



Key Vocabulary	
<b>civilisation</b>	A group of people with their own language and way of life.
<b>Mesoamerica</b>	Different civilisations that share similar ways of life in the area known today as Central America and Southern Mexico.
<b>chultun</b>	An underground storage chamber which held rainwater.
<b>maize</b>	A Mesoamerican cereal plant - crop.
<b>hierarchy</b>	A system where people or groups are ranked one above the other
<b>Mayan hieroglyphs</b>	the native writing system of the Maya civilization
<b>Chichen Itza</b>	A large city built by the Maya people.
<b>Kukulcan</b>	A step-pyramid at the centre of Chichen Itza.
<b>advancements</b>	to improve or develop something

Knowledge
<p><b>Mesoamerica</b> Mesoamerica was made up of the countries known today as Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Belize, Nicaragua and Costa Rica.</p>
<p><b>Links to other civilisations</b> Early Mayan society was a Stone Age Civilisation as they made weapons and tools out of stone and bone.</p>
<p><b>Maize</b> As well as being used to make food and household items, maize was significant to Maya people in a spiritual and religious way as Maya worshipped the maize god. They believed that the first humans were made by the gods from maize dough. 80% of Maya diet was made up from Maize.</p>
<p><b>Hierarchal society</b> The Mayan society was organised depending on how important the person was. For example, the king was at the top and slaves at the bottom.</p>
<p><b>Mayan Writing System</b> Maya script, also known as Maya glyphs, is historically the native writing system of the Maya civilization of Mesoamerica. They used a writing system of pictures and symbols which was a highly sophisticated system for the time.</p>
<p><b>Mayan Number System</b> The Mayans used a number system which consisted of symbols which represented 0 (a shell), 1 (a dot) and 5 (a bar). Numbers after 19 are written in multiples of 20.</p>
<p><b>Mayan Calendar</b> Mayan calendar system was made up of three interlocking calendar cycles. Haab' (solar calendar), Tzolkin (religious calendar) and the Long Count (historical calendar). These very detailed calendars told them what time of year to plant crops and when they should harvest them.</p>
<p>For decades, archaeologists have been searching for an explanation of the Maya collapse. Many theories have been put forward, ranging from warfare and invasion to migration, disease and over-farming. Many think the truth may lie with a combination of these and other factors.</p>



Archaeologists suggest the Maya were the most advanced Mesoamerican culture.