A Closer Look at Maya Social Structure
Social Structure

• The Maya society had different levels.
• At the top was the king and his family.
• Next came the council/priests (often from the royal family)
• Then came the nobles.
• After that came the craftsmen, merchants, & traders
• Below them were the farmers.
• Slaves were at the lowest level.
Often members of King’s family

*Hepled Ajaw run city-state
*Fought Battles

*traded for resources
*Made items for royals and nobles

FARMERS
*largest group
*Had to grow enough food for themselves and people in cities

PRIESTS

KING (AJAW)

SLAVES
*captured enemies

MERCHANTS & ARTISANS

NOBLES
Social Structure and Clothing

• The clothing and headdresses that the people wore indicated how powerful the person was in the society.

Royals and Nobles

• Wore layers including animal skins such as jaguars and clothing made from brightly colored cloth
• They wore sandals and jewelry made from jade.
• They inserted small pieces of jade into their teeth.

Villagers

• Wore simple clothes that were easy to work in
Social Structure and Headdresses

• Many Maya wore fancy headdresses.
• The more complicated and higher the headdress, the more powerful the person wearing it was.