

The Maya Civilisation: Social Studies / History Assessment

Learning objective: To demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the Maya Civilisation, including their geographical location, societal structure, and achievements.

Read each question carefully. Write your answers clearly in the spaces provided. Ensure you use full sentences for extended responses. Total marks available: 25.

Ellie the elephant has been studying the Maya people. She discovered that they lived in the tropical rainforests of Central America, primarily on the Yucatan Peninsula. Unlike a single country, the Maya lived in independent city-states, each ruled by its own king. They were brilliant scientists who studied the stars and developed a complex writing system.

Word bank: Chichen Itza · Hieroglyphics · Maize · Tikal · Astronomy · City-state · Temple · Yucatan Peninsula

1. Name the geographical region where the Maya civilisation was primarily located. (1 mark)

2. Explain what is meant by the term 'city-state' in the context of the Maya civilisation. (2 marks)

3. Identify two major agricultural crops grown by the Maya people. (2 marks)

4. Why were the Maya highly skilled in the field of astronomy? Explain how this influenced their daily lives or farming. (3 marks)

5. Describe the social hierarchy of a Maya city-state. Who held the most power, and who held the least? (4 marks)

6. List three significant achievements of the Maya civilisation (e.g., in writing, maths, or architecture). (3 marks)

7. Imagine you are an archaeologist uncovering a hidden Maya city. Describe the types of buildings and artefacts you might expect to find and what they tell us about the Maya way of life. (5 marks) (5 marks)

Draw: Draw a sketch of a Maya stepped pyramid temple, including details of the stone stairs and the surrounding jungle landscape.



Extension challenge: Research task: Investigate why many Maya cities were abandoned. Write a short paragraph explaining one theory historians have about their decline. Total: /25