

History

As part of your Mayan project at the beginning of lockdown we asked you to design your own systems and symbols for counting as well as a crossword containing key words related to the Mayans.

For your history task this week, we would like you to take this further by developing your knowledge on the Mayans writing system. Below are some information texts for you to read and some websites you might like to visit to learn more. Once you have done some investigating, we would like you to complete the activity designing your own logograms (a Mayan hieroglyph that represents a whole word).

Ancient Maya Codices



Maya codices are books that have been found (above), made from the inner bark of fig trees. The Mayan word for 'paper' was 'huun'. The codices were the works of professional scribes who wrote of gods, war and history.

Mayan Meanings

Mayan: Meaning:	 chan sky	 winik person	 witz mountain	 k'in sun	 b'alam jaguar	 k'ak' fire
Mayan: Meaning:	 bak bone	 way spirit	 juun book	 ja' water	 ajaw lord	 muyal cloud
Mayan: Meaning:	 ix woman	 ch'am to grab	 k'uk' quetzal	 chan snake	 ch'ul holy	 chok to scatter
Mayan: Meaning:	 jaab year	 yax blue/green	 pakal shield	 tok flint	 naj house	 k'al twenty

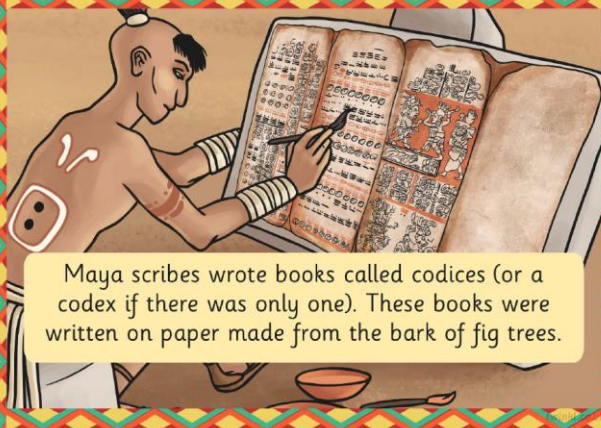
The ancient Maya hieroglyphic writing system consisted of a series of signs and symbols called glyphs.



Although most Maya people would be able to read and write some glyphs, it was only the priests and noblemen who would know the whole written language.



Maya scribes wrote books called codices (or a codex if there was only one). These books were written on paper made from the bark of fig trees.



Some glyphs used in Maya hieroglyphic writing are called logograms. Logograms represent a whole word.



CHAN
'sky'



WINIK
'person'



WITZ
'mountain'



K'IN
'sun'



B'ALAM
'jaguar'



K'AK'
'fire'

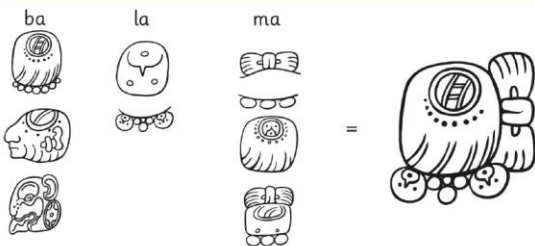


BAK
'bone'

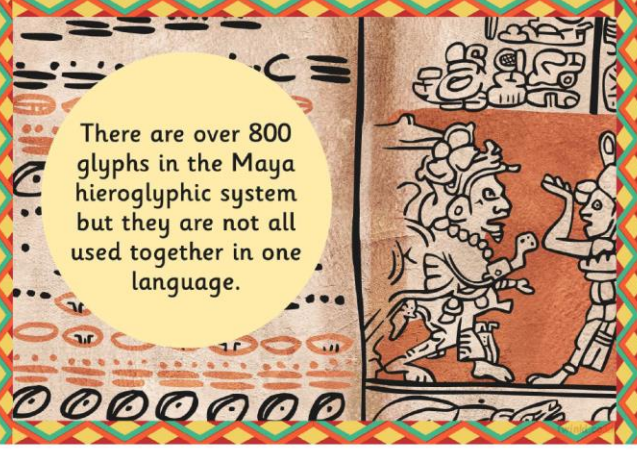


WAY
'spirit'

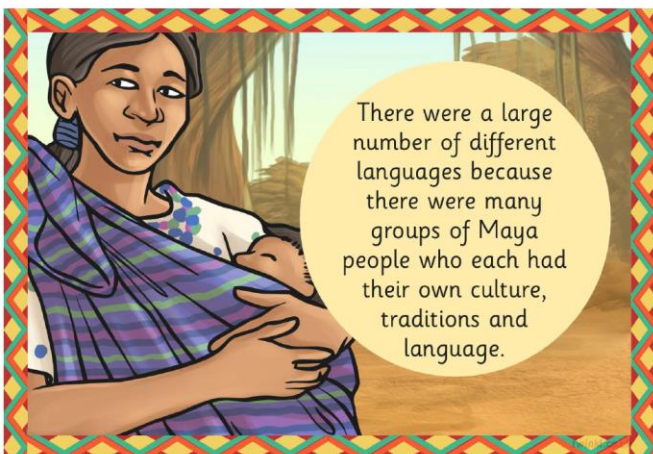
Some glyphs in Maya hieroglyphic writing are called syllabograms. Syllabograms represent a unit of sound.



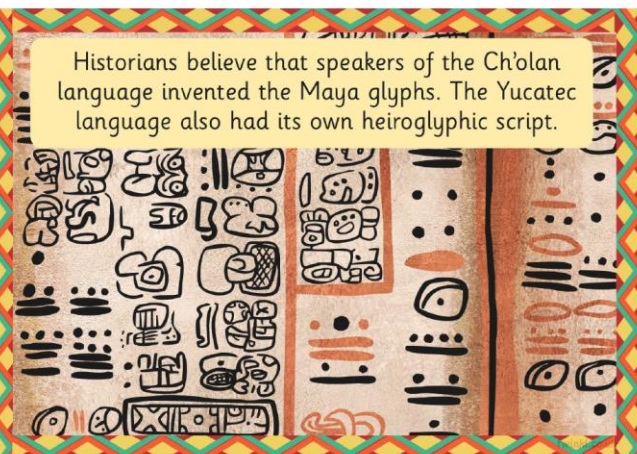
There are over 800 glyphs in the Maya hieroglyphic system but they are not all used together in one language.



There were a large number of different languages because there were many groups of Maya people who each had their own culture, traditions and language.



Historians believe that speakers of the Ch'olan language invented the Maya glyphs. The Yucatec language also had its own hieroglyphic script.



Can you draw some Maya logograms and write down their meanings?



Name and Meaning



Name and Meaning



Name and Meaning



Name and Meaning

My own Maya style logogram



A description of my design:

