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Discovering Lost Cities

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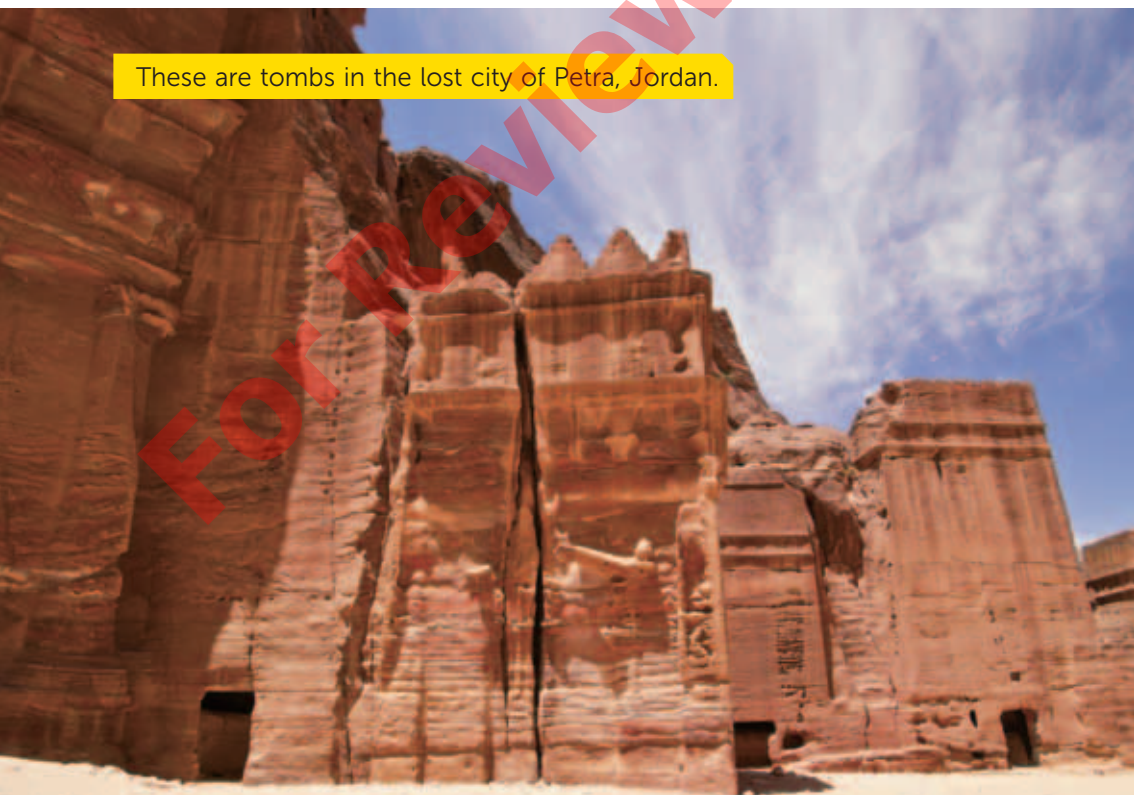
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What Is a Lost City?

Spin a globe and let your finger stop on nearly any continent. Your finger will probably be near a lost city. A lost city is a place that once was prosperous. Then, for some reason, the city lost its importance. Eventually, it was **abandoned** and possibly completely forgotten. After some time, some lost cities are “discovered” and word spreads about their many wonders.

These are tombs in the lost city of Petra, Jordan.





Did You Know?

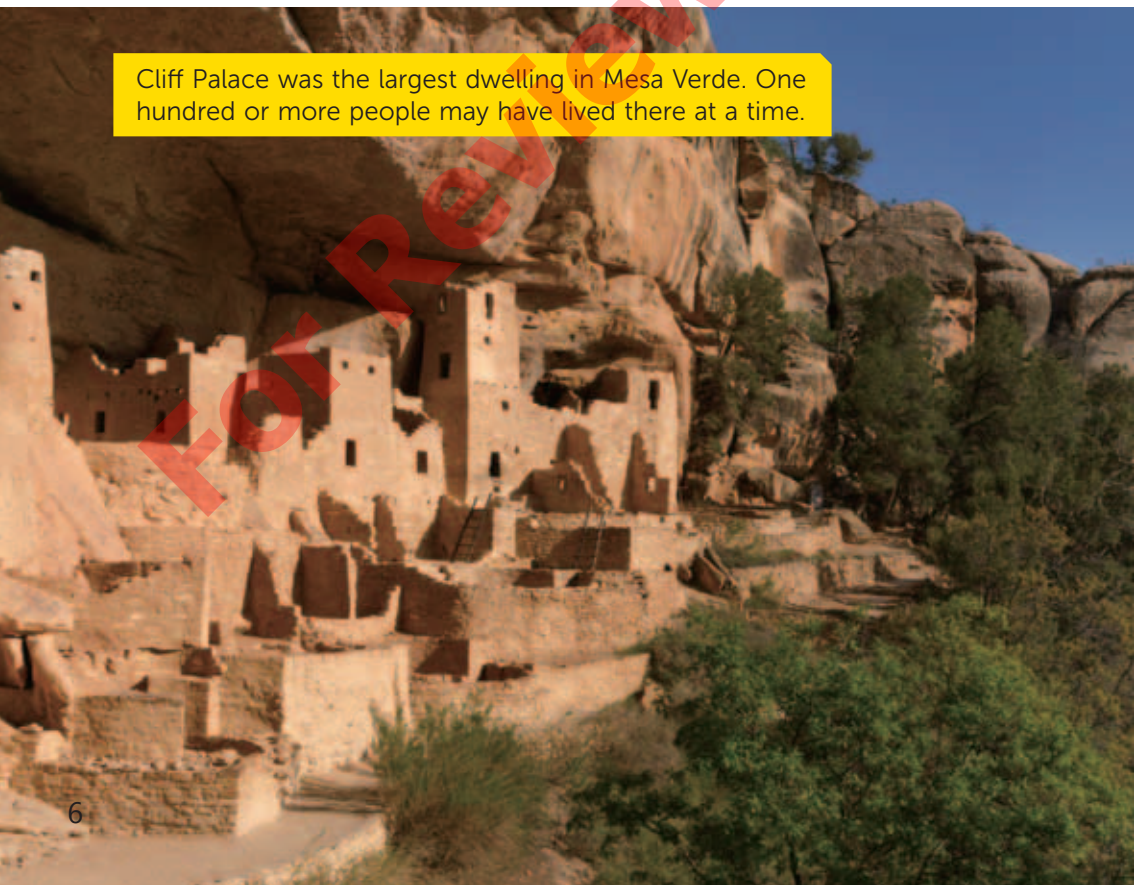
What does an archaeologist do? Archaeologists study the past. They study the past of people and their culture.

Gather a team of archaeologists and travel back in time to visit some famous lost cities: Mesa Verde, Machu Picchu, Angkor, and Petra. Imagine the treasures that await you. You'll visit a tall, grassy mesa in the United States and a mountaintop in Peru. Then you'll visit forests and farmland in Cambodia and red cliffs in Jordan.

Marvelous Mesa Verde

Your first stop in your tour of lost cities is Mesa Verde, which is **located** in the southwestern part of Colorado in the United States. Mesa Verde means “green table” in Spanish. A mesa is a hill with a flat top and steep sides. Mesa Verde was the home of the Pueblo people for about seven hundred years. They inhabited the area from about 550 CE to 1300 CE.

Cliff Palace was the largest dwelling in Mesa Verde. One hundred or more people may have lived there at a time.

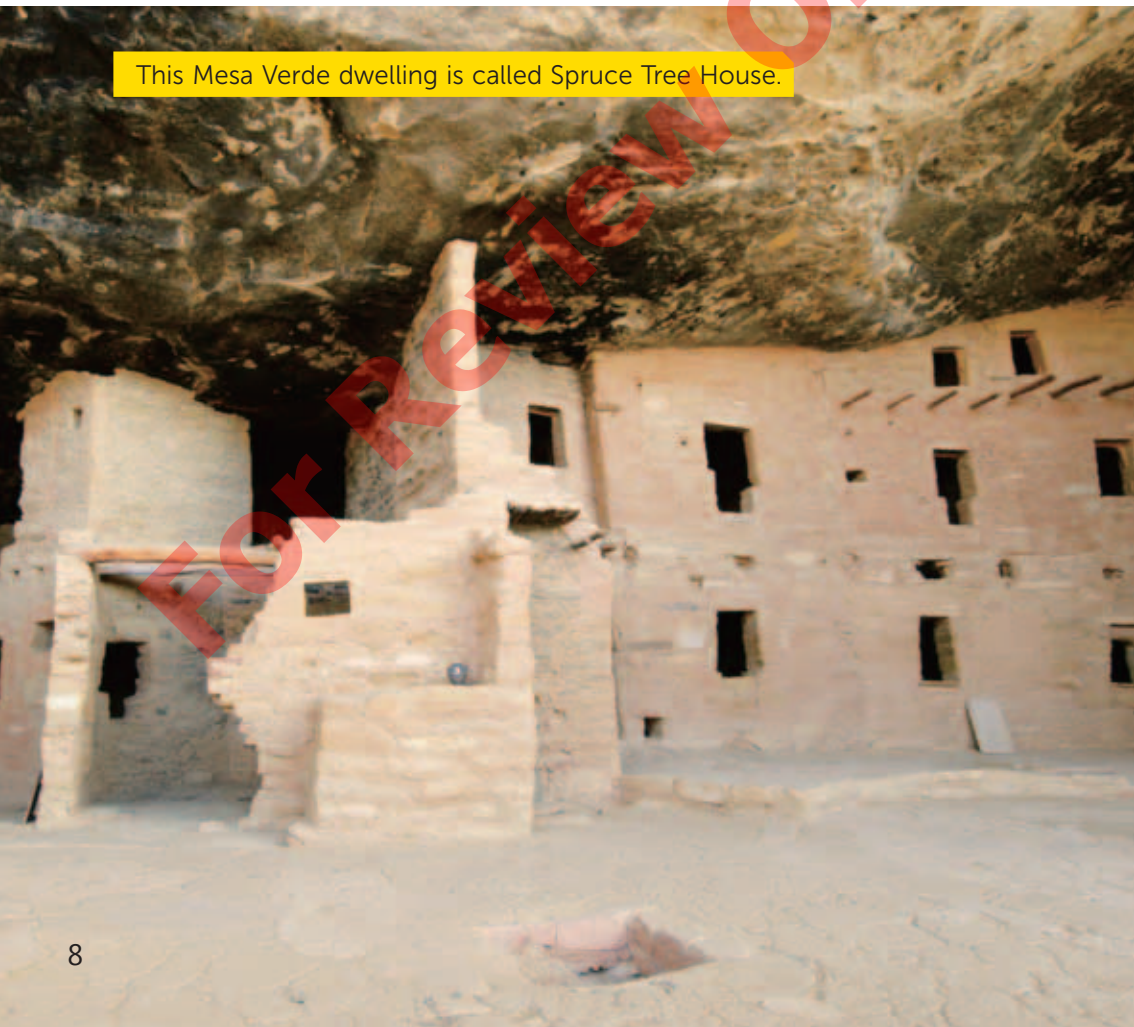




The Pueblos first lived in caves. Then they made houses by digging holes in the ground. They covered the holes with logs and mud. These people were farmers who raised corn and beans. They were also **talented** basket makers. Later, they became **expert** pottery makers. Some of their black and white pottery has survived the years.

Eventually, in the 8th century or so, the Pueblo people moved to the top of the mesa. They built houses out of poles and logs. Some houses had up to fifty rooms. The people lived on top of the mesa for about six hundred years. Eventually, they moved into the cliffs and **canyons** on the sides of the mesa. Possibly they moved there to protect themselves from enemies.

This Mesa Verde dwelling is called Spruce Tree House.



They built homes and apartments in the cliffs, some as tall as four stories. The Cliff Palace had between 150 and 200 rooms. As many as five thousand people may have lived at Mesa Verde. Unfortunately, within a few years, no one was left. Archaeologists think that people left because years and years of drought forced them out. Eventually, they couldn't grow enough crops to feed everyone.

