



# St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School – Sycamore Class

## The Mayans

Gospel Value  
Faith

**What I should know-** I know that Benin was an advanced society as long ago as a thousand years - more advanced than Saxon and Viking society at the time. I know that Benin society was organised around the all-important Oba who lived in his own palace within a well-defended city. I know that Benin is best remembered for its magnificent bronzes. I know that at the end of the Victorian period, the British looted a vast collection of bronzes from Benin.

### Timeline

- 000 BC - 1000 BC** People begin to farm and settle in small villages.
- 900 BC** Farmers begin to use irrigation systems to help their plants to grow.
- 300 BC** The first cities begin to develop and the Mayan population grows rapidly.
- 50 BC** The first temple is built in Cerros.
- 250 AD** The Maya begin their most powerful era.
- 300 AD** The Maya adopt the idea of a monarchy and are now ruled by kings.
- 500 AD - 800 AD** Major cities develop and thrive, such as Tikal, Palenque, Uxmal and Copan. Fine temples and palaces are built and art, culture and religion all reach their peak.
- 800 - 900 AD** The major cities begin to decline and are eventually abandoned.

### Key Knowledge

- Each city state was ruled by its own king supported by nobles and priests.
- Maize was the most important food source and was sacred to the Maya.
- Mayans honoured their gods by making offerings and sacrifices.

The Maya built cities, pyramids and ornate sculptures in the rainforest



### Key Vocabulary

**civilisation** A human society with well-developed rules and government, often where technology and the arts are considered important.

**drought** A long period of time with little or no rain.

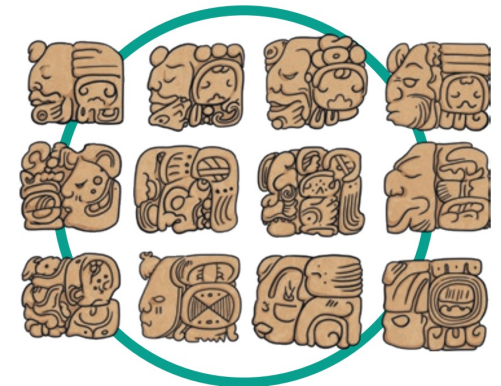
**jaguar** A big cat with yellowish fur and black spots.

**scribes** People trained to write things down, either as an official record or for someone else unable to write.

**codices** Ancient handwritten texts.

**maize** Another word for sweetcorn or corn on the cob.

**cacao beans** When they are ripe, the pods can be broken open to reveal the beans, which can then be dried, roasted and ground.



The Maya writing system was made up of many symbols called glyphs

