

The Sydney Opera House

Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. Do you like the design of the Sydney Opera House?
2. Do you know when the Sydney Opera House first opened?
3. How much do you think it cost to build the Sydney Opera House?
4. Do you like opera music?
5. Have you ever been to an opera? If so, what did you see?



B. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.

Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

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| _____ 1. jut | a) to build |
| _____ 2. design | b) a practice for a public performance |
| _____ 3. spectacular | c) a square piece of baked clay used for walls, roofs, floors, etc. |
| _____ 4. architect | d) a place where an event occurs |
| _____ 5. due to | e) to stick out, to extend out |
| _____ 6. issue | f) not realistic, not based on anything specific |
| _____ 7. construct | g) amazing, fantastic to look at |
| _____ 8. concrete | h) to prepare a plan or drawing of something to be made |
| _____ 9. pier | i) a show, a public presentation of music, a play, etc. |
| _____ 10. tile | j) because of |
| _____ 11. section | k) a person who designs buildings |
| _____ 12. cable | l) a structure built out into the water to walk on or as a place to tie up a boat |
| _____ 13. performance | m) a part, piece |
| _____ 14. venue | n) a question for discussion |
| _____ 15. rehearsal | o) very strong rope, wire, or chain |
| _____ 16. abstract | p) a hard building material |

Reading

1. The Sydney Opera House in Sydney, Australia, is famous throughout the world.
2. It stands on Bennelong Point, a point of land that **juts** into Sydney Harbour, near the Sydney Harbour Bridge. The roof of the opera house was **designed** and built to look like a ship under full sail. Since its official opening on October 20, 1973, the building and its **spectacular** white-sailed roof have become a symbol of Australia.
3. The Sydney Opera House was designed in the late 1950s by Jorn Utzon, a Danish **architect**. He quit the project in 1966 **due to** differences with the state government over cost and design **issues**, and the building was not completed until 1973.
4. The opera house cost close to \$100 million to **construct**. It is almost 394 feet (120 metres) wide in places and more than 600 feet (183 metres) long. It sits on 580 **concrete piers**, some of which are sunk 80 feet (24 metres) below the sea. Over one million white **tiles** were used to construct its famous roof, and the roof **sections** are held together by over 200 miles (322 kilometres) of steel **cable**.
5. The building has five **performance** rooms. The largest is the Concert Hall (2,679 seats); the smallest is the Studio Theatre (364 seats). Each year, more than two million people attend the 3,000 performances that are held in the various **venues**. These include performances by Opera Australia, as well as by the Sydney Theatre Company and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. **Rehearsal** halls, restaurants, bars, and souvenir shops are among the more than 1,000 rooms in the building.
6. The Sydney Opera House is considered by many to be one of the finest examples of modern **abstract** architectural design in the world.

The Sydney Opera House is one of the most-photographed buildings in the world.

Comprehension

A. True or False?

Read the statements below.

If the statement is true, write T beside the sentence.

If it is false, write F and correct the information in your notebook.

- _____ 1. The Sydney Opera House is located in Sydney Harbour.
- _____ 2. The Sydney Opera House was designed by a Swedish architect.
- _____ 3. The architect, Jorn Utzon, had some disagreements with the government about the project.
- _____ 4. There are more than 1,000 performance rooms in the building.
- _____ 5. The opera house cost almost \$100 million to build.

B. Ask & Answer

Practise asking and answering the following questions with your partner.

Then write your answers in complete sentences in your notebook.

- 1. Where exactly is the Sydney Opera House located?
- 2. When was the Sydney Opera House designed and who designed it?
- 3. Why did the original architect quit the project?
- 4. What is the roof of the opera house designed to look like?
- 5. What are the dimensions of the opera house?
- 6. How was the roof constructed?
- 7. What kinds of rooms are in the opera house?

Vocabulary Review

Complete the sentences using vocabulary from page 1.
You may need to change the word forms.

1. The boys sat on the _____ and fished all afternoon.
2. _____ the rain, the picnic will be cancelled.
3. The musicians should have one more _____ before their big weekend show.
4. The officials of the Olympic Games have not yet chosen the _____ for the skating events.
5. There will be several important _____ to discuss at today's meeting.
6. She slipped on the wet, _____ floor and cut her head.

Discussion

1. What kind of architecture do you like? Give some examples of famous buildings that have impressed you.
2. The Sydney Opera House has become a symbol of Australia. Give some other examples of famous places that symbolize their countries. Have you visited any of these places?
3. What do you think is the most beautiful building in the city in which you live? What do you like most about this building?