
demise	something or someone is their end or death
economy	the wealth that a society or country gets from business and industry
hierarchy	a system of organising people into different ranks or levels of importance, for example in society
indigenous	people or things belong to the country in which they are found
Mayan	of, relating to, or characteristic of the Maya or any of their languages
merchant	a person who buys or sells goods in large quantities
Mesoamerica	Central America - the countries consist of Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Belize; and the western sections of Honduras and Nicaragua, and northern Costa Rica
polytheists	the worship of or belief in more than one god
society	people in general, thought of as a large organized group

Historical Skills and Enquiry

- Examine the timeline of Mayan civilisation and compare to what was happening in Britain at the same time.
- Examine Mayan everyday life and test against recognised criteria for a civilisation to answer the question: Were the Mayan's civilised.
- Describe ideas, beliefs and attitudes of the Mayans, including their creation stories. Compare to other creation stories that they have studied.
- Explore the social order of the Mayans and how prisoners became slaves.
- Explore the Mayan writing system.
- Consider the possible theories behind the fall of the Mayan civilisation, including natural disasters and climate change.
- Consider the impact if Spanish invaders on the Mayan people. Did European diseases lead to the fall of the civilisation?
- Examine if the Mayan civilisation really fall or did it relocate?

Mayan Society

Mayan cities had similar layouts to each other. They would have a palace for the ruler, a plaza for the marketplaces and temples, in the form of pyramids.

- Mayan cities were often found near trade routes and good farmland.
- Mayans were polytheists, believing in many nature gods or deities.
- Priests were considered the most important people in the Mayan culture. Warriors, crafts-men and traders were next in the hierarchy. Farmers, workers and slaves were at the bottom of the hierarchy.
- Mayan merchants traded many goods including salt, cotton, honey and jade.
- The Mayan calendar (Tzolkin) consisted of 260 days and 13 months.
- The demise of the Mayan civilisation came about because of a mixture of deforestation, land erosion and drought.

What I should know by the end of the unit:

- The Mayans were a successful civilisation that existed from 1800 BC up until the time of the Anglo Saxons.
- The Mayans lived in the part of America now known as Mexico.
- The Mayans were a sophisticated civilisation.
- The Mayan's worshipped many Gods (up to 250) and believed people were created from yellow and white corn.
- The Mayan society was structured with kings, priests and nobles in the upper class; professionals, merchants and craftsmen in the middle classes; and workers, servants and slaves in the lower classes.
- The Mayans had their own form of writing.
- There are many theories for the collapse of the Mayan civilisation: warfare between the city states; deforestation and drought; and invasion and colonisation by the Spanish and the spread of European diseases.
- As the Mayan cities in the centre of the country declined, many Mayans relocated to the coast and flourished once again.

Timeline

