



Year 6 – Spring Term

What did the Maya know?

By the end of the unit I will know

Timeline of the Mayans: 1100BC to 1502AD.

The geography of Central America – they covered 5 modern day countries – formed of city states.

Mayan culture and achievements:

Writing, mathematics, calendar and astronomy.

Religious practices – demanded human sacrifices and blood-letting rituals – believed in an afterlife – ‘place of the misty sky’.

The Mayans were ruled by a king and royal family ‘linked to the gods’ and a ruling educated elite of scribes, priests and nobles.

What I should already know

South America is a continent.

Some human and physical features of South America.

What an ancient civilization is and some features of these.

Knowledge of ancient Egyptians and Greeks



Ahau/ahaw	The king or lord of a Mayan city state.
batab	A lesser lord ruling over a smaller town.
cocoa	Seeds that the Mayans used to make chocolate.
Chichen Itsa	The Mayans’ most well-known pyramid.
codices	Books created by the Mayans. They were made of soft bark and folded like a fan.
glyphs	symbols used in the Mayan writing system – each symbol represents a word or sound.
huipil	A traditional garment worn by Mayan women.
itzamna	The main god of the Maya – the god of fire who created the earth.
Kin	A word representing a day in the Mayan calendar.
Kukulcan	The serpent god of the Maya. One of the primary gods especially to the Itsa people of Chichen Itsa.
Mesoamerica	Modern day Mexico and Central America
Uinal	A word for a month in the Mayan calendar. It was 20 days long.

