



Read the text and do the tasks below.

Mystic Places

There are certain places around the world that are surrounded by mystery because they contain the remains of lost civilisations.

They may have strange buildings, unusual statues or interesting temples, but they are places of great architectural beauty and archaeological interest.

1. Easter Island

On Easter Sunday, 5th April, 1722, Jacob Roggeveen, a Dutch explorer, found and named a small Island in the Pacific Ocean 2,000 miles from South America.

He was the first European to visit the world's most remote inhabited island. He noticed that the island had very few trees or animals, and there were only a few thousand people who lived there. He also could not fail to notice the hundreds of magnificent stone statues that stood proudly all over the island. These 887 statues, called 'moai', are up to 10 metres tall and weigh about 80 tonnes. No one knows why they were built and how exactly they were carved and transported at least 14 miles across the island, or by whom. One theory is that a great civilisation built them and cut down the trees to transport them and when all the trees were gone, the animals died out and so did the people. Other researchers think climate change affected the island and its people. Perhaps we will never know the truth, and so Easter Island will remain a beautiful and mysterious place.

2. Delphi

Delphi, at the foot of Mount Parnassus, is one of the most amazing archaeological sites in Greece. In ancient times, it was thought to be the centre of the known world. It was also a spiritual centre for several thousand years, because it was the home of the Oracle. This was a mysterious force said to be the spirit of the god Apollo. That spoke through the high priestess of the Temple of Apollo, called The Pythia. People travelled a long and difficult journey through the mountains to visit the temple and consult the Oracle, who predicted the future and answered people's questions. The success of the Oracle made the town very wealthy as the city states of Greece gave offerings for every victory they had in battle. Most of the ruins that you can see today, including the Temple of Apollo, the treasuries, the gymnasium, the stadium and the theatre date back to the 5th and 6th centuries BC. Some people also say that the Oracle is still there, and if you listen carefully enough, you may hear it.

3. Kailasa Temple

The Kailasa Temple was cut by hand from a granite cliff in Ellora about 300 km northeast of Mumbai. Generations of dedicated monks lived, worked and worshipped their gods there and created the largest structure in the world carved from a single rock. Built around the 8th century, it is believed to have taken 7,000 workers 150 years to carve it and remove 200,000 tonnes of rock from it.

Every surface is covered with symbols and figures, and the temple is full of beautiful sculptures. It was built to honour the Hindu god, Lord Shiva. Around the base of the temple, some 90 metres below the surface, there are hundreds of carved elephants that look as if they are carrying the temple on their backs. This unique place brings the ancient cultured India to life.

4. Machu Picchu

Otherwise known as 'The Lost City of the Incas', Machu Picchu is an ancient Incan city located almost 2,500 metres above sea level in the Andes Mountains in Peru. Machu Picchu is invisible from below and no one knows when life in this city ended. It was forgotten by almost everyone until an American called Hiram Bingham, found it, in 1911.

Unlike many other Incan ruins, it has not been damaged by Spanish invaders, only by time. Many of the buildings are completely preserved. It is thought to have been a royal residence, a sort of holiday home. The walls of the houses, temples, parks and buildings are made from dry stone without any cement, and the stones fit together so perfectly, not even a knife edge can fit between them. It is an amazing feat of craftsmanship. According to legends, the mountain has magical properties and that's why the city was built there in the first place.

1. Read the text again. Which place (1,2,3 or 4) ...

1. cannot be easily seen?	
2. is in the middle of an ocean?	
3. took about 150 years to create?	
4. was discovered by an American?	
5. includes a stadium?	
6. is at the base of a mountain?	
7. was discovered by a European?	
8. includes a park?	
9. was built for religious reasons?	
10. has decorations below ground level?	

2. Match the words from the text to their meanings.

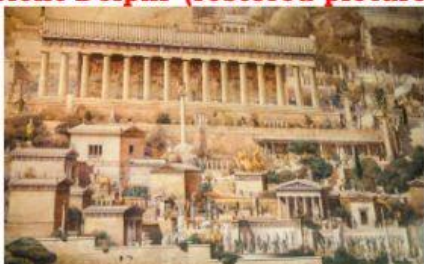
remote invaders transported preserved worshipped feat symbols
properties unique consult invisible offerings

1. _____ = praised the gods
2. _____ = not able to be seen
3. _____ = ask for advice
4. _____ = one of a kind
5. _____ = moved
6. _____ = achievement
7. _____ = designs to represent sth else
8. _____ = far away
9. _____ = kept in a good condition
10. _____ = qualities
11. _____ = soldiers who enter a country by force
12. _____ = gifts to the gods

1. Easter Island



2. Ancient Delphi (restored picture)



3. Kailasa Temple



4. Machu Picchu

