

Lost City Unearthed: An Archaeologist's Discovery

COMPREHENSION • VOCABULARY • DISCUSSION

INTERACTIVE ONLINE TEST

Take the full interactive test with instant feedback →

<https://www.esl-tests.com/reading/b2/lost-city-unearthed-archaeologist-discovery>



Reading Passage

Read the passage carefully. Each paragraph is labelled with a letter for easy reference.

- A** In the summer of 2023, Dr. Emily Carter, a renowned archaeologist, embarked on a groundbreaking expedition in the dense jungles of Guatemala. Her team had been investigating ancient Mayan ruins for several months when they stumbled upon an astonishing discovery: a lost city hidden beneath the thick foliage. Using advanced technology, including LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging), they meticulously mapped out structures that had long been concealed by nature. The city, believed to date back to the 8th century, featured intricate temples, expansive plazas, and residential areas, showcasing the remarkable sophistication of the Mayan civilization.
- B** As news of the find spread rapidly, excitement grew within the archaeological community and beyond. Dr. Carter and her dedicated team worked tirelessly to excavate the site, carefully uncovering a wealth of artifacts such as beautifully crafted pottery, essential tools, and even vibrant murals that depicted the daily life of the ancient inhabitants. These murals offered a fascinating glimpse into the customs and practices of the Mayans, enriching the understanding of their culture and societal norms. The discovery not only shed light on the Mayan culture but also raised important questions about their societal structure and eventual decline. Dr. Carter expressed her hope that this lost city would provide invaluable insights into the past, helping to piece together the complex history of the Mayans and their remarkable achievements, which have fascinated historians and archaeologists for generations. The expedition has the potential to change the way we view ancient civilizations and their contributions to modern society.

Vocabulary Glossary

Key words and phrases from the passage. Study them before attempting the exercise below.

WORD / PHRASE	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
renowned	famous and respected for a special skill or achievement	<i>The renowned chef opened a new restaurant in the city.</i>
expedition	a journey made for a special reason, often to explore or study something	<i>The team went on an expedition to find rare plants in the forest.</i>
foliage	the leaves of a plant or group of plants	<i>In autumn, the foliage turns red and yellow.</i>
intricate	having many small parts or details that are skillfully made or put together	<i>The intricate design of the carpet was admired by everyone.</i>
meticulously	in a very careful and exact way, paying attention to details	<i>She meticulously organized her books by color and size.</i>
sophistication	the quality of being complex or having a lot of knowledge and experience	<i>The new phone's sophistication makes it easy to use and powerful.</i>
depicted	shown or represented in a picture or story	<i>The painting depicted a beautiful sunset over the ocean.</i>
insights	clear ideas or understanding about something	<i>The book gave her new insights into human behavior.</i>

Vocabulary Exercise — Fill in the Blank

Use one word or phrase from the glossary above to complete each sentence. Each item is used only once. Answers are on the final page.

1. The artist's work is _____ for its beauty and detail.
2. The _____ to the Arctic was both challenging and rewarding.
3. The forest is dense with green _____ in the summer.
4. The jeweler created an _____ necklace with tiny gems.
5. He checked his homework _____ to make sure there were no mistakes.
6. The movie _____ the story of a hero from a small village.

Comprehension Questions

These questions are different from the online practice test. Choose the best answer (A, B, C, or D). Answers and explanations are on the final page.

Question 1

What is the main reason Dr. Carter's discovery is significant?

- A. It shows the advanced technology of the Mayans.
- B. It reveals the location of all Mayan cities.
- C. It helps understand Mayan culture and history.
- D. It proves the Mayans were the first civilization.

Question 2

What does the use of LiDAR technology suggest about the expedition?

- A. It was very expensive.
- B. It relied on cutting-edge technology.
- C. It was completed very quickly.
- D. It was a solo mission by Dr. Carter.

Question 3

Why did Dr. Carter's discovery raise questions about Mayan society?

- A. It showed the Mayans were warlike.
- B. It suggested the Mayans lived in small groups.
- C. It provided new information about their decline.
- D. It indicated the Mayans had no written language.

Question 4

What was one result of the murals found at the site?

- A. They proved the Mayans were great artists.
- B. They gave a view into the daily life of the Mayans.
- C. They showed the Mayans used only basic colors.
- D. They explained the fall of the Mayan civilization.

Question 5

What is the author's purpose in mentioning the archaeologists' excitement?

- A. To highlight the importance of teamwork.
- B. To show the universal interest in the discovery.
- C. To criticize the slow pace of the excavation.
- D. To emphasize the challenges of archaeology.

Discussion & Writing Prompts

Each prompt references a specific detail from the passage above. Use for classroom discussion or a short written response (150–200 words).

1. From paragraph one, Dr. Carter's team used LiDAR technology to find the lost city. How do you think technology will change archaeology in the future?

2. The passage mentions vibrant murals depicting Mayan life. What role do you think art plays in understanding ancient cultures?

3. Paragraph two suggests the discovery may change our view of ancient civilizations. Do you think modern society can learn from ancient achievements, and how?

Answer Key

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Q1 C

Q2 B

Q3 C

Q4 B

Q5 B

VOCABULARY EXERCISE

FIB1 renowned

FIB2 expedition

FIB3 foliage

FIB4 intricate

FIB5 meticulously

FIB6 depicted

Comprehension Question Explanations

Why the correct answer is right — and why each wrong option is incorrect.

1. What is the main reason Dr. Carter's discovery is significant?

✓ C — It helps understand Mayan culture and history.

The discovery provides insights into Mayan culture and history, as stated in the passage.

✗ A — It shows the advanced technology of the Mayans.

The passage focuses on culture and history, not technology.

✗ B — It reveals the location of all Mayan cities.

The passage does not claim to reveal all Mayan city locations.

✗ D — It proves the Mayans were the first civilization.

The passage does not claim the Mayans were the first civilization.

2. What does the use of LiDAR technology suggest about the expedition?

✓ B — It relied on cutting-edge technology.

LiDAR is described as advanced technology used in the expedition.

✗ A — It was very expensive.

The passage does not mention the expedition's cost.

✗ C — It was completed very quickly.

The passage does not imply the speed of the expedition.

✗ D — It was a solo mission by Dr. Carter.

The passage mentions a team, not a solo mission.

3. Why did Dr. Carter's discovery raise questions about Mayan society?

✓ C — It provided new information about their decline.

The passage states the discovery raised questions about Mayan societal structure and decline.

✗ A — It showed the Mayans were warlike.

The passage does not mention warlike behavior.

✗ B — It suggested the Mayans lived in small groups.

The passage suggests large, complex societies, not small groups.

✗ D — It indicated the Mayans had no written language.

The passage does not discuss their language.

4. What was one result of the murals found at the site?

✓ B — They gave a view into the daily life of the Mayans.

The murals depicted daily life, giving insight into Mayan customs and practices.

✗ A — They proved the Mayans were great artists.

While they may show artistic skill, the focus is on cultural insight.

✗ C — They showed the Mayans used only basic colors.

The passage describes vibrant murals, not basic colors.

✗ D — They explained the fall of the Mayan civilization.

The murals depicted life, not the civilization's fall.

5. What is the author's purpose in mentioning the archaeologists' excitement?

✓ **B — To show the universal interest in the discovery.**

The passage mentions excitement spreading within and beyond the archaeological community.

✗ **A — To highlight the importance of teamwork.**

Teamwork is not the focus of the passage.

✗ **C — To criticize the slow pace of the excavation.**

The passage does not criticize the excavation's pace.

✗ **D — To emphasize the challenges of archaeology.**

Challenges of archaeology are not emphasized.

MORE B2 LEVEL READING PRACTICE

Letters Refugee Camp Family Story Hope — <https://www.esl-tests.com/reading/b2/letters-refugee-camp-family-story-hope>

Global Health Preparedness Lessons Recent Pandemics — <https://www.esl-tests.com/reading/b2/global-health-preparedness-lessons-recent-pandemics>

Climate Migration Communities Move — <https://www.esl-tests.com/reading/b2/climate-migration-communities-move>