

## **READING PASSAGE 1**

*Answer Questions 1-16, which are based on Reading Passage 1 on pages 2 and 3*

### **History of the Globe Theatre**

The original Globe Theatre opened in autumn 1599 on the south bank of the River Thames, in London. It was one of several major theatres in the area, the others being the Swan, the Rose, and the Hope. The Globe was the main playhouse of the Lord Chamberlain's Men, later called the King's Men, a theatrical company to which the playwright William Shakespeare belonged. Most of Shakespeare's post-1599 plays were staged at the Globe, including *Julius Caesar*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Hamlet*.

The Globe was built in 1576, using timber from an earlier theatre in Shoreditch, east London, by James Burbage, the father of one of the actors. Called simply *The Theatre*, this structure was taken down after a 20-year lease on its land expired, and the timber from it was then transported over the Thames to construct the Globe.

The Globe Theatre was highly successful. Since there was little artificial light, performances were held in the afternoon, usually beginning in May. Flags waving in the wind advertised plays by the King's Men, and all about the grounds of the theatre, playgoers would be buying merchandise and refreshments from stalls. People from all walks of life could enjoy the tragedies and comedies of Shakespeare. Both men and women would attend the plays, but the well-off would frequently wear masks to conceal their identity.

After years of success, the Globe was destroyed by fire on 29 June 1613, during a performance of *Henry VIII*. A theatrical cannon, set off during the performance, misfired, igniting the building's roof and wooden beams. According to one of the few surviving contemporary accounts of the event, no one was hurt except a man who put out his burning trousers with a bottle of ale. A new Globe was created by the theatre company on the foundations of its predecessor before Shakespeare's death in 1616.

However, after the Puritans gained control of Parliament, their campaign to enforce a higher standard of morality meant the end of the Globe. Their strict views gave rise to restrictions on many social activities, and like all the other theatres in London, the Globe was closed down in 1642. In 1644, the Puritans destroyed the Globe altogether to make room for housing. Its exact location was forgotten and remained unknown until remnants of its foundations were discovered in 1989 near a row of eighteenth-century buildings. There may be further remains under these buildings but they are themselves listed as historical buildings, and currently may not be disturbed by archaeologists.

The Globe's shape and size have been the subject of scholarly inquiry over the last two centuries. The evidence suggests that it was a three-storey, 100-foot-wide, open-air amphitheatre. It was probably a polygon in shape, with twenty sides. At the base of the stage there was an area called the 'pit', where spectators (called 'groundlings') would either stand or sit on the ground to watch the performance. They paid one penny to see the play, and the box into which they put their entrance fee gave rise to the term 'box office'.

A rectangular platform, also known as an 'apron stage', thrust out into the middle of the open-air yard. On this, there was a trap door for use by performers to enter from the 'cellarage' area beneath the stage. Large columns on either side of the stage supported a roof over the rear portion of the stage. This would have been constructed using thatch. The inner ceiling was called the 'heavens', and was possibly painted with images of the sky. An opening in the heavens enabled performers to descend, using some form of rope and harness. The back wall of the stage had three doors on the first floor and a balcony on the second. The doors led into the 'tiring house' where the actors dressed and awaited their cue. The balcony was where the musicians performed and could also be used for scenes requiring an upper space, such as the balcony scene in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. In addition, it could be used as the 'Lord's Room', where higher-paying audience members could be seated.

When the foundations of Shakespeare's Globe were discovered in London's Bankside district, public interest in building a modern version was reignited. Workers began construction in 1993, close to the site of the original. Completed in 1996, the current Globe Theatre was officially opened on 12 June 1997 with a production of *Henry V*. The reconstruction was carefully researched, so that the new building would be as faithful a replica as possible. It had the first thatched roof permitted in the city since the Great Fire of London in 1666. Modernisations include the addition of sprinklers on the roof to protect against fire. Due to modern health and safety regulations, only 1,300 people can attend a show, under half the estimated 3,000 of Shakespeare's time.

Tickets to stand in the open – no sitting allowed in this section – are available for every performance at £5 each. The only covered parts of the amphitheatre are the stage and the more expensive seated areas. Plays are normally performed between May and October, and in winter the theatre is used for educational purposes.

*Questions 1-7*

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 1?

In boxes 1-7 on your answer sheet, write:

**TRUE**

*if the statement agrees with the information*

**FALSE**

*if the statement contradicts the information*

**NOT GIVEN**

*if there is no information on this*

1. The Lord Chamberlain's Men performed plays only in the Globe Theatre.
2. Recycled wood was used in the construction of the original Globe.
3. Performances at the Globe were so popular that advance booking was necessary.
4. Some people who watched the plays tried to avoid recognition.
5. When the original Globe burned down, it was rebuilt on the same site.
6. The Globe was the first theatre to be closed down by the Puritans.
7. The remains of Shakespeare's Globe were fully excavated in the 20th century.

*Questions 8-16*

Complete the notes below.

Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER** from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 8-16 on your answer sheet.

## The Globe

### Parts of the original Globe

- the **8** ..... — for members of the audience (one penny per person)
- the **9** ..... — a protruding platform
- the **10** ..... — giving access to the stage from below
- roof made of **11** .....
- the **12** ..... — for performers to change into costumes
- balcony for the use of the **13** ....., actors or wealthy spectators

### The modern Globe

- **1993–1996** — the modern Globe was built
  - **the building**
    - it was designed to be a mainly accurate replica
    - **14** ..... were a new safety feature
    - audience capacity was reduced by more than **15** .....
  - **the performances**
    - the price of outdoor tickets is fixed
    - tickets for seats in the **16** ..... spaces cost more
    - there are no performances during winter