

Name _____

Date _____

Lost!

For thousands of years, humans have built cities. Some of our oldest cities have managed to maintain pieces of their original characteristics. Other cities have disappeared completely. Devastation from war, famine, disease, and natural disasters has caused many cities that were once bustling centers of civilization to vanish completely.

One of these lost cities belonged to the Anasazi (pronounced "an-uh-SAH-zee") people. The Anasazi lived in Chaco Canyon in New Mexico. They built dwellings along the river that ran through the canyon. For close to 300 years, the Chaco Canyon was the population center of many desert cities. Now, nothing is left of this busy city but ruins. Scientists speculate that drought may have made the Anasazi's food scarce or that some kind of disease killed off many of the people. However, no one knows for sure what happened to the people of the Chaco Canyon.



Another lost city sits high atop the Andes Mountains in Peru: the city of Machu Picchu (pronounced "MA-choo PEE-choo"). It was once among the most powerful cities in South America, because it was home to the Incan emperor. In 1527, its citizens packed up their belongings and moved for unknown reasons. Scientists guess that smallpox, a disease brought by European explorers, was the cause of Machu Picchu's downfall. Today, tourists from all over the world climb thousands of steep stone steps to view the ruins of this formerly majestic city.

Yet another city that is no more was called Pompeii (pronounced "pom-PAY"). This was one of the wealthiest cities of ancient Italy. This beautiful seaside city was a lively center of commerce and trade. However, Mt. Vesuvius was lurking in the distance. Eventually, a storm of lava, smoke, and ash buried the city of Pompeii, putting an end to its prosperity. Scientists have excavated and studied the ruins of Pompeii, which led to new discoveries about ancient civilizations of Europe.

Humans have always built cities as hubs for trade, business, and family life. Cities that have been lost provide information about the past, helping to inform our future. By studying lost cities, we can learn how to preserve our current cities.

1) Which of the following statements provides the best summary of the passage?

- A. Cities of the past and present look different from one another.
- B. Several great cities have fallen into history.
- C. Ancient cities are shrouded in mystery.
- D. Humans built cities thousands of years ago.

- 2) In paragraph 2, the author describes the Anasazi people of the Chaco Canyon in New Mexico. These people most likely “built dwellings along the river that ran through the canyon” because
- A. the Anasazi utilized the river to transport goods using boats
 - B. the river was the safest place to build homes
 - C. it was difficult to find food in the desert
 - D. water is an important resource in the desert
- 3) According to the passage, the city of Machu Picchu was among the most powerful cities in South America because
- A. it was home to the Incan emperor
 - B. it was nestled high atop the Andes Mountains
 - C. powerful European explorers founded the city
 - D. tourists flocked to climb the steps to the city
- 4) Which of the following statements best summarizes the similarities and differences between the three cities the author examines?
- A. All of the cities were “lost,” but the ruins of each reflect a unique civilization and geographic region.
 - B. Each city was founded by native people long ago, although one of the cities was eventually “lost” by its founders.
 - C. All three cities were competitors in the world trade market of their time, but only one city is still thriving today.
 - D. These cities were all destroyed by natural disasters, however, scientists were only able to uncover ruins from one.
- 5) In the final paragraph, the author suggests that we should
- A. get information about how to build thriving cities for a competitive world
 - B. figure out how to protect our cities from disease and famine
 - C. learn from the past to ensure that we do not lose cities in the years to come
 - D. learn about certain customs of ancient civilizations that can be used today

