

Exploring the Maya Civilisation with Ellie the Elephant

Learning objective: To describe the key features of the Maya Civilisation and compare their achievements to modern life.

Use this writing scaffold to organise your report about the Maya. Think like Ellie the Elephant—use your excellent memory to recall the facts we have learned about their cities, farming, and inventions. Write in full, descriptive sentences.

Hidden deep within the dense rainforests of Central America, the ancient Maya people built a magnificent and mysterious civilisation that thrived for centuries.

Word bank: furthermore · consequently · in addition to · contrary to · significant · advanced · civilisation · innovative · perspective · traditionally

1. The Cities: Describe the layout of a typical Maya city. Use these starters: The heart of the city was dominated by... Furthermore, the stone temples were used for... (3 marks)

2. Daily Life and Farming: Explain how the Maya survived in the rainforest. Consider their techniques: To provide food for their population, the Maya farmers... Additionally, they utilised a method called... (3 marks)

3. Inventions and Knowledge: Justify why the Maya are considered highly advanced for their time. Focus on their maths and astronomy: The Maya were brilliant mathematicians because... They also tracked the stars to help them... (4 marks)

4. Compare and Contrast: How does modern life differ from the Maya way of life? Think about technology and trade: While we use digital tools today, the Maya relied on... In contrast, the ways they traded goods were... (4 marks)

5. The Mystery: What might happen if archaeologists discovered a new, untouched Maya city today? Explain your theory: If researchers found a new site, they might uncover... This would be important because... (4 marks)

6. Reflection: Explain why it is important for historians to study civilisations from the past. Start with: Studying the Maya is essential because... (2 marks)

Extension challenge: Imagine you are an explorer finding a Maya pyramid for the first time. Write a diary entry describing what you see, hear, and feel. Use at least three technical terms from the word bank in your account.