

Famous Landmarks: The Buildings Everyone Knows

Around the world, there are buildings and places that almost everyone knows. We see them in movies, on TV, and in photos online. These places are called landmarks. A **landmark** is a famous **structure** or place that people **recognize** right away. Some landmarks are very old. Others were built only 100 or 200 years ago. Landmarks are important because they tell us about history, culture, and the people who built them. They also **attract** millions of visitors every year. A landmark can also become a **symbol** of the country it is in — something that makes people think of that place right away.

The Great Wall of China is one of the most amazing **ancient** structures in the world. It **stretches** across northern China for thousands of kilometers. Builders started working on it more than 2,000 years ago. They built the wall to keep enemies away. Today, the wall is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. That means the world has agreed to **preserve** it for future **generations**. Millions of people travel to China every year to see this **wonder**. Some parts of the wall are so high that you can see for many kilometers in every direction. Walking along it feels like stepping back in time.

The Eiffel **Tower** in Paris, France, is one of the most recognized towers in the world. It was designed by a brilliant French **architect** named Gustave Eiffel. Workers built it in 1889. At the time, many people in Paris did not like it. They thought it was ugly! But over time, people began to love it. Today, nearly seven million visitors climb or ride to the top every year. The tower is made of **steel**. From the **observation deck** at the top, visitors can see the entire city spread out below them. At night, the tower lights up and becomes even more beautiful. It has **inspired** artists, photographers, and travelers for more than 130 years.

The Statue of Liberty stands on a small island in New York Harbor, USA. France gave this **monument** to the United States as a gift in 1886. It was meant to celebrate freedom and friendship between the two countries. The statue shows a woman holding a **torch** high in the air. She is a **sculpture** that **represents liberty** — the idea that all people deserve to be free. Millions of people from around the world have sailed past the statue when arriving in America for the very first time. For many of them, seeing the Statue of Liberty was the moment they knew they had finally reached their new home.

The Taj Mahal is a beautiful white **palace** in Agra, India. The **emperor** Shah Jahan built it in the 1600s to honor his wife after she died. It took more than 20,000 workers about 22 years to complete. The building is made of white **marble**. Inside the **tomb**, both Shah Jahan and his wife are buried together. Workers used to decorate the walls with precious stones and **ivory**, as well as flowers made from colored gems. Today, the Taj Mahal is one of the most visited places on Earth. It is a symbol of love and one of the greatest works of human creativity.

Beyond the Headlines

Did you know that the Leaning Tower of Pisa started leaning before it was even finished? Workers began building it in 1173 in Pisa, Italy. But the soft ground on one side started to **sink**. After years of **restoration** work to stop it from falling, engineers made an unexpected discovery — fixing the lean too much would actually make the tower less interesting to tourists! So engineers stopped the restoration when the tower had just a small, safe lean. Today, visitors love taking photos pretending to hold the tower up. There is even an **underground tunnel** that engineers use to check the structure regularly. The two sides of the tower connect through this hidden **passage**.

Vocabulary

Paragraph 1

landmark (n.)	(n.) A famous place or building that many people know. <i>"The Eiffel Tower is one of the most famous landmarks in the world."</i>
structure (n.)	(n.) A building or something that has been built. <i>"The old structure in the center of town was built 300 years ago."</i>
recognize (v.)	(v.) To know who or what something is because you have seen it before. <i>"Most people recognize the Eiffel Tower from photos."</i>
attract (v.)	(v.) To make people want to come to a place. <i>"The new museum attracts thousands of visitors every month."</i>
symbol (n.)	(n.) Something that stands for or represents an idea or a place. <i>"The flag is a symbol of the country."</i>

Paragraph 2

ancient (adj.)	(adj.) Very, very old — from thousands of years ago. <i>"The ancient city had buildings that were over 3,000 years old."</i>
stretches (v.)	(v.) Extends or goes across a long distance. <i>"The road stretches from one side of the country to the other."</i>
preserve (v.)	(v.) To keep something safe so it does not get damaged or lost. <i>"The museum works hard to preserve old paintings for future visitors."</i>
generations (n.)	(n.) All the people who are born and live at about the same time. <i>"This family recipe has been passed down through many generations."</i>
wonder (n.)	(n.) Something amazing or impressive that makes people feel surprised. <i>"The Grand Canyon is one of the natural wonders of the world."</i>

Paragraph 3

Tower (n.)	(n.) A tall, narrow building or structure. <i>"You can see the whole city from the top of the tower."</i>
architect (n.)	(n.) A person who designs buildings. <i>"The architect spent two years planning the new library."</i>
steel (n.)	(n.) A very strong metal used to build large structures. <i>"The bridge is made of steel and can hold many heavy trucks."</i>
observation deck (n. phrase)	(n. phrase) A platform high up in a building where visitors can look at the view. <i>"We stood on the observation deck and could see the whole city below us."</i>
inspired (v.)	(v.) Made someone feel excited and want to create or do something. <i>"The beautiful painting inspired her to start drawing every day."</i>

Paragraph 4

monument (n.)	(n.) A large structure built to honor a person or event. <i>"The town built a monument to remember the soldiers who fought in the war."</i>
torch (n.)	(n.) A long stick with a flame at the top, used as a light or symbol. <i>"The runner held the torch high as she ran into the stadium."</i>

sculpture (n.)	(n.) A work of art made by shaping stone, metal, or another material. <i>“The sculpture in the park shows a famous local leader.”</i>
represents (v.)	(v.) Stands for or is a sign of something. <i>“The dove represents peace in many cultures.”</i>
liberty (n.)	(n.) The freedom to do what you want and to live the way you choose. <i>“People fought for many years to win their liberty.”</i>

Paragraph 5

palace (n.)	(n.) A very large and beautiful building where a king, queen, or emperor lives. <i>“The king opened the palace to visitors on weekends.”</i>
emperor (n.)	(n.) The ruler of a large empire or kingdom. <i>“The emperor built a great wall to protect his land.”</i>
marble (n.)	(n.) A hard, smooth stone used to build or decorate beautiful buildings. <i>“The floor of the museum was made from white and black marble.”</i>
tomb (n.)	(n.) A place where a person is buried, often a special building or room. <i>“The tourists visited the tomb of the ancient king.”</i>
ivory (n.)	(n.) A hard, creamy-white material, traditionally from elephant tusks, or anything that color. <i>“The piano keys were made of ivory-colored material.”</i>

Beyond the Headlines

sink (v.)	(v.) To go down slowly into something soft, like ground or water. <i>“The heavy box began to sink into the wet mud.”</i>
restoration (n.)	(n.) Work done to repair something old and bring it back to good condition. <i>“The restoration of the old church took five years and cost a lot of money.”</i>
underground (adj.)	(adj.) Below the surface of the ground. <i>“Workers dug an underground passage below the busy street.”</i>
tunnel (n.)	(n.) A long passage built under the ground or through a mountain. <i>“The train goes through a tunnel under the mountain.”</i>
passage (n.)	(n.) A narrow path or corridor that connects two places. <i>“There is a secret passage behind the bookcase in the old house.”</i>

Language Review

Exercise A — True or False

Read each statement. Write True or False on the line.

1. A landmark is a famous place or structure that many people know. _____
2. Landmarks can only be found in Europe. _____
3. The Great Wall of China was built to keep enemies away. _____
4. The Eiffel Tower was immediately loved by everyone in Paris when it was built.

5. The Eiffel Tower is made of steel. _____
6. France gave the Statue of Liberty to the United States as a gift. _____
7. The Taj Mahal was built in just five years. _____
8. The Leaning Tower of Pisa started to lean because the ground on one side was soft.

Exercise B — Matching

Match each word in Column A with its meaning in Column B. Write the correct letter.

Column A	Column B
1. landmark	a. the freedom to live and act as you choose
2. ancient	b. a famous place or building that people recognize
3. preserve	c. a large structure built to honor a person or event
4. architect	d. to keep something safe so it is not lost or damaged
5. liberty	e. work done to repair and return something to good condition
6. monument	f. very, very old — from thousands of years ago
7. tomb	g. a place where a person is buried
8. restoration	h. a person who designs buildings

Exercise C — Multiple Choice

Choose the best answer (a, b, c, or d) for each question.

1. What is a landmark?
 - a. A type of food from another country
 - b. A famous place or building that many people know

- c. A small park in a city
 - d. A government law about buildings
2. Why was the Great Wall of China built?
- a. To attract tourists
 - b. To celebrate a famous emperor
 - c. To keep enemies away
 - d. To store water for farmers
3. What did many people in Paris think of the Eiffel Tower when it was first built?
- a. They thought it was beautiful.
 - b. They thought it was ugly.
 - c. They thought it was too small.
 - d. They thought it was dangerous.
4. What material is the Eiffel Tower made of?
- a. Marble
 - b. Stone
 - c. Ivory
 - d. Steel
5. Who gave the Statue of Liberty to the United States?
- a. England
 - b. Italy
 - c. France
 - d. China
6. What does the Statue of Liberty represent?
- a. War and power
 - b. Freedom and friendship
 - c. Trade and business
 - d. Art and music
7. Who built the Taj Mahal?
- a. Emperor Eiffel
 - b. Emperor Pisa
 - c. Emperor Shah Jahan
 - d. Emperor Liberty
8. Why did the Leaning Tower of Pisa start to lean?
- a. Workers built it wrong on purpose.
 - b. The soft ground on one side started to sink.
 - c. A strong wind pushed it over.
 - d. An earthquake damaged the base.

Exercise D — Discussion Questions

Talk about these questions with a partner or in a small group.

1. Have you ever visited a famous landmark? Which one? What was it like?
2. Which landmark from the article would you most like to visit? Why?
3. Are there any famous landmarks in your country? What do they look like?
4. Why do you think people travel far to see famous buildings?
5. If you could build a new landmark for your city, what would it look like?