



Hola Mexico!

Topic focus: Geography & History

Year 6 – Autumn 2

This is the knowledge organiser for our topic. It includes all the learning outcomes, key facts and vocabulary. Please share this with your child to help them develop their knowledge and understanding of our topic.

Mexico is located in the south of the continent of North America. It has a diverse landscape that includes mountains, rainforests and deserts. This means that its climate is also very varied and there are a wide range of plants and animals found there, including many types of cacti and over 700 species of reptile. Some people live in rural communities and others live in large cities. Mexico City is the capital of Mexico. It is home to nearly nine million people, with a vibrant, diverse population and a rich cultural heritage.

Timeline

3114BC	The Maya calendar begins.
1000BC	Maya settlements develop.
750BC	Large stone structures are built in Maya cities.
600BC	The Maya create a settled at Tikal that later becomes a major city.
300BC	The Maya begin to use a monarchy government and develop writing known as glyphs.
250AD	The Maya become one of the most significant civilisations: they dominate Central America.
900	The Maya civilisation begins to mysteriously decline.
1200	The Maya abandon their northern cities
1400	The surviving Maya suffer a period of warfare natural disasters and disease.
1500	Spanish explorers take land and wealth from the remaining Maya.

Food plays an important part in Mexican culture. Many Mexican foods can be traced back thousands of years to the Aztecs or Maya and some contain flavours from other countries, including Spain. Traditional Mexican foods include chocolate, corn tortillas, avocados and beans. Popular Mexican dishes may contain a mixture of these ingredients, such as enchiladas, guacamole or churros with chocolate.



The Maya were a group of indigenous people who lived in Mexico and other parts of Central America over 3000 years ago. The Maya were experts in farming, pottery, writing and maths. Around AD 900, the Maya civilisation began to decline, and the people moved into small villages, rather than staying in the great cities they had built. There are still some Maya people today who follow the lifestyle, language and traditions of the ancient Maya.

Maya calendar

The Maya created a calendar that was based on their understanding of maths and astronomy. It was highly complex and used three different calendars to record the days, months and years.

Maya ball game

The Maya played a ball game called *ulama* on a long, stone-lined court. Teams would compete to get a large, rubber ball through a stone ring using their knees, elbows or hips. The leader of the losing team was killed after the game.

El Castillo

El Castillo is a Maya temple in Chichén Itzá. During the spring and autumn equinox, the Sun casts a shadow that slithers down the steps of the temple like a snake.



civilisation	A well-organised and developed society.
climate	The weather in a particular place over a period of time.
culture	The lifestyle of a group of people or society,
diverse	Varied or different.
equinox	A time when the length of day and night are the same.
heritage	Traditions, languages or buildings from the past that are important to a particular society.
indigenous	People, plants or animals that originated in a place.
patron saint	A holy person who is specially chosen as a protector over a person, place, object or activity.
region	A geographical area with its own unique features or characteristics
tradition	An activity, custom or belief that people have continued to follow for a long time.