

# MESOAMERICAN CULTURES PROJECT

Summer Week 1

20<sup>th</sup> April 2020



# WHAT AND WHERE IS MESOAMERICA?



Mesoamerica refers to the diverse civilizations that shared similar cultural characteristics in the geographic areas comprising the modern-day countries of Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Belize, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica.

Some of the shared cultural traits among Mesoamerican peoples included a complex system of gods, architectural features, a ballgame, the 260-day calendar, trade, food (especially a reliance on maize, beans, and squash), fashion, and jewellery.





# FAMOUS MESOAMERICAN CULTURES

## Mayans

The **Maya** civilization were people who lived in Mesoamerica, with Maya languages and Maya religion. They lived there for a long time and some of the Maya people **live** there even today. The Maya lived there 4,000 years ago (about 2000 BC).

## Aztecs

The **Aztecs** were a fierce tribe of warriors who settled in the Valley of Mexico in the 1200 AD. They fought endless wars with neighbouring tribes until they dominated most of what is now Mexico.

## Incas

By about 1200 CE the **Incas** grew from a small tribe living in the Andes mountains into an organized society united under one ruler, called The **Inca**. From his capital at Cusco, the **Inca** was worshipped as a **child** of the sun god.

# YOUR TASK

- Research the 3 main Mesoamerican cultures, highlighting their similarities and differences.
- Create a timeline to show when these civilisations were thriving and highlight things that were happening around the world at the same time (e.g. in England)
- Examine our culture today, are there any items, foods or customs that we got from these ancient civilisations?

Identify the key factors about each cultural group

Apply your historical research skills to use online and print resources to **dig deep** into the past

Analyse the similarities and differences between the different ancient civilisations, and ours today

Evaluate how the past has influenced the present

Create a timeline to put these periods of history in context (and draw a map of where it all happened if you can)

## SUCCESS CRITERIA