

Year 6: Let's Learn About... Hola Mexico!

Autumn 1



Mexico is located in the south of the continent of North America. It has a diverse landscape that includes mountains, rainforests and deserts. This means that its climate is very varied and there are a wide range of plants and animals found there. Some people live in rural communities there and others live in large cities.



Key Locations and Landmarks

Mexico City

The capital city of Mexico which is home to around 9 million people



Chihuahuan Desert

One of the largest deserts in North America where summers are extremely hot and there is little rainfall



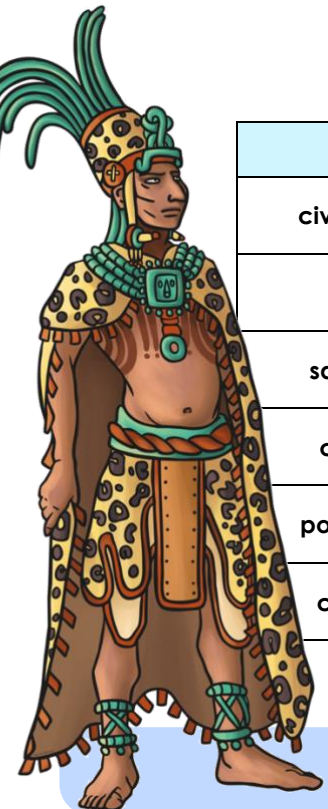
El Castillo

A Mayan step-pyramid at the centre of the ancient city of Chichen Itza in Mexico



Geographical Vocabulary

| | | | |
|----------------|--|------------------------|--|
| equator | An imaginary line around the middle of the earth, between the northern and southern hemispheres, halfway between the North and South Poles | indigenous | People, plants or animals that originated in a place |
| desert | A waterless area of land with little vegetation | active volcano | They have a recent history of eruption |
| climate | The weather in a particular place over a period of time | dormant volcano | They have not erupted for a very long time but may erupt in the future |
| biome | Regions of the world with a similar climate that include certain types of living things | extinct volcano | They not expected to erupt in the future |



Key Vocabulary

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| civilisation | A well-organised and developed society |
| deity | A god or goddess |
| sacrifice | A ritual in which people offered themselves or parts of themselves to the gods |
| cacao | The seeds that are the source of cocoa and chocolate |
| pok-a-tok | A ball game played by the Ancient Maya where the leader of the losing team was killed |
| cenote | A natural underground water source that exists in Yucatan, Mexico |

Key Questions

Who were the Maya?

The Maya were a group of indigenous people who lived in Mexico and other parts of Central America over 3000 years ago

What do we use from the Mayan Civilisation today?

The Maya were experts in farming, pottery, writing and maths. They also created a complex calendar based on their understanding of maths and astronomy

What did the Mayan people do for fun?

Mayans enjoyed religious ceremonies where they played music, danced and played ball games

What did the Maya believe in?

Religion featured strongly in Mayan life and they worshipped nature gods (such as the god of sun) and engaged in rituals of human sacrifice

What was happening in Britain?

6000 – 800BCE
Bronze Age

800BCE – 43CE
Iron Age

43CE – 410CE
Romans

800 – 1066CE
Vikings

Historical Timeline of the Ancient Maya

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| 3114 BCE | The Maya calendar begins |
| 1000 BCE | Maya settlements develop |
| 750 BCE | Large stone structures are built in Maya cities |
| 600 BCE | The Maya create a settlement at Tikal that later becomes a major city |
| 300 BCE | The Maya begin to use a monarchy government and develop a writing system known as glyphs |
| 100 BCE | The largest known ancient city in the Americas, Teotihuacan, is founded in the Valley of Mexico |
| 250 CE | The Maya become one of the most significant civilisations. They dominate Central America |
| 900 CE | The Maya civilisation begins to mysteriously decline. People begin to live in smaller villages and abandon the great Maya cities |
| 1200 CE | The Maya abandon their northern cities |
| 1400 CE | The surviving Maya suffer a period of warfare, natural disasters and disease |
| 1500 CE | Spanish explorers take land and wealth from the remaining Maya |

