

# The Maya Civilisation with Ellie the Elephant

*Learning objective: To understand key features of the ancient Maya civilisation.*

Read the text carefully. Use the word bank to help you. Answer the questions in the boxes provided.

Ellie the Elephant loves learning about history. She has been reading about the ancient Maya people. The Maya lived a long time ago in a place called Mesoamerica. This area is mostly covered in thick, green rainforest. To survive, the Maya built amazing cities with very tall stone temples. These buildings were shaped like pyramids. Many Maya people were clever farmers. They grew crops like maize, which is a type of corn, to feed their families. The Maya were also great at maths and astronomy. They watched the stars to help them decide when to plant their seeds. They even created their own special system of writing using pictures called glyphs. The Maya did not have one king for everyone. Instead, each city had its own ruler. Their history is very interesting because they built such a huge civilisation without using metal tools or horses. Today, we can still see the ruins of their beautiful stone cities hidden deep in the jungle.

*Word bank: Maya · civilisation · temples · rainforest · farmers · writing · stone*

## 1. Where did the Maya people build their cities? (Literal) (2 marks)

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## 2. What type of crop did the Maya farmers grow to eat? (Literal) (2 marks)

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## 3. Why do you think the Maya studied the stars? (Inferential) (2 marks)

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## 4. What does the text suggest about the Maya people's skills? (Inferential) (2 marks)

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## 5. Would you like to live in a Maya city? Explain why. (Evaluative) (2 marks)

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**Draw:** Draw a tall Maya pyramid temple hidden in the middle of a green rainforest.



*Extension challenge: Imagine you are a Maya farmer. Write two sentences about your day. Use the sentence starter: 'Today, I am going to...'*