

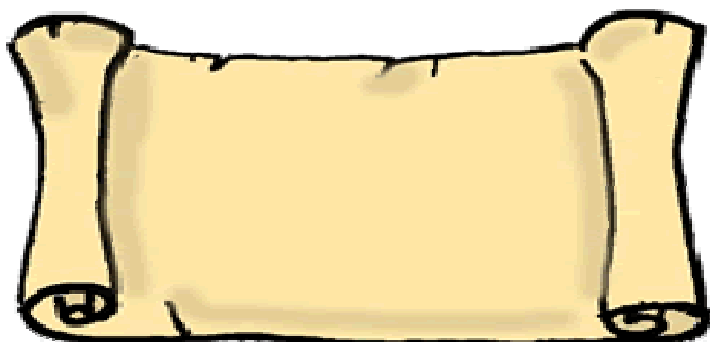
# Central America

In this unit you will learn

- about a civilisation living in Central America?
- The Maya civilisation
- The Incas civilisation

Vocabulary:

1. Have you ever heard about a civilisation living in the Central America?  
(Write down some information)



2. Read the following article and answer the questions

The civilisations which eventually appeared in America, cut off as they were by the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans from all contact with the rest of mankind, were unlike any others. On their farms they kept turkeys, ducks, dogs and bees. The usual domestic animals of Europe and Asia (horses, cattle and sheep) did not exist. They had, however, many more crops, of which maize was the most widely

grown, but they never invented a plough and used tilling sticks instead. Neither did they discover how to make iron and steel, nor did they use bronze except in small quantities. Their tools and weapons were made of stone or wood with razor-sharp edges of obsidian (a black volcanic glass). Their traders always bartered, never having coins, and their architects design children's toys but not anything else!

Q.: Write down the difference between Central America and Europe - Asia

Central America	Europe and Asia
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

3. Look at the map and point the area



#### 4. Read the following article and answer the questions

a) The first civilisations of Central America were in what is now modern Peru and also on the Gulf coast of Mexico. In Peru the inhabitants became excellent weavers and, between 2000 BC and 1000 BC, began to build large religious centres in the mountains. They were called the INCAS. On the Mexican Gulf coast, the Olmec people began civilisation about 1300 BC. At about AD 300 and AD 600 to the south in Yucatan, the foundations of the great Maya civilisation.



The Maya civilisation is perhaps one of the most interesting ones, alongside the Inca, Egyptian, Chinese and Mesopotamian. Unlike the other scattered indigenous populations of Mesoamerica, the Maya were centred in one geographical block covering all of the Yucatan Peninsula and modern day Guatemala, Belize, and parts of the Mexican states of Tabasco and Chiapas.

One of the many intriguing things about the Maya was their ability to build a great civilisation, not in plain sight, but in a tropical rainforest. These ancient people had a flourishing civilisation in dry climates as well, where the centralised management of water resources formed the basis of society.

The Mayas had a mysterious decline between the eights through the end of the ninth century. Researchers have come up with three theories:

- § The Mayas might have exhausted the environment around them to the point it could no longer sustain a very large population.

- § Another theory claims that population disappeared due to large warfare. As the stature of the holy lords diminished, their complex system of traditions dissolved into chaos.

- § A catastrophic event, such as environment change consisting in a long period of drought may have been the contributing factor to the total wipe out of the Mayas.

#### Q.: Who were the Mayas?

b) The Inca Empire (Quechua: Tawantinsuyu, lit. "The Four Regions"[2]), also known as the Incan Empire, was the largest empire in pre-Columbian America.[3] The administrative, political, and military center of the empire was located in Cusco in modern-day Peru. The Inca civilization arose from the highlands of Peru sometime in the early 13th century, and the last Inca stronghold was conquered by the Spanish in 1572.



Famed for their unique art and architecture, they constructed finely-built and imposing buildings wherever they conquered, and their spectacular adaptation of natural landscapes with terracing, highways, and mountaintop settlements continues to impress modern visitors at such world famous sites as Machu Picchu.

#### Q.: Who were the Incas?