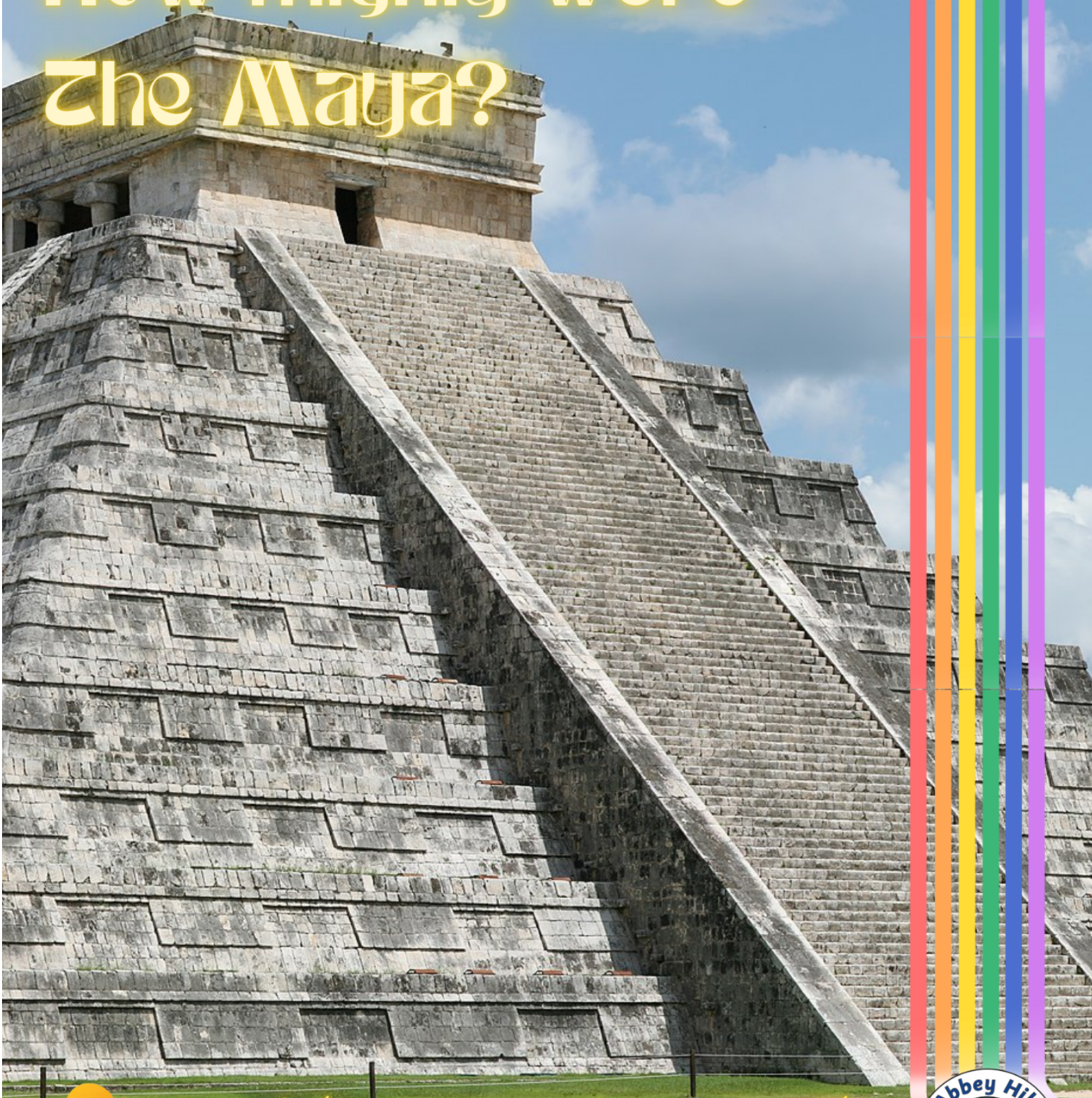


The Abbey Hill CURRICULUM

How mighty were The Maya?



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How mighty were The Maya?

5



Key Idea:



Imagine a world where towering pyramids and ancient rituals shaped a mighty civilization. The Mayan people, who lived in Mesoamerica, built incredible cities and developed advanced knowledge in farming, astronomy, and writing. They believed their gods controlled the world and performed ceremonies to honor them. Discover the rise of the Mayans, the mysteries behind their decline, and how their achievements still influence us today.

We will:



Create a Maya Hot Chocolate service!

Core Text:



The Chamber
Gareth Baker



Core Knowledge



1. The Mayans began around 2000 BCE in Mesoamerica, evolving from small villages into a complex society through agriculture and settlements.
2. Mayan city-states like Tikal and Chichen Itza were independent, each with its own ruler
3. **E&D: Lady Xoc was a significant queen in Mayan culture, known for her leadership. The Mayans worshipped multiple gods linked to nature and the cosmos, performing rituals to honor their deities and ensure prosperity.**
4. Pok-a-Tok, a ceremonial ball game, symbolized cosmic battles and sometimes involved human sacrifices to please the gods.
5. The Mayans developed advanced farming techniques such as irrigation.
6. The Mayan civilization's decline around the 9th century CE remains uncertain.
7. Tulum's well-preserved ruins provide valuable insight into Mayan culture.

Disciplinary Knowledge

Being a Historian:



Know that attitudes, beliefs and opinions about consequences may differ by groups of people.

Know that people make decisions for a variety of reasons e.g. personal gain, the opinions of others, religious beliefs.

Know the connections between local, regional, national and international history and between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history.

Know which sources are generally considered most reliable for gaining an accurate understanding of events or periods in time.

Know that some events, people and changes have been interpreted in different ways and suggest possible reasons for this.

Know that some sources may be considered more useful or reliable for different purposes and gaining an understanding, than others.



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Lesson 3: What was Pok-a-Tok and why did it matter?

Section	Details
 Learning Intention	To investigate the cultural and religious significance of Pok-a-Tok.
 Disciplinary Knowledge	Know that people make decisions for a variety of reasons e.g. religious beliefs.
 Key Knowledge	Pok-a-Tok, a ceremonial ball game, symbolized cosmic battles and sometimes involved human sacrifices.
 What the Teacher Does	Show a re-enactment or animation of Pok-a-Tok. Explain symbolism and consequences. Lead a class discussion about rules and fairness.
 What the Pupils Do	Create a rules poster for Pok-a-Tok, using Mayan symbols and explaining its purpose. Optional: act out parts of the game.
 How the Lesson Will Be Evidenced	Illustrated Pok-a-Tok rule sheet/guide – how to play Pok-a-Tok
 Adaptation (Dual Coding)	Provide a visual storyboard of game rules and icons to support vocabulary.

Lesson 4: Why was Lady Xoc important?

Section	Details
 Learning Intention	To explore the role of women in Mayan society through the story of Lady Xoc.
 Disciplinary Knowledge	Know that some events, people and changes have been interpreted in different ways and suggest possible reasons for this.
 Key Knowledge	Lady Xoc was a significant queen in Mayan culture, known for her leadership.
 What the Teacher Does	Share artefacts and stone carvings depicting Lady Xoc. Read an adapted historical account. Lead discussion on gender roles.
 What the Pupils Do	Compare two portrayals of Lady Xoc (one ceremonial, one as warrior queen). Write a short biography or diary entry in role as Lady Xoc.
 How the Lesson Will Be Evidenced	Written biography or diary entry from the viewpoint of Lady Xoc.
 Adaptation (Preteaching)	Preteach key vocabulary (e.g. “noble”, “ritual”, “sacrifice”) and provide sentence starters for writing.

Lesson 5: How did the Mayans farm and feed themselves?

Section	Details
 Learning Intention	To understand Mayan farming methods and why they were advanced.
 Disciplinary Knowledge	Know which sources are generally considered most reliable for gaining an accurate understanding of events or periods in time.





Key Knowledge	The Mayans developed advanced farming techniques such as irrigation.
What the Teacher Does	Present a range of historical sources, including illustrations of cacao trees, archaeological evidence, Mayan artwork and modern reconstructions of cacao farming. Explain how cacao was grown, harvested, fermented and prepared into a bitter chocolate drink. Model how historians evaluate different sources to decide what they can reliably tell us about Mayan farming.
What the Pupils Do	Explore and compare a range of historical sources about cacao farming, discussing which provide the most reliable evidence. Create an illustrated life cycle or flow diagram showing the journey of cacao from tree to cup, adding explanations of each stage.
How the Lesson Will Be Evidenced	An illustrated 'From Tree to Cup' cacao farming diagram with labelled stages and written explanations, ready to be used as part of the Mayan Hot Chocolate Café displays.
Adaptation (Environment)	Use table trays with labelled models of farming systems (clay terraces, paper channels) for hands-on exploration.

Lesson 6: What can we learn from Mayan ruins today?

Section	Details
Learning Intention	To explore what Mayan ruins reveal about their beliefs and way of life.
Disciplinary Knowledge	Know that some sources may be considered more useful or reliable for different purposes and gaining an understanding than others.
Key Knowledge	Tulum's well-preserved ruins provide valuable insight into Mayan culture.
What the Teacher Does	Share photos and 3D tours of Tulum ruins. Provide source packs (temple drawings, burial sites, murals). Model inferring from evidence.
What the Pupils Do	Use sources to complete an infographic (mini poster or box display) explaining what one ruin tells us about Mayan life.
How the Lesson Will Be Evidenced	Completed infographic.
Adaptation (Chunking)	Pupils work through 3 source stations in order with scaffolding prompts at each.

Hot Chocolate Stall

Section	Details
Learning Intention	To apply our learning by researching, creating, promoting and selling a Mayan-inspired hot chocolate product.
What the Teacher Does	Stage 1 – Research & Recap Revisit learning from the Partake workshop and previous lessons about cacao. Explore how the Mayans grew, prepared





	and drank hot chocolate, comparing traditional recipes with modern versions. Stage 2 – Product Development Support pupils to create their own Mayan-inspired hot chocolate recipe, considering ingredients, flavour and presentation. Stage 3 – Marketing Model effective advertising techniques and support pupils to create company names, logos, posters and price lists that explain the historical origins of their product. Stage 4 – Sales Event Support pupils in running their hot chocolate stalls at home time, encouraging them to welcome customers, explain the history of cacao and promote their products confidently.
 What the Pupils Do	Stage 1 – Research Recap how the Mayans farmed cacao and prepared their ceremonial chocolate drink, using notes and resources from the Partake experience. Stage 2 – Create Work collaboratively to make a Mayan-inspired hot chocolate recipe, adapting it for modern tastes where appropriate. Stage 3 – Advertise Create promotional posters and menus, and prepare short sales pitches explaining the importance of cacao in Mayan civilisation. Stage 4 – Sell Run a hot chocolate stall at home time, serving customers, explaining the historical significance of their drink and using persuasive language to encourage sales.
 How the Lesson Will Be Evidenced	A successful Mayan Hot Chocolate Stall, including pupil-created recipes, branding, promotional materials, customer interactions, photographs of the event and pupil reflections demonstrating their understanding of the importance of cacao in Mayan civilisation.
 Adaptation (Environment)	Organise the classroom into clear workstations (Research, Recipe Development, Marketing and Sales). Provide role cards, visual checklists and sentence stems so every pupil has a meaningful role in the company and can confidently communicate with visitors.



Knowledge Organiser

HOW MIGHTY WERE THE MAYANS?

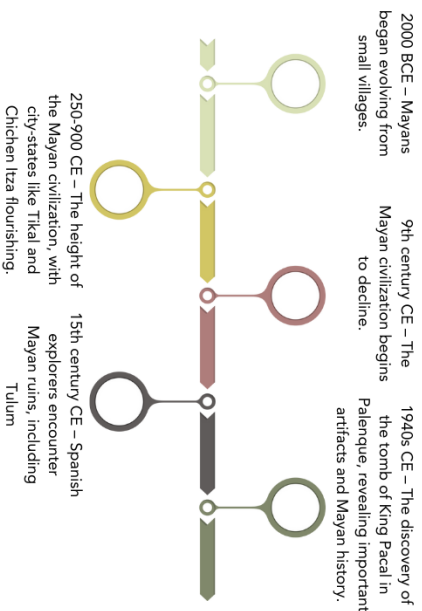
Imagine a world where towering pyramids and ancient rituals shaped a mighty civilization. The Mayan people, who lived in Mesoamerica, built incredible cities and developed advanced knowledge in farming, astronomy, and writing. They believed their gods controlled the world and performed ceremonies to honor them. Discover the rise of the Mayans, the mysteries behind their decline, and how their achievements still influence us today.



KEY KNOWLEDGE

- The Mayans began around 2000 BCE in Mesoamerica, evolving from small villages into a complex society through agriculture and settlements.
- Mayan city-states like Tikal and Chichen Itza were independent, each with its own ruler.
- Lady Xoc was a significant queen in Mayan culture, known for her leadership.
- The Mayans worshipped multiple gods linked to nature and the cosmos, performing rituals to ensure prosperity.
- Pok-a-Tok, a ceremonial ball game, symbolized cosmic battles and sometimes involved human sacrifices to please the gods.
- The Mayans developed advanced farming techniques such as irrigation.
- The Mayan civilization's decline around the 9th century CE remains uncertain.
- Tulum's well-preserved ruins provide valuable insight into Mayan culture.

TOPIC TIMELINE



FAMOUS



Lady Xoc – A powerful queen known for her leadership and ceremonial practices in the Mayan world.



King Pacal – A ruler of the city-state of Palenque, famous for his tomb and achievements in architecture and writing.



Dr. George E. Stuart – A renowned archaeologist who made significant contributions to Mayan studies, particularly through his work at Tikal.

GLOSSARY

- **Civilization** – A complex society with its own systems of government, culture, and economy.
- **City-State** – An independent city that also governs the surrounding land.
- **Pok-a-Tok** – A ceremonial Mayan ball game, often involving a ritualistic element.
- **Rituals** – Ceremonial acts performed for religious or cultural reasons.
- **Decline** – The gradual collapse or fall of a civilization.



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