

**Wonders of the World - Petra**

Petra is a historical and archaeological city in southern Jordan. It lies within the mountains of the Arabian valley that runs from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Arabia. Petra is believed to have been settled in as early as 5000 BC, and it was possibly established in the 4th century BC as the capital city of the Nabataean Kingdom.

The earliest historical reference to Petra was in 312 BC when Greek historians wrote about an unsuccessful attack on the city. The Nabataeans were used to living in deserts, and were able to defend any attacks by taking advantage of the area's terrain. Petra flourished in the 1st century AD, when its population peaked at an estimated 20,000 people.

The Nabataean Kingdom became a client state of the Roman Empire in the first century BC, but it wasn't until 106 AD that it lost its independence. Petra fell to the Romans, who renamed it as Araba Petraea. Petra's importance then declined as Roman trade routes emerged, and an earthquake destroyed many of its structures. By the 6th century, Petra was abandoned except for a handful of nomads. It was rediscovered again in 1812 by Johann Ludwig Burckhardt.

Petra is famous for its rock-cut architecture and water system. Petra is also called the "Rose City" because of the color of the stone out of which it is cut. In 1985 it was made a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Petra is one of the most precious archaeological sites in the world. Petra was once a city of 20,000 people. In 2010, Petra was named one of the world's most beautiful places. Petra has been visited by over 800,000 tourists since it was rediscovered, and about 800,000 tourists visited the site in 2010.

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# Wonders of the World

## UKS2 Reading Comprehension Activity

# Petra

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## Wonders of the World – Petra

Petra is a historical and archaeological city in southern Jordan. It lies within the mountains of the Arabah valley that runs from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Aqaba. Petra is believed to have been settled in as early as 9000 BC, and it was possibly established in the 4th century BC as the capital city of the Nabataean Kingdom.



The earliest historical reference to Petra was in 312 BC when Greek historians wrote about an unsuccessful attack on the city. The Nabataeans were used to living in deserts, and were able to defeat any attacks by taking advantage of the area's terrain. Petra flourished in the 1st century AD, when its population peaked at an estimated 20,000 people.

The Nabataean kingdom became a client state of the Roman Empire in the first century BC, but it wasn't until 106 AD that it lost its independence. Petra fell to the Romans, who renamed it as Arabia Petraea. Petra's importance then declined as sea trade routes emerged, and an earthquake destroyed many of its structures. By the early Islamic era Petra was abandoned except for a handful of nomads. It remained unknown to the world until it was rediscovered again in 1812 by Johann Ludwig Burckhardt.

Famous for its rock-cut architecture and water system, Petra is also called the Rose City due to the color of the stone out of which it is carved. In 1985 it was made a UNESCO World Heritage Site, where it was described as, "one of the most precious cultural properties of man's cultural heritage". In 2007, Petra was voted as one of the New7Wonders of the World.

Petra has become a symbol of Jordan, and is its most-visited tourist attraction. In 2010 visiting numbers peaked at 1 million; but tourism slumped due to the Arab Spring which affected several surrounding countries. However, tourist numbers have since increased, and about 800,000 tourists visited the site in 2018.

# Wonders of the World – Petra

## Comprehension

1 – In what country is Petra situated? (1)

2 – In what year was Petra believed to have been settled in? (1)

3 – What was it possibly established as in the 4th century BC? (1)

4 – Who wrote about Petra in 312 BC? (1)

5 – Why would the city have been hard to invade? (1)

6 – How and when did the Nabataean kingdom lose its independence? (2)

7 – Why did Petra's importance decline? (2)

8 – Who remained in the city by the early Islamic era? (1)

9 – When, and who, rediscovered the ancient city? (1)

10 – What was Petra voted as in 2007? (1)

11 – Describe how and why visitor numbers have varied since 2010. (2)

## Wonders of the World – Petra

### Grammar

12 - Underline the proper nouns in the sentence below: (1)

Petra is a historical and archaeological city in southern Jordan.

13 – Underline the verbs in the following sentence. (1)

Petra flourished in the 1st century AD, when its population peaked at an estimated 20,000 people.

### Extension

14 – Draw a timeline of Petra from 9000 BC until 2018. Include as many facts as possible from the text. (3)

# Wonders of the World – Petra

## Questions

### Comprehension Questions

- 1 – In what country is Petra situated? (1)
- 2 – In what year was Petra believed to have been settled in? (1)
- 3 – What was it possibly established as in the 4th century BC? (1)
- 4 – Who wrote about Petra in 312 BC? (1)
- 5 – Why would the city have been hard to invade? (1)
- 6 – How and when did the Nabataean kingdom lose its independence? (2)
- 7 – Why did Petra's importance decline? (2)
- 8 – Who remained in the city by the early Islamic era? (1)
- 9 – When, and who, rediscovered the ancient city? (1)
- 10 – What was Petra voted as in 2007? (1)
- 11 – Describe how and why visitor numbers have varied since 2010. (2)

### Grammar Questions

- 12 - Underline the proper nouns in the sentence below: (1)  
Petra is a historical and archaeological city in southern Jordan.
- 13 – Underline the verbs in the following sentence. (1)  
Petra flourished in the 1st century AD, when its population peaked at an estimated 20,000 people.

### Extension

- 14 – Draw a timeline of Petra from 9000 BC until 2018. Include as many facts as possible from the text. (3)

## Answers

### Comprehension Questions

- 1 – Jordan
- 2 – 9000 BC
- 3 – The capital city of the Nabataean Kingdom
- 4 – Greek historians
- 5 – The Nabataeans were used to living in deserts / or, they were able to defeat any attacks by taking advantage of the area's terrain
- 6 – 106 AD / Petra fell to the Romans
- 7 – Sea trade routes emerged / An earthquake destroyed many of its structures
- 8 – A handful of nomads
- 9 – Johann Ludwig Burckhardt / In 1812
- 10 – One of the New 7 Wonders of the World
- 11 – In 2010 visiting numbers peaked at 1 million / Tourism slumped due to the Arab Spring / Tourist numbers have since increased, and about 800,000 tourists visited the site in 2018 (any 2 for 2 marks)

### Grammar Questions

- 12 - Petra is a historical and archaeological city in southern Jordan.
- 13 – Petra flourished in the 1st century AD, when its population peaked at an estimated 20,000 people.

### Extension

- 14 – 0-3 marks depending on detail

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