

# 3

# Ancient civilisations

## 1 Read and write P (pyramid), S (Stonehenge) or N (Nazca).

The Great Pyramid of Giza is probably the most famous of all the Egyptian pyramids. It was built over four thousand years ago as a tomb for King Khufu. The Egyptians worshipped lots of different gods and also believed in life after death. The Pyramids were seen as 'resting places for the dead' on their way to another world with the gods. Inside the pyramid paintings of animals line the walls.

Many people have wondered how the Pyramids were built. It can't have been easy. There are over a million stones some of which, for example the 'blue' stones in the king's chamber, came from hundreds of kilometres away. The construction must have taken hundreds of men a lot of years to complete. The pyramids must have seemed amazing to them as well.

Crossing the southern plains of England you will suddenly come across a circle of stones in the middle of a field. Stonehenge was built around 4,000 years ago and is the most famous stone circle found in Britain. Nowadays most people agree that Stonehenge must have been built as a calendar to mark important events in the life of the people. In the summer when you stand in the circle the sun rises between two stones. Stonehenge is also a feat of engineering. The largest of the stones weigh around 50 tons and it could have taken 600 men to move them. Some of the stones were also transported from the Welsh mountains over 200 kilometres away. The people who built it can't have been ordinary people.

In the Nazca Desert in southern Peru are a collection of lines that close up appear to be nothing unusual. However, if you fly above the desert you will see an amazing thing. Many of the lines are perfectly straight and run for many kilometres. Other lines make up shapes or pictures. There are over seventy such pictures including a spider, a monkey, a hummingbird and a 300 metre long pelican. The main mystery is how anyone could have made such lines and drawings more than 1,000 years before the invention of the aeroplane. The other mystery is why the lines were drawn. One idea is that they might have been used in religious ceremonies and could have been designed to be 'seen by the gods'.

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|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 It was built for a person.                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 Lots of stones were used.                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 It was used in connection with the gods.                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 You need to be above the ground to see this properly.        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 Animals are an important part of it.                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 Some of the stones came from another country.                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 People might go there early in the morning to see something. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8 It is the most recent of the three ancient mysteries.        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## 2 Talk about the places in activity 1.

- 1 Which of the three landmarks would you like to see? Why?
- 2 Are there any mysterious landmarks in your country?