



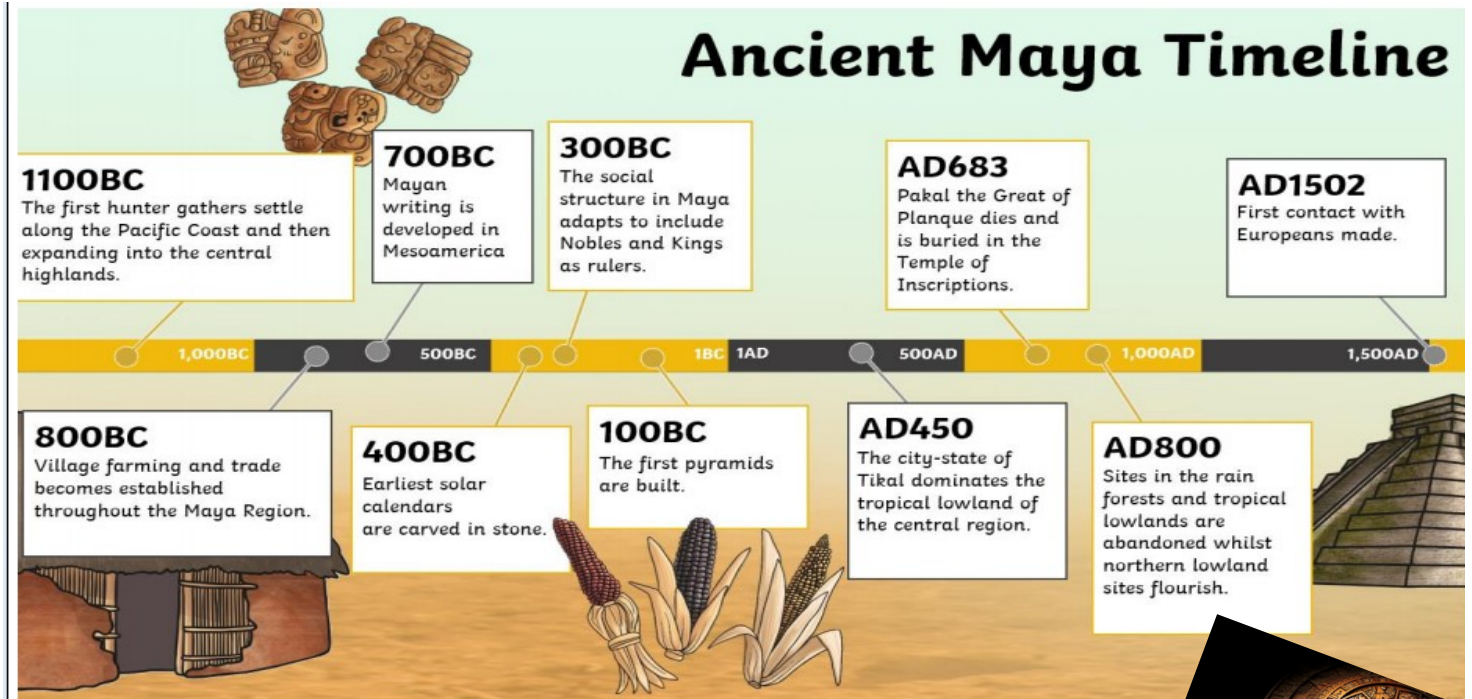
# The Maya

## Vocabulary

Word	Definition
<b>Maya civilisation</b>	The Maya civilisation began long ago in a place called ' <b>Mesoamerica</b> '. This area is made up of Mexico and part of Central America.
<b>Glyphs</b>	The writing system of the Maya civilization of Mesoamerica.
<b>Gods</b>	The Maya had many gods, each representing an aspect of life. They made sacrifices to them.
<b>Logograms</b>	These were signs which represented words and concepts.
<b>Syllabograms</b>	These were symbols which represented sounds.
<b>Calendars</b>	Time was extremely important to the Maya, they made elaborate and accurate calendars and used them in charting the movements of the sun, moon, stars and even planets.
<b>Sacred</b>	This was over 20 days and was like an astrology chart. Each day had a particular symbol.
<b>Solar</b>	This consisted of 19 months and worked alongside the sacred calendar.
<b>Astronomer</b>	Someone who studies the universe.
<b>Burial chambers</b>	Special tombs for important individuals, such as kings.

## Previous knowledge

- Understand different world civilizations in history
- Recognise different cultures and practices in history



## Key Facts

- The Maya civilisation extended from what is now South East Mexico through Central America.
- This area included highland and lowland settlements and a variety of climate zones, including rainforest. Crops grown in the lowlands were traded for mineral ores and rocks from the mountainous areas.
- Although the Maya had metal-working skills, metal ores were scarce. The Maya used stone tools to carve the limestone that they used for their buildings.
- The Maya did not use wheels or pulleys for their building projects. They did not have draught animals capable of heavy labour. Building materials were transported by human porters or canoes.
- At the top of Maya society were the King and Royal Family who were believed to be closely linked to the gods. An educated elite of scribes, priests and nobles formed the ruling class. They occupied the finest buildings in the city.
- The Maya were sophisticated mathematicians who made use of the number zero. They used base 20 in their calculations. They were keen astronomers who were able to predict solar eclipses. Their complex calendar system was one of the most accurate of the ancient world.
- No one knows for sure why the Maya civilisation went into decline. Possible explanations involve the overuse and exhaustion of farming land, prolonged drought, misrule, warfare and disease.