

Maya Civilisation: Explorer's Fact-File

Learning objective: To analyse and record key features of the Maya civilisation, including their social structure, technological achievements, and daily life.

Use your library books or research notes to complete this fact-file. Imagine you are travelling back in time with Ellie the elephant to uncover the secrets of the ancient Maya. Be precise with your historical evidence and ensure your explanations are clear.

Word bank: Mesoamerica · Chichén Itzá · Hieroglyphics · Astronomy · Maize · City-state · Stepped pyramid · Mathematics

1. Geographical Location: Where did the Maya civilisation thrive, and what were the key physical features of their landscape? (2 marks)

2. Social Hierarchy: Describe the structure of Maya society. How did the lives of a noble differ from those of a farmer? (3 marks)

3. Scientific Achievement: Explain the significance of the Maya calendar or their development of the concept of zero. (3 marks)

4. Agricultural Practices: Describe how the Maya adapted their farming methods to survive in a rainforest environment. (2 marks)

5. Compare and Contrast: How did the Maya city-state system differ from the way modern towns are governed today? (4 marks)

6. Justification: Why might historians argue that the Maya were one of the most advanced civilisations of the ancient world? (4 marks)

Extension challenge: Imagine you are an archaeologist who has just discovered a hidden Maya temple. Write a short, formal report explaining why this site is historically significant and what it reveals about the religious or cultural beliefs of the people who built it.