

Journey to the Maya: Sorting the Past

Learning objective: To understand the social structure, daily life, and achievements of the ancient Maya civilisation.

Ellie the elephant has been studying her historical records! Help her sort the following list of items and roles into the correct categories: 'Daily Life', 'Achievements', or 'Social Hierarchy'. Once sorted, explain why each item belongs in that group.

Word bank: King · Hieroglyphic writing · Maize farming · Priests · Astronomy · Weaving colourful textiles · Farmers · Stepped pyramids · Calendar systems

1. Sort the items from the word bank into the three categories. Provide a brief reason for your classification. (6 marks)

2. If a farmer wanted to trade their maize for a piece of jewellery, which social group might they approach and why? (2 marks)

3. Why do you think the development of a calendar system was important for the Maya people? (2 marks)

4. Identify one achievement from the list that shows the Maya were advanced in mathematics or science. (1 mark)

5. Ellie remembers that the Maya used cocoa beans as money. If a small bag of grain cost £2, and a rare feather cost £15, how much would it cost to buy both items? (1 mark)

Draw: Draw a scene showing a Maya city. Include a large stepped pyramid in the background and a market stall in the foreground where people are trading items like maize or textiles.



Extension challenge: Research how the Maya used the number zero. Write a short poem about the importance of this discovery in the style of Leo the lion.