

Name _____



Date _____

Machu Picchu

By Sharon Fabian

When the first explorers from Europe came to America, they found forests and plains. They also found something that they didn't expect. They found big cities!

One of these big cities was Machu Picchu. Machu Picchu was an Inca city in Peru. It was not found by the first explorers from Europe, however.

It was built by the Inca leader, Pachakuteq. In the 1400s, he conquered the lands around the mountain called Machu Picchu. Then he built his city on the side of the mountain. The city is called Machu Picchu, too.



The city was built right into the mountainside. It had a main part where most of the buildings were. Around that it had fields.

The fields are unusual. They are on a steep mountainside, but the fields are flat. The Incas terraced the mountainside. They built their fields like big stair steps going up the side of the mountain. Stone walls separate the fields.

The Incas grew maize and other crops in their fields. They also grew fields of beautiful orchids.

Above the fields was the main city. The city was large and had many parts. It had an open area called a plaza. It had smaller plazas around that. It had palaces, temples, homes, and storehouses. It had workshops for making ceramics. It also had places for their llamas and other animals.

There were large buildings for religious ceremonies. The Incas held ceremonies to honor their ancestors there.

The buildings of Machu Picchu were made of heavy blocks. The blocks were cut from granite, a heavy stone. The Incas used bronze and stone tools to cut the granite blocks. They didn't use mortar to hold the blocks together. They just stacked them together very neatly.

In the 1500s, the Incas left Machu Picchu. For hundreds of years, few people knew that there had once been a great Inca city there.

Then, about 100 years ago, Machu Picchu was rediscovered. Archaeologists began to dig there. They searched for clues to its past. They found many clues. They found gold earplugs and gold pins. Maybe this jewelry was worn for important ceremonies. They found signs that Machu Picchu had once been rich in gold. They never found out exactly why the Incas left.

Today many tourists visit Machu Picchu. Some of them take the train up the mountain. Some of them hike. It takes a few days, and they sleep in tents. When they get there, they can imagine how the Incas once lived in their great city.

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Questions

- _____ 1. Machu Picchu is a _____.
 - A. city
 - B. Indian leader
 - C. building

- _____ 2. Machu Picchu is in the country of _____.
 - A. Mexico
 - B. the United States
 - C. Peru

- _____ 3. The _____ built Machu Picchu.
 - A. archaeologists
 - B. explorers
 - C. Incas

- _____ 4. Machu Picchu was built on a _____.
 - A. mountainside
 - B. beach
 - C. flat field

- _____ 5. A plaza is a/an _____.
 - A. small house with a field
 - B. large palace
 - C. open area in a city

- _____ 6. The buildings in Machu Picchu were made from _____.
 - A. clay
 - B. wood
 - C. granite

- _____ 7. The Incas grew fields of flowers in Machu Picchu.
 - A. true
 - B. false

- _____ 8. The Incas lived in Machu Picchu for 500 years.
 - A. true
 - B. false