

Maya Food



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The Maya ate very well. They hunted wild turkey, deer, ducks, and even monkey. They caught fish. They ate bird eggs. They grew sweet potatoes, corn, beans, chilies, and squash.

Corn was called maize. Out of all their foods, maize was the most important. They made corn flour and used it to make tortillas and other kinds of breads.

Women had charge of cooking the daily meals, which usually were composed of maize, beans, and squash, plus whatever else they served.

Women made and painted gourds for cooking and serving food. They also tended the kitchen garden and took care of the cattle.

Maya Food Anagrams



Use the clues on the **Maya Food Anagrams Activity Sheet** to help you work out the anagrams for the Maya foods.

Think about how and why these foods could have been eaten.

Be ready to give feedback about your ideas to the rest of the class.

eynoh

qshaus

senab

kutrye

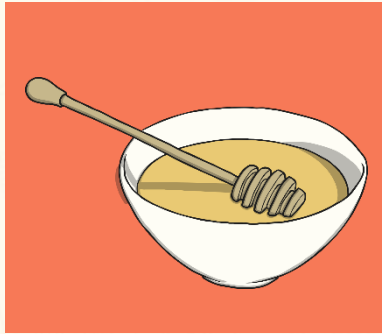
ocaca

hilicl
rppeeps

rnco or
ezami

erde

Food Anagrams Answers



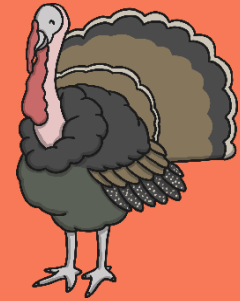
honey



squash



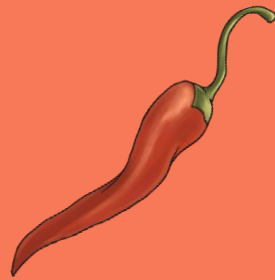
beans



turkey



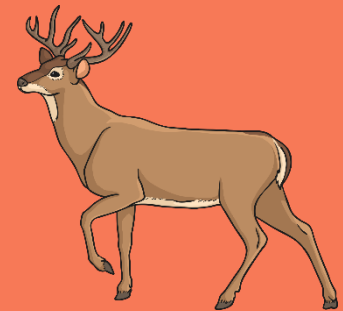
cacao



chilli peppers



corn or maize



deer

Other Maya Foods

Maize or corn was the main food of the Maya people and made up to 80% of their diet. Examples of other foods eaten include:



avocado



cassava



chilli peppers



cacao



honey



jicama



maize



papaya



pumpkins



squash



sweet potato



tomatoes

Fact

They would plant beans next to the maize so that the vines would wrap around the growing maize stalks.

Fact

The Maya people ate out of bowls made of pottery.

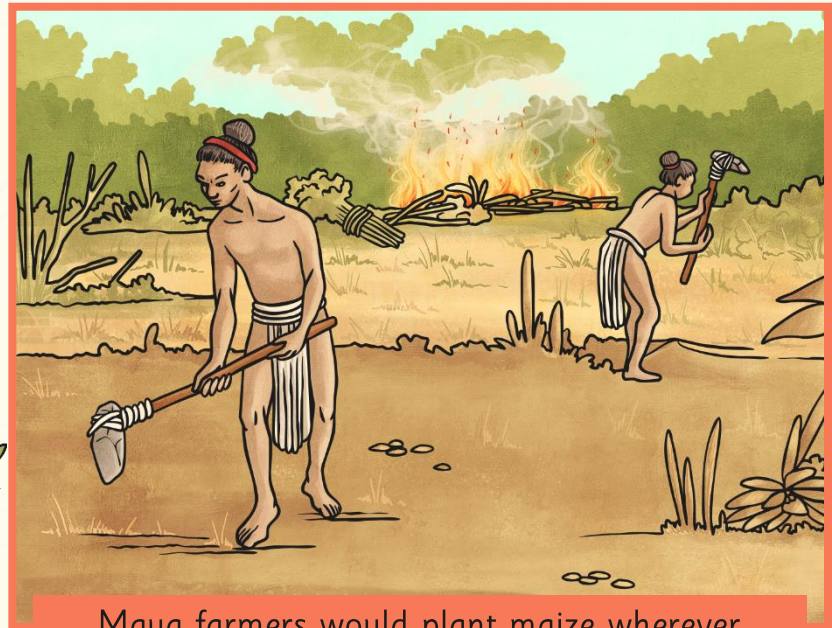
Video clip - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/history-ks2-ks3-what-did-the-maya-eat/zkxc8xs>

Maize

Maize was a very important crop, and formed up to 80% of their diet.

To plant the maize, holes would be made in the soil with a sharp bladed, wooden digging stick called a dibble. The soil was very dry and if the May rains didn't come, a whole year's crop would be lost.

For thousands of years, the Maya worshipped the maize god. They believed that the first humans were made by the gods from maize dough! Because of this, when suffering from severe illness, they would eat nothing but corn.



Maya farmers would plant maize wherever they could. Maize is more commonly known as corn.

Chocaholics!



It is known that the Maya enjoyed chocolate. The seed from the cacao tree is the main ingredient in chocolate drinks.

Just as you drink chocolate milk and hot chocolate, they too drank chocolate in many forms ... from a frothy drink to a pulpy mush.

The Mayas referred to chocolate as "The Drink of the Gods"

Chocaholics!

Cacao trees sprout cacao pods directly from their trunks. The pods are then opened to reveal the cacao beans inside. The Maya were using these beans to make a chocolatey drink from as far back as the fourth century AD. However, it was not the sweet, chocolately flavour we crave today, but a more bitter tasting version, often laced with chilli or vanilla and other spices.



The drink was enjoyed by the rich and noble members of society, and the cacao beans were highly valued. They were even used as a form of currency later on in Maya history.

The Maya word for chocolate is Kakaw.



The Maya used chocolate in religious ceremonies, and they also mixed them with herbs to make medicines.

[Video Clip - https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zngsqp3](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zngsqp3)

Chocaholics!

Your task today is to take inspiration from the Maya and design your own chocolate bar.

- What weird and wonderful flavours are you going to include?
- What is your bar going to look like?
- What ingredients does it contain?
- What is the name? (the name should reflect the above information and should therefore be created at the end).

