

There are 3 activities in this lesson, please use 3 separate afternoons to spread the work out for yourselves.

Discovering the Maya ruins

Each year thousands of visitors explore the Maya archaeological sites in Mexico and Central America. They climb the steps of the temples and pyramids and gaze in amazement at the cities built by the mysterious civilisation. Less than two centuries ago, these lay in ruins in the jungle waiting to be discovered....

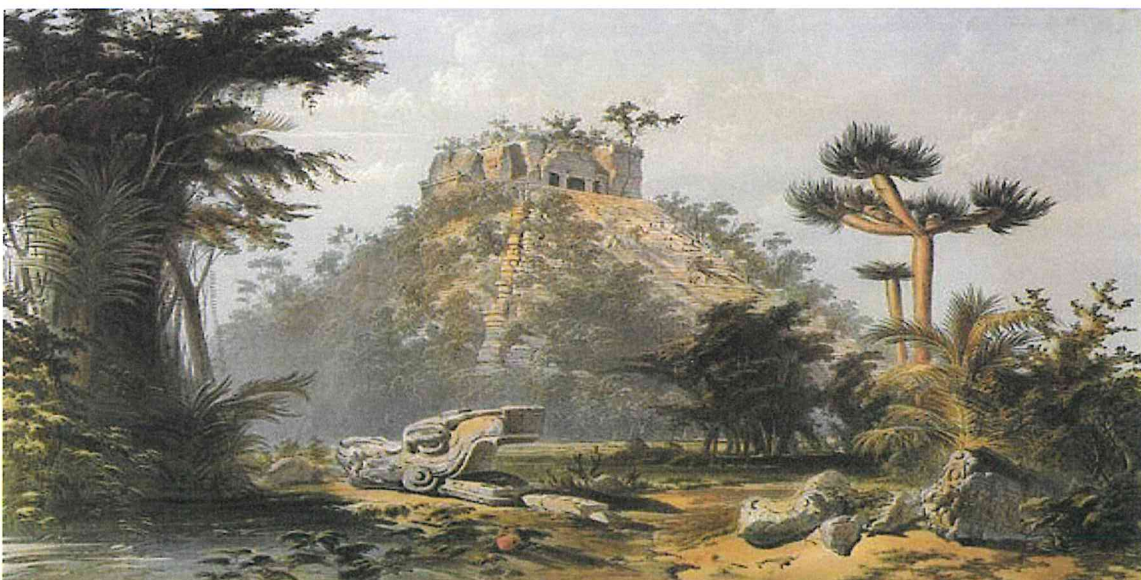
In 1839, two explorers set out on an expedition into the jungles of Central America. The rainy season had begun as John Lloyd Stevens, an American lawyer and travel writer, and English artist Frederick Catherwood set out to see whether the stories of Central America's lost cities were true. A villager led them to the ancient ruins of Copan which soared 5 stories high out of the jungle.

Just inside the ruins of Copan a huge stone head stared at the men, snakelike vines covered the buildings, crumbling pyramids rose through the trees and strange carved symbols, which looked like hieroglyphs, decorated stone monuments.

Stephens and Catherwood visited 43 other ancient cities on their travels through the Maya world. Not one of the cities had a name at that time. When they returned home they collected the information about the civilisation in a book called 'Incidents of Travel in Central America' and epigraphers (people who decipher ancient writings) began to look for ways to unlock the secret meanings of the hieroglyphs.

Can you tell me which Mayan temple Star Wars was filmed in? Can you find a clip of the part of the film that shows the site?

Here is the painting that Frederick Catherwood drew of the main temple at Chichen Itza.



This week's addition to your project will be to:

- To research the Mayan civilisation and answer questions to show an understanding of their achievements and culture. (Year 5 and 6)
- To chronologically order the development of the Mayan civilisation. (Year 3,4,5,6,)
- To build a replica of the pyramid at Chichen Itza. (Years 3,4,5,6)

Introduction

Activity 1

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iaKofHyZ00c>

Above is an introduction to the Maya. See if you can answer these questions after watching it.

- Around 2,000 BC the Maya were originally surfers or farmers? ☺
- What did they sometimes use as money (that you may use now to make a bedtime drink?)
- When did the Maya start making cities?
- Where did the ruling class live in the cities?
- Where did the poor people live in the cities and what were their homes made out of?
- What type of sport did they play and what parts of their bodies did they use?
- What else were the Maya famous for? (hint: they were seen as being very clever!)

Activity 2

Use the timeline Powerpoint (only one slide!) to order your cut out timeline game pieces.
Discuss with an adult the amazing achievements of the Maya.

Activity 3

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kyvw6G9Max0>

Watch the video above also if you have access, as it gives you a more detailed account of Chichen Itza.

Make a replica of the pyramid at Chichen Itza (include the snake detail and tell me what was the intention for including it on the pyramid? You can use cardboard, boxed, lego, cubes etc...anything you can get your hands on!

Take a picture and include this in your presentation, if you can.