



London Colney Primary and Nursery School – Knowledge Organiser

Name of Topic

The Mayans

Year Group

5

Key Vocabulary and Spellings

1	civilisation	An organised society with its own culture and way of life, existing in a particular area over a particular period of time.
2	artefact	An object that is made by a person, such as a tool or a decoration, especially one that is of historical interest.
3	empire	A group of countries ruled by a single person, government or country.
4	dynasty	A series of rulers or leaders who are all from the same family, or a period when a country is ruled by them.
5	glyphs	A system of writing using pictures not words.
6	maize	Also known as corn, is a cereal grain.
7	temple	A building used for the worship of a god or gods in some religions.
8	tomb	A large stone structure or underground room where someone, especially an important person, is buried.
9	pok a tok	a cross between soccer and basketball
10	codices	Ancient handwritten texts. Maya codices could be unfolded like a concertina. One text is called a codex.



The Maya logogram for b'alam - jaguar



Top 5 Topic Facts

1	The Mayans predicted that the world would end in 2012.
2	Flat foreheads were fashionable so they would put baby's heads in a press to squash them.
3	It was considered beautiful to be cross-eyed so parents would hang balls in-between their children's eyes to make them look inwards.
4	Mayans sacrificed humans for religious and medical reasons. It was an honour to be sacrificed!
5	Noblewomen would file their teeth into sharp points.

Key Investigations/Questions

1	What Gods did the Maya worship?
2	How did the Maya count and how did their number system compare to ours?
3	What can we learn about the Maya from the buildings they left behind?
4	What caused the Mayan Empire to decline?