

Maya, Aztec & Inca Civilizations

Latin America
Notes

Objective

Students will be able to describe
the culture and tradition of the
Ancient Maya.

The Maya



- From 250 to 900 A.D. is known as the Classic Period of Mayan civilization.

Mayan Geography

- Central America:
 - Southern Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, Honduras, El Salvador
- Rugged terrain, hilly
- Tropical Climate
 - Hot, humid, rainy season





Agriculture



- Maize was staple crop
- Planted maize, beans, squash together
 - Supported one another
- Terracing
- Canals



Mayan cities

- Mayan cities were composed of great pyramids, temples, palaces, and elaborate stone carvings dedicated to the gods and to important rulers.
- The population of these cities reached as high as tens of thousands.



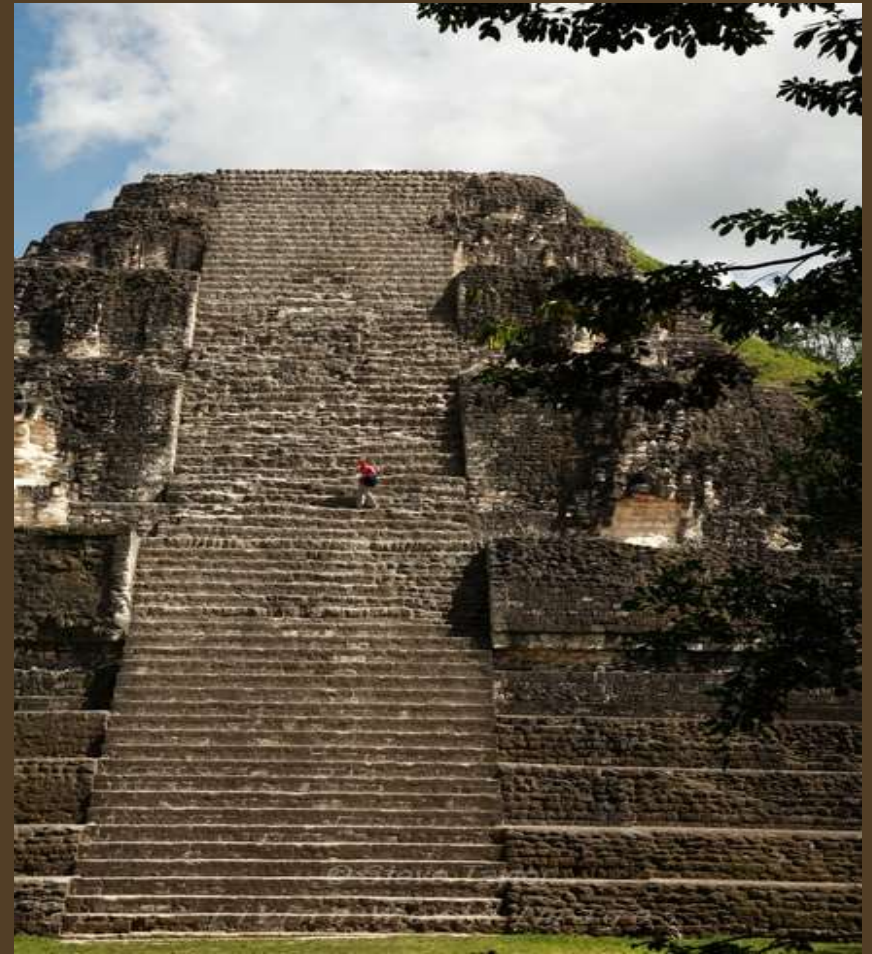
Cities

- Large Plazas
 - City center
 - Trade
- Astronomical patterns
- Commoners lived outside center
 - Adobe or wood homes



Mayan cities cont.

- 50 of these cities have been found by archeologists. They all have great monuments.
- Pyramid IV at Tikal stretched 212 feet into the jungle sky.



Tikal

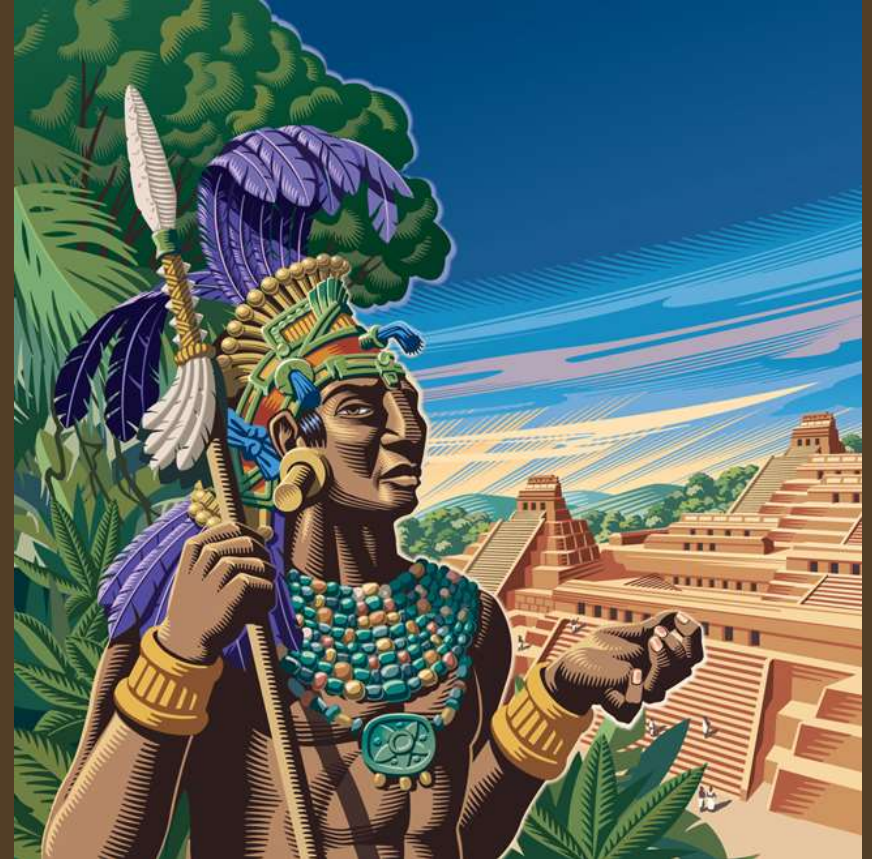


Tikal – Star Wars Scene



Government

- A city state is a city that governs itself individually. These cities were ruled by a theocracy.
- A theocracy is a rule by a god. As the Egyptians had their pharaohs, the Mayans were ruled by god-kings.



Sports

- Mayan cities featured a ball court. In this stone – sided playing field, the Maya played a game that had religious and political significance.
 - They believed that this game would help maintain the cycles of the sun and moon and bring life-giving rains. The losers were sacrificed to the gods.



Maya Fashion



- Flattened foreheads
- Crossed eyes
- Jade and gold jewelry
- Decorated teeth



Achievements

- Advanced astronomers
- Mathematicians
 - Zero
- Advanced Writing
 - Stele
 - Graphic record of history and culture



History: The Fall



- Mysterious decline after 900 AD
 - Many states declined or were abandoned before Spanish arrived 1519
 - Cause unknown
 - Invasion
 - Peasant revolts
 - Disease