



What should I already know?

- 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 ancient **civilisations** include the Egyptians and the Romans.
- The chronology of British history.

Important Facts that I will learn

- **Mayan** cities were often found near trade routes and good farmland.
- The **Maya** were **polytheists**, believing in many nature gods or **deities**.
- 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.

Diagrams

Where did the **Maya** live?



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

Vocabulary

architecture	the art of planning, designing and constructing buildings
Chichen Itza	a village in Yucatan state in Mexico: site of important <b>Mayan</b> ruins. A UNESCO World Heritage Site
chronology	the order of events in time
circa	Latin meaning 'around'. c. 800 BC means around 800 BC.
civilisation	a human <b>society</b> with its own social organisation and <b>culture</b>
culture	activities such as the arts and philosophy, which are considered to be important for the development of the <b>civilisation</b>
deities	a god or goddess
demise	something or someone's end or death
drought	a long period of time in which no rain falls
economy	the wealth that a <b>society</b> or country gets from business or industry
hierarchy	a system of organising people into different ranks or levels
Mayan	relating to or characteristics of the Maya or any of their languages
merchant	a person who buys or sells goods in a large quantities
Mesoamerica	Central America—the countries consist of Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador and Belize and the western sections of Honduras, Nicaragua, and northern Costa Rica
plaza	an open square in a city
polytheists	the worship or belief in more than one god
Society	people in general, thought of as a large organised group

Historical skills and Enquiry

- Where **Mesoamerica** is on a world map?
- Can you deduce facts about the Maya from archaeological discoveries?
- What shape the **Mayan** society was organised into?
- Describe what daily life was like for the Maya.
- Did you know that the Maya developed their own writing system?

Timeline

AD 250: By this stage, the Maya had many established cities. They had many monuments, pyramids and devised a writing and maths.

AD 840: The quality of the fields is poor, and this combined with land erosion, leads to a **drought**.

Today...there are still 7 million indigenous **Mayan** people living in Central America.

AD 600: The **Mayan** population exceeded 5,000,000 people. Excessive farming and deforestation due to overflow from the cities were commonplace and this led to land becoming less fertile.

AD 900: Many **Mayan** cities are deserted due to deforestation, **drought** and war.