









Topic	Chocolate	Year 5	Spring Term
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Key Knowledge – The Mayans	
Who were the Mayans? 	The Maya were native Americans of Central America, who built a great civilisation in the tropical rainforest that lasted for over 2000 years. The earliest Maya settlements were built in about 1800 BCE. The golden age of the Maya was between 250 and 900 CE.
Mayan society 	While the average Maya lived in small stone or thatched homes, the palaces and temples in the cities were decorated with beautiful murals and sculptures. The Maya people built sewer systems and there was even running water in the wealthiest people's homes. An educated elite of scribes, priests and nobles formed the ruling class. They occupied the finest buildings in the cities.
Beliefs 	Mayan religion was extremely bloodthirsty, demanding human sacrifices and blood-letting rituals. The Mayans believed in an afterlife and that those who were sacrificed, as well as those killed in war and women who died in childbirth, went to 'the place of misty sky'. The Maya worshipped different nature gods, including gods of the Sun, the Moon, rain and corn. The rulers of Maya society were the kings, or holy lords, who claimed to be related to gods.
The end of the Mayans? 	At its peak, the Mayan civilisation was made up of 40 great cities and almost 2 million people. Suddenly, in around 900, many of these significant Maya settlements were abandoned. No one is quite sure why, but it is possible that changes in the climate or overpopulation made the cities uninhabitable.
Legacy 	The Ancient Mayans developed the science of astronomy, calendar systems, and hieroglyphic writing. They were also known for creating great architecture, such as pyramids, temples, palaces and observatories.
How do we know about the Mayans? 	Carved stone artefacts, writing and remains of cities like Chichén Itzá in Mexico show us what Mayan civilisation was like. Chichen Itza is a city built by the Maya and its remains like its ball court and Temple of the Serpent tell us about Mayan civilisation and pastimes.

Key Knowledge – Chocolate	
Where does chocolate come from? 	Cacao grows around the equator – which is why it is called the cacao belt. The temperature is 20°C to 30°C all year round. There's 45% humidity and 1000–2500mm of rain per year.
A brief history of chocolate... 	The first documented enjoyment of chocolate was by the Aztecs in the region now known as Mexico. Montezuma, their emperor, gave his guests cups of chocolate with added vanilla. Hernán Cortés took the secret of cacao with him back to Spain after he conquered Mexico in 1521. When chocolate reached England, the chocolate drink could only be afforded by the wealthy as cacao beans were so expensive. In 1664 the famous writer, Samuel Pepys, wrote about the chocolate drink. Fast-forward 200 years and George Cadbury made chocolate more accessible to everyone!
	

Key Knowledge – Central America	
Where is Central America?	Central America is generally considered part of the continent of North America, but is often referred to as its own region. Central America is a narrow isthmus that is bordered by North America and the Gulf of Mexico to the north and by South America to the south. To the east of Central America is the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean is to the west. There are seven countries that are considered part of Central America: Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama.
Major Geographical Features	Sierra Madre de Chiapas, Cordillera Isabelia Mountains, Sierra Maestra Mountains, Lucayan Archipelago, Greater Antilles, Lesser Antilles, Isthmus of Panama
Climate	Central America has an overall humid, tropical climate with distinct dry and rainy seasons throughout the region. However, the weather can vary from country to country, and some countries have multiple climate zones. Typical hurricane season for Central America can stretch from June to November, but it's usually concentrated in August through October.



Key Vocabulary	
Spelling	Definition
isthmus	A narrow strip of land with sea on either side, forming a link between two larger areas of land.
Irrigation	The supply of water to land or crops to help growth, typically by means of channels
Civilisation	A group of people with their own languages and way of life