

# See inside The Maya Civilization Resource Pack



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A full unit of  
history work  
for **KS2**  
covering the  
Maya  
Civilization.

Detailed  
plans for  
each lesson

Ready to  
pick up and  
teach

Differentiated  
activities to  
adapt for your  
pupils' needs

Assessment  
and retrieval  
opportunities

**The Maya Civilization**  
Lesson 5: How useful are the pictures of Frederick Catherwood as a source of information about the Maya?

**Lesson Objectives**

- To evaluate the usefulness of a historical source
- To explore the significance of Frederick Catherwood's contribution to our understanding of the Maya

**Resources:**

- Slide: Lesson 5
- Resource 5a
- Resource 5b - optional
- Resource 5c (both pages)

**Starter**

Explain that in order to discover information about the past, historians use a range of sources. There are two main kinds of sources: primary and secondary. Read the starter slide to give a brief overview of each type of source and ask if children can think of examples. Hand out Resource 5a and ask children to imagine that they had heard about a birthday party in the local town and that they wanted to find out what it was like. Ask pupils to look at the sources of information about the party listed on their sheet and to discuss the following with a partner: *What would you choose as the 3 most useful sources of information? What would be least useful? Which are primary sources and which are secondary ones?*

**Main Input**

Tell the pupils that today they are going to find out about an explorer and artist called Frederick Catherwood. When he visited the Maya area in 1839, the classic Maya buildings stood deserted and in ruins. We will look at the pictures he created, and evaluate how useful they are as sources of information about the Maya.

Work through the *Main Input* slides to learn the story of Frederick Catherwood. Each time you reach the 'Do You Agree' slides, give children time to discuss the opinions shown about the usefulness of Catherwood's pictures as a source. Try to help children to understand that there is not a right or wrong answer here, just a balance of factors that contribute to evaluating how useful the source is. If you wish to print and distribute some of the pictures for children to see more clearly as you work through this section, a selection is available in Resource 5b. You can extend older or more able pupils in their thinking by challenging them to consider the difference between a source being *reliable* and a source being *useful*.

**Activity**

Pupils should complete a source evaluation for Catherwood's drawing. Hand out copies of Resource 5c and give children time to colour-code the various factors according to the instructions on the sheet to evaluate the usefulness of the pictures as a source about the Maya. Then, pupils should finish the sentences on the second sheet to complete their evaluation.

**More Support:** Simplify the task by focusing solely on the table on the first sheet. You could pre-cut the factors into cards and work as a group to separate them into two piles.

**More Challenge:** For older or more able pupils, you can turn this into a longer piece of writing consisting of two main sections and a conclusion. Give pupils the following prompts:

- The reasons why Catherwood's images are considered useful as a source are...
- Some people think the sources are not so useful because...
- On balance, I would say that Catherwood's pictures are not/quite/very useful because...

**Spot check**

Use the *Spot Check* slide to check pupils' understanding of key points from the lesson.

**Plenary**

Ask pupils to imagine that Catherwood had a social media account at the time that he was clearing the Central American jungle and discovering Ancient Maya ruins. Ask pupils what they think he would have wanted to communicate to his followers? Pupils should choose one of the pictures from the slide to post on his account and create a short caption to go with it (spoken or written). If you have time, read the *Think About* slide and encourage pupils to make links between Catherwood's artistic framing of his pictures and modern-day social media filters.

Fully  
resourced  
lessons

Integrated  
source work

Extension  
ideas

Further links  
and discussion  
ideas

10 full lessons with  
Powerpoints



Pupil activity  
sheets

