

## How did the Maya influence our world today?

### Subject Specific Vocabulary:

**Glyphs:** Symbols used in the Maya writing system. Each symbol represents a word or sound.

**Codices:** Books created by the Maya. They were made of soft bark and folded like a fan.

**Chichen Itza:** The most well-known Maya pyramid.

**Ahau/Ahaw:** The main King or Lord of a Maya city-state.

**Batab:** A lesser lord, usually ruling over a small town.

**Itzamna:** The main God of the Maya, Itzamna was the God of fire who created the Earth.

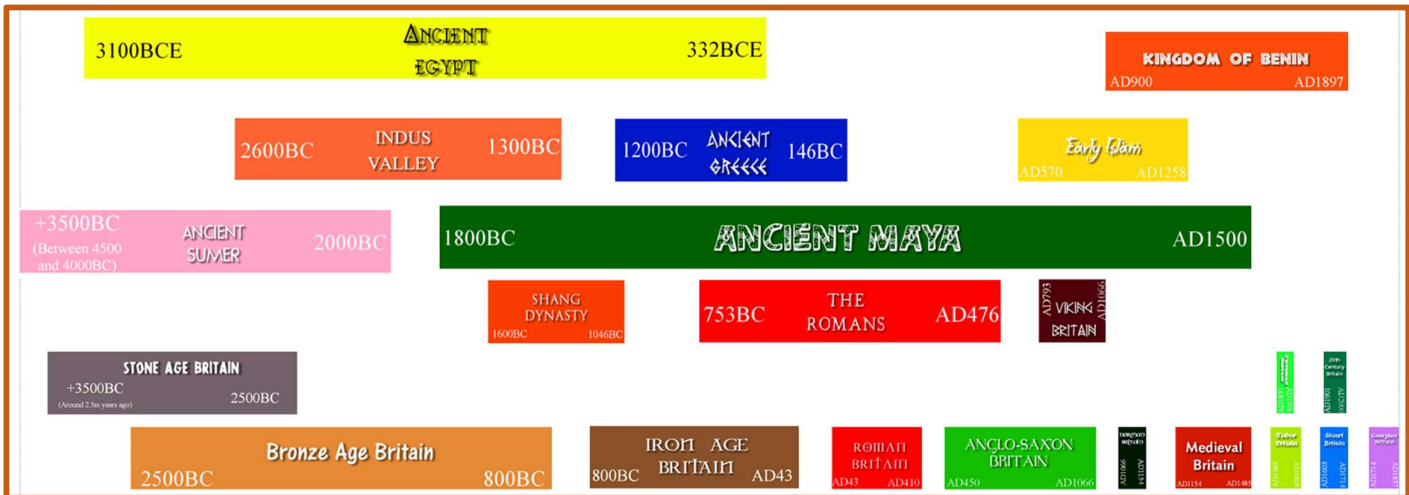
**Kin:** Word representing a day in the Maya Calendar.

**Kukulcan:** The serpent god of the Maya, one of the primary gods, especially to the Itza peoples of Chichen Itza.

**Uinal:** Word for a month in the Maya Calendar. It was 20 days long.

### What do I need to know about the Mayans?

- The Maya were expert mathematicians and astronomers. They used this expertise to make calendars.
- The Maya were situated in modern day Central America and covered 5 modern day countries.
- Maya religion was bloodthirsty – demanding human sacrifices and rituals. The Maya believed in an afterlife and that those who were sacrificed or killed went to ‘the place of misty sky’.
- At the top of the Maya society was the King and royal family who were believed to be closely linked to the Gods.
- The Maya 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 just three symbols in their number system. These are thought to represent items that the Maya people might have first used to count with, such as pebbles, sticks and shells.
- The Maya people believed that the earth, which they called the Middleworld, was large and flat and resting on the back of a creature, such as a turtle or crocodile.



### Curriculum Links

**RE:** How did the Maya worship and what were their religious beliefs? Who were the main Gods and what did they represent?

**Maths:** How did the Maya number system work?

**Geography:** Describing the different features of Maya Cities and monuments.

**English:** ‘Oh Maya Gods!’ by Maz Evans. Understand and explain the Maya writing system.

