

HISTORY



- **In Central America, Guatemala is the largest Latin American country. It is a country full of heritage and in fact it has the largest collection of UNESCO heritage sites in Latin America.**
- **In Guatemala, Mayan culture is important and there are about 21 varieties of the Mayan language still spoken there today.**

**What do you already know
about the Mayan's
religious beliefs and their
Gods?**

WALT: Select and record information relating to the study of the Mayan culture.

S2S:

I can

gather information given about religious beliefs

create a fact file about two Maya Gods of my choice

out about the everyday lives of people in the society studied.

THE MAYA'S BELIEFS

The Maya believed in and worshipped a number of different gods. They believed that the gods had a good side and a bad side and that they could help or hurt them. The Maya would dance, sing and sometimes make offerings of blood to the gods to demonstrate their respect and loyalty.



RELIGIOUS RITUALS



The Maya people performed many different religious rituals. These rituals were often performed during festivals or special ceremonies and they were a way of appealing to the gods.

Blood letting.



To represent a battle between the gods.

Playing a ball game.



To nourish the gods.

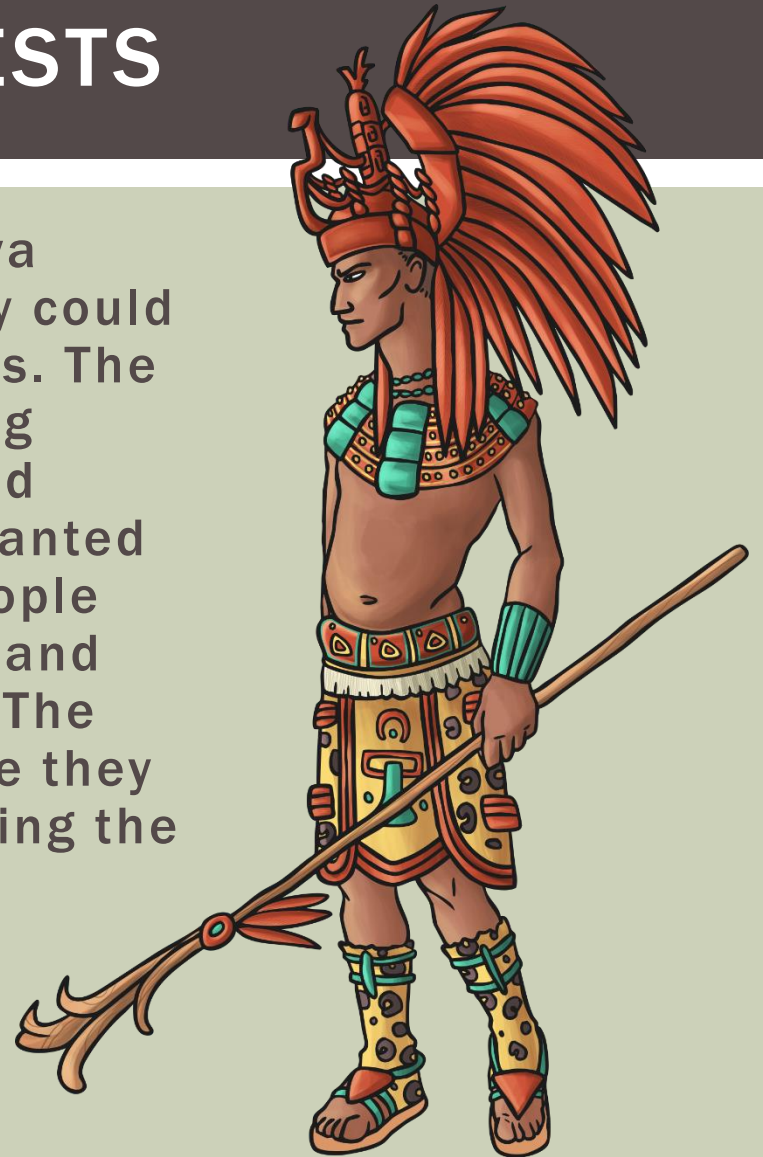
Priests wearing masks and costumes.



To scare away demons.

MAYA PRIESTS

Priests were very important in Maya society as it was believed that they could communicate directly with the gods. The priests were responsible for leading rituals of worship and sacrifice, and telling the people what the gods wanted them to do. They would tell the people when to plant crops, who to marry and what sacrifices they should make. The people did all these things because they believed that the priest was speaking the wishes of the gods.



FESTIVALS

During festivals, the priests would dance, sing, bang drums and make lots of noise on the steps of the temples while wearing brightly coloured clothing and headdresses containing the feathers of exotic birds. This ritual dance was thought to scare away demons and demonstrate the priest's power and authority to the gods.



THE MAYA WORLD



The Maya people believed that the earth, which they called the Middleworld, was large and flat and resting on the back of a creature (like a turtle or crocodile).

On the Middleworld grew a tree whose branches reached up into the heavens (the Upperworld) and whose roots grew down into Xibalba (the Underworld) which was guarded by gods of death who looked like jaguars.

The Maya believed that after they died, their souls would travel through a series of caves and tunnels to Xibalba (which means 'place of fear') but the rulers and noblemen believed there was a chance of them getting to the Upperworld.



MAYA GODS

The Maya people worshipped a number of different gods, many of whom had overlapping roles and names. Some had human form, some took the form of an animal and some were a phenomena of nature.

Historians have discovered a lot about the Maya gods from carvings and codices (Maya books).



MAYA GODS

Itzamna

One of the creator gods.

Inventor of writing.

Patron of learning.

Portrayed in human form as an old man with no teeth and a large nose.



MAYA GODS

Ix Chel

Wife of Itzamna.

Goddess of childbirth,
healing, weaving and the
Moon.

Portrayed in human form
wearing a headdress of
snakes entangled in her
hair, and toes and
fingers that looked like
jaguar claws.

Capable of causing
floods and destruction.

The mother of many
gods.



MAYA GODS

Maize God

Yumil Kaxob

From his head sprouted
an ear of maize.

Was important because
the diet of the Maya was
80% maize and they
relied on the harvest
being successful.

Also important because
humans were created
from maize dough by the
gods.



MAYA GODS

Chac

Brought the rain
needed to make
crops grow.

Created storms,
thunder and
lightning.

Caused wars and
human sacrifice.

Portrayed as a human
with a curling snout
and reptile fangs.



MAYA GODS

Kimi
Death god.

Portrayed as a human with a skeletal nose, jaw and spine along with a body covered in hideous spots.



OVER TO YOU!

- Write a 'Did you know fact?'
- Choose 2 Gods of your choice, write a short paragraph about each of your chosen Gods including what they are the God of and an interesting fact about them.
- Draw your chosen Gods above your written information.
- Colour in your Gods.



Table- top/Dojo Gallery

