

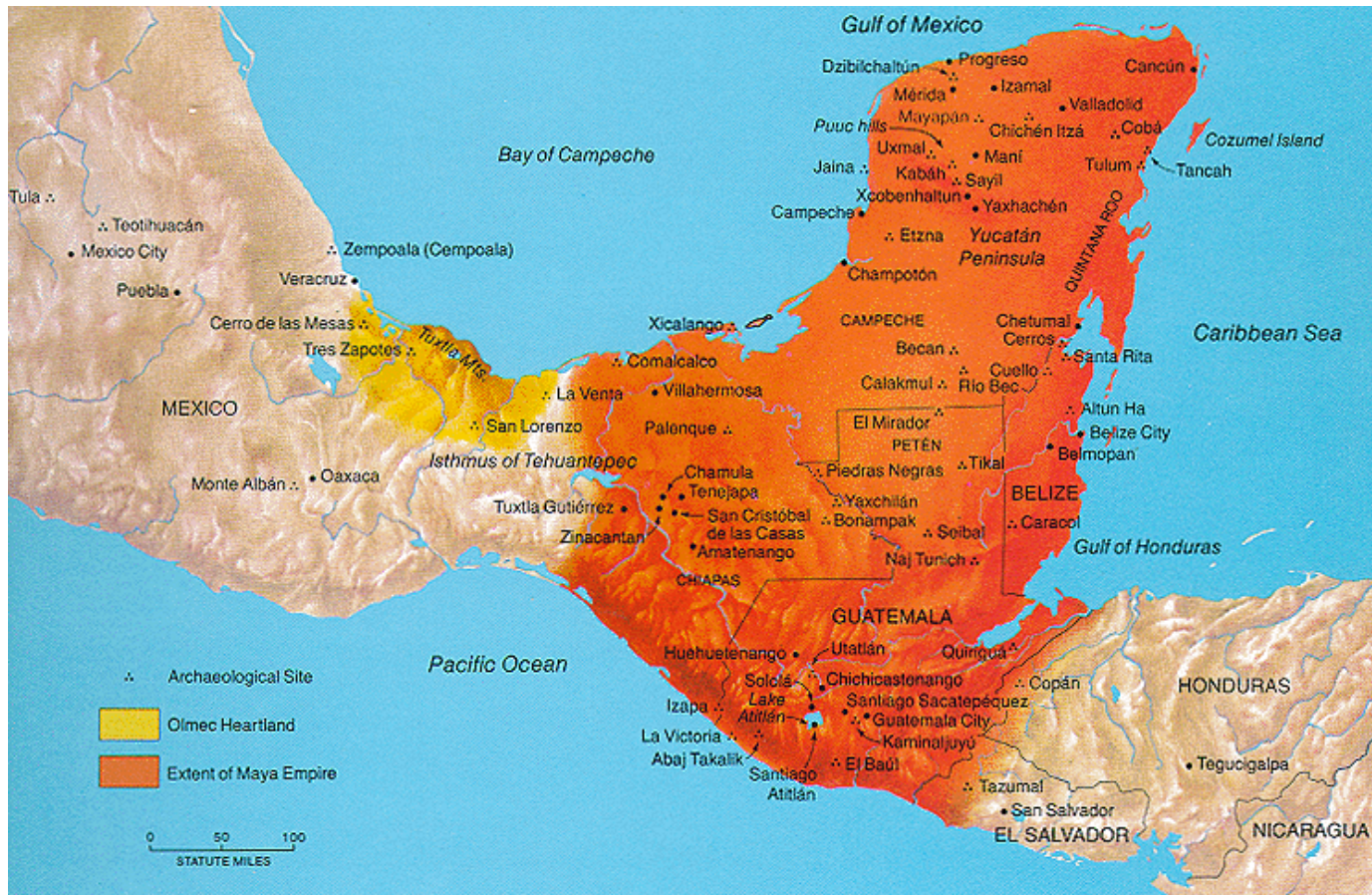


I can describe the social and political system of the Maya civilization.

7.65 Describe the highly structured social and political system of the Maya civilization, ruled by kings and consisting of agriculturally intensive centers around independent city-states.

# The Big Idea

- The **Maya** developed an advanced civilization that **thrived in Mesoamerica** from about 250 until the 900s.



# Main Ideas

- Geography helped shape the lives of the early Maya in Mesoamerica. (Yesterday)
- During the Classic Age, the Maya built great cities linked by trade. (Yesterday)
- Maya culture was influenced by social structure, religion, and achievements in science and the arts. (Today)
- The decline of Maya civilization began in the 900s, for reasons that are still unclear. (Today)
- <http://www.history.com/topics/maya>

## Main Idea #3

Maya culture was influenced by social structure, religion, and achievements in science and the arts.

- Social structure and religion heavily influenced the everyday lives of the Maya.
- Maya worshipped many gods who controlled a different part of daily life.
  - Gods could be helpful or harmful, so the Maya tried to please the gods.
  - The Maya believed the gods needed blood to prevent disasters, so they offered their blood from piercings or sometimes used human sacrifices.
- Maya achievements included advances in astronomy and writing.

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### Maya Social Structure

- **King** • Held the **highest position** in Maya society. He was believed to be **related to the gods**.
- **Upper Class** • **Priests, merchants, and noble warriors**. Together with the king, they held all the power in Maya society.
- **Lower Class** • Most Maya fell into this group, made up of **farming families who lived outside the cities**. They also had to “pay” rulers with crops or goods and helped construct buildings.
- **Slaves** • Usually men captured in battle or those who worked for farmers and the upper class.

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Maya culture was influenced by social structure, religion, and achievements in science and the arts.

### Maya Achievements - Science

- Built observatories, buildings from which people could study the sky
- Created a 365-day calendar for planting and a 260-day one for religious events
- Created a number system that included zero
- <http://www.history.com/topics/mayan-scientific-achievements/videos/mayan-galactic-alignment>



## Main Idea #3

Maya culture was influenced by social structure, religion, and achievements in science and the arts.

### Maya Achievements - Writing

- Had a writing system similar to Egyptian hieroglyphics
- Wrote on stone tablets, bark paper books, and passed down stories orally





## Main Idea #3

Maya culture was influenced by social structure, religion, and achievements in science and the arts.

### Maya Achievements - Art



- Created exceptional jade and gold jewelry
- Architecture included huge temple-pyramids.
- The Maya often decorated their buildings with paintings.



## Main Idea 4:

The decline of Maya civilization began in the 900s, for reasons that are still unclear.

- Historians are not sure why Maya civilization collapsed.
- One theory is that increased warfare over food may have destroyed the Maya.
- Another theory is that people may have rebelled against the kings, who demanded too much of them.
- A long period of droughts may have played a role.
- Most scientists agree that it was a combination of causes.
- <http://www.aol.com/article/2014/12/29/insights-into-mayan-civilizations-collapse-found-in-belizes-b/21122366/>

# Exit Ticket

- Complete section 1 assessment at the end of the section.