

Ellie's Ancient Maya Expedition

Learning objective: To recall and apply knowledge about the Maya civilisation, including their location, achievements, and daily life.

Join Ellie the elephant on her journey through the rainforest! Read the questions carefully and use your historical knowledge to uncover the secrets of the Maya. Answer all 10 questions to earn your Explorer's Badge.

Answer Key: 1. A (Rainforest); 2. True; 3. Maize; 4. C (Hieroglyphics); 5. False (They used a complex calendar system); 6. B (Step pyramid); 7. Cacao; 8. B (Astronomy); 9. True; 10. Chichen Itza.

Word bank: Chichen Itza · Cacao · Hieroglyphics · Maize · Rainforest · Astronomy · Step pyramid · Calendar

1. **1. In which environment did the Maya civilisation primarily build their cities? A) Desert B) Rainforest* C) Tundra D) Grassland (1 mark)**
2. **2. True or False: The Maya people lived in independent city-states rather than one single country. (1 mark)**
3. **3. What was the most important crop grown by the Maya, often called 'the grain of the gods'? (1 mark)**
4. **4. What system of writing did the Maya develop? A) Alphabet B) Braille C) Hieroglyphics* D) Morse code (1 mark)**
5. **5. True or False: The Maya had no interest in tracking time or seasons. (1 mark)**
6. **6. Which architectural structure is most iconic to Maya cities? A) Igloo B) Step pyramid* C) Skyscraper D) Longhouse (1 mark)**
7. **7. The Maya were the first people to turn which bean into a frothy, spicy drink? (1 mark)**
8. **8. What scientific study were the Maya experts in? A) Marine biology B) Astronomy* C) Volcanology D) Economics (1 mark)**
9. **9. True or False: The Maya civilisation was a highly advanced society that existed for over a thousand years. (1 mark)**

10. 10. Name the famous Maya site located in modern-day Mexico that features a massive stone pyramid. (1 mark)

Draw: Draw a bustling Maya marketplace. Include a stone pyramid in the background, a person trading cacao beans, and colourful tropical plants typical of the rainforest.



Extension challenge: Greater Depth Challenges: 1. Explain why the Maya chose to build their cities in the rainforest despite the challenges of the dense vegetation. 2. Compare and contrast Maya food sources with the food you eat today; how does the role of 'Maize' compare to bread or rice? 3. Justify why the development of a complex calendar was essential for their survival. 4. What might happen if the Maya had not developed a written language? 5. Why do historians consider the Maya to be one of the most advanced civilisations of the ancient world? 6. If you were a Maya architect, what features would you include in a new city to ensure it lasted for centuries?