



Year 4- Autumn 2- Marvellous Mayans



Central America

Timeline								
1100 B.C.E	800 B.C.E	400 B.C.E	300 B.C.E	100 B.C.E	600 C.E	800 C.E	900 C.E	1502 C.E
The first hunter-gatherers settle on the pacific coast	Village farming and trade become established	First solar calendars invented	Cities become centres for trade and Kings begin to rule	First pyramids are built	Cities start expanding quickly	Building of stepped pyramid of Chichen-Itza	Decline of Mayan cities	First contact with Europeans is made

Key Vocabulary	
astronomy	The Mayans were able to predict solar eclipses and used observatories and shadow-casting devices.
calendar	These were circular and charted the movements of the sun, moon, stars and planets, with 365 days in a year.
hieroglyphs	They used about 800 symbols to create writing, often on folded pages forming a book (codex).
maize	The staple food of the Mayans which was so important that they even had a maize god.
numbers	Using a base 20 system (we use base 10), they used dots and bars to create numbers and had a symbol for zero.
pyramids	Built with a temple at the top to give sacrifices to the gods, others were built for the gods themselves.
sacrifice	Humans and animals were used as a blood offering to gods, mostly war prisoners by decapitation or heart removal.
tribe	A group of people who are of the same kind.
civilisation	A group of people with their own languages and way of life.
ritual	A ceremony or series of acts that is always performed in the same way.

Maya Food
 Maize was a very important crop and formed up to 80% of their diet. The Mayans worshipped a maize God. The Maya used chocolate in religious ceremonies and they mixed it with herbs to make a medicine.



General Knowledge

Numbers

The Mayans had a good understanding of numbers and they developed a complex number and counting system that was advanced for their time. They were one of only two cultures in the world to develop the concept of zero. The Maya people used symbols to represent their numbers.

1	•	11	• =====
2	••	12	•• =====
3	•••	13	••• =====
4	••••	14	•••• =====
5	• =====	15	=====
6	• • =====	16	• =====
7	•• =====	17	•• =====
8	••• =====	18	••• =====
9	•••• =====	19	•••• =====
10	=====		

Writing

The Maya people wrote books made out of bark from fig trees. These books were called codices. They contained information about astronomy, war, gods and history. Maya hieroglyphic writing can be made up of syllabograms (representing sounds) and logograms (representing whole words).

Significant Person

John Lloyd Stephens
 John Lloyd Stephens was an American explorer and travel writer who rediscovered Maya Civilisation throughout Middle America in 1839.

Maya People
 The ancient Maya people developed a writing and number system, studied and charted the stars and planets, invented 3 calendars to keep track of time, built impressive palaces, temples, monuments and cities and skilfully farmed the land.

Maya Gods
 The Maya people worshipped a number of different Gods. They believed that the Gods had a good side and a bad side and it could help or hurt them. The Maya would perform rituals to show their respect and loyalty.