

Hola Mexico

Spring 2: 2021- 2022

Year 6



Key Learning Area - GEOGRAPHY & MUSIC

The children will learn all about the ancient Mayan civilisation and how their environment, beliefs, architecture and mathematical knowledge made the Maya one of the most sophisticated ancient civilisations.

In Music we will look at graphic scores and listen to *El Jarabe Tapatío*. We will also learn a traditional Mexican song (*La Cucaracha*) using Spanish lyrics. Finally, we will listen to examples of Maya music.

In Geography we will be locating Mexico and the Chihuahuan Desert using maps, atlases and globes. We will be learning about daily life in Mexico including what schools were like, what families would eat and compare cities to more rural areas.

ENGLISH

In English we will be writing a persuasive advert for Camp Green Lake trying to convince children to visit this 'resort'. Alongside this, we will be writing our own journey story where a character that the children make up escapes from Camp Green Lake, and tries to evade capture in the surrounding area. Within both of these writing outcomes and in Whole Class Reading, the children will also focus on grammatical aspects that complement these writing genres such as rhetorical questions, adverbials and hyphenated words.

MATHEMATICS

In Maths we will be learning about:

- Percentages
- Algebra, including finding rules, creating formulas and solving equations
- Imperial and Metric units of measure
- Perimeter, area and volume
- Ratio and proportion

SCIENCE

In Science we will be investigating shadows, making prediction about how they change and consider how we can affect the shape of a shadow.

ART & DESIGN

In Art we will create a 3D Day of the Dead skull which will be painted with a range of beautiful colours and bright colours.

HISTORY

In History we will learn about the ancient civilisation of the Maya from AD 900 and how their environment, beliefs, architecture and mathematical knowledge made the Maya one of the most sophisticated ancient civilisations. We will investigate images that illustrate what their civilisation was like and create a set of questions to research further.

RE

The first question we will be considering is: "Is it better to express your religion in arts and architecture or in charity and generosity?". We will look at how art and buildings can be an expression of devotion and how lives are lived by Christians and Muslims with generosity and charity. Before Easter we will ask: "Was Jesus the Messiah?"

PSHE

In PSHE Y6 will be taking part in Bikeability and visiting Warning Zone. Both of these will teach vital life skills surrounding activities and places that could be dangerous should they be done incorrectly.

In Financial Education we will be learning how Mayan's used chocolate as a currency; the currency of Mexico and other currencies around the world.

COMPUTING

In Computing we will be creating Scratch Animated Stories. This unit builds on the previous unit in Year 5 (Scratch: Developing Games) as well as prior units introducing Scratch in Year 2 and Year 4. The unit is designed to help children in continuing to develop their skills in writing their own algorithms as well as editing and debugging existing codes.

D&T

In D&T we will create a traditional Mexican fruit drink using a recipe. We will learn about the Maya chocolate making process and make our own spicy drinking chocolate. Finally we will create a junk musical instrument.

PE

In PE we will be continuing to develop our skills when playing invasion games, including tag rugby and football. We will also be learning traditional Mexican dances in our topic work.

FRENCH

In French we will use *La Jolie Ronde* to be able to use prepositions to describe the layout of a house. We will also recap the days of the week and the months. Then we will learn about countries that speak French, decide where they would like to go on holiday and select dates to go on holiday.

SMSC & VALUES

The values we will be covering are Forgiveness and Hope.

To develop our SMSC awareness we will be learning about Mexican culture; celebrating our love of reading during World Book Day; gaining art appreciation in Christian and Islamic art during RE week and take part in fundraising for Comic Relief.

Hola Mexico!

This is Mexico!

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.



Mexico City and the Popocatepetl volcano

Chihuahuan Desert

The Chihuahuan Desert is one of the largest in North America. It covers parts of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and Mexico. Winters are cool and summers are extremely hot. There is very little rainfall, but the Rio Grande River runs through the desert and provides water for the animals, plants and people who live there. The Chihuahuan Desert is said to have more species of cacti than any other desert. Shrubs and cacti, such as Mormon tea and prickly pear, are found in the desert. There are many different animals, such as the pronghorn antelope and kit fox, that thrive in the desert.

Festivals and celebrations

Mexican people celebrate many different festivals and special days across the year. They are a central part of Mexican culture and may involve music, food, dancing and special clothes.

Dia de la Independencia (Independence Day)

This festival celebrates the start of Mexico's fight for independence from Spain in 1810. On 15th September, the President of Mexico rings a bell in the National Palace in Mexico City then shouts, 'Viva Mexico!' from the balcony. The Mexican flag is waved, and people sing the national anthem. The following day, banks, schools, offices and many businesses close and there are parties and parades for everyone to enjoy.

Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead)

This festival takes place during the first two days of November. It is a positive celebration to remember loved ones who have died. Families set up brightly decorated altars with photographs of the deceased. Relatives place their loved ones' favourite foods on altars and skeleton costumes and skull decorations are popular.



Fiesta de Santa Cecilia (Festival of Saint Cecilia)

Mexicans celebrate Saint Cecilia, the patron saint of musicians, on 22nd November. Musicians take part in open-air concerts and people celebrate with food and drink. Over 500 musicians perform a song called *Las Mañanitas* that is dedicated to Saint Cecilia.

Food

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.



Music

Music and dance are essential to the culture of Mexico. Each region of Mexico has traditional dances that are accompanied by music and feature colourful costumes. One well-known type of music is mariachi, which is performed by a group of musicians playing violins, trumpets and guitars. A traditional Mexican song is *La Cucaracha*, which means 'The cockroach'.



Maya

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.



El Castillo in Chichén Itzá, Mexico

Maya timeline

- 3114 BC** The Maya calendar begins.

- 1000 BC** Maya settlements develop.

- 750 BC** Large stone structures are built in Maya cities.

- 600 BC** The Maya create a settlement at Tikal that later becomes a major city.

- 300 BC** The Maya begin to use a monarchy government and develop a writing system known as glyphs.

- 100 BC** The largest known ancient city in the Americas, Teotihuacan, is founded in the Valley of Mexico.

- 250 AD** The Maya become one of the most significant civilisations. They dominate Central America.

- 900 AD** The Maya civilisation begins to mysteriously decline. People begin to live in smaller villages and abandon the great Maya cities.

- 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.

Glossary

- 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 a society.

- diverse** Very varied or different.

- equinox** A time when the length of the day and night are the same.

- festival** A celebration or special event held to mark a particular occasion.

- 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.

- landscape** A large area of land.

- 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.