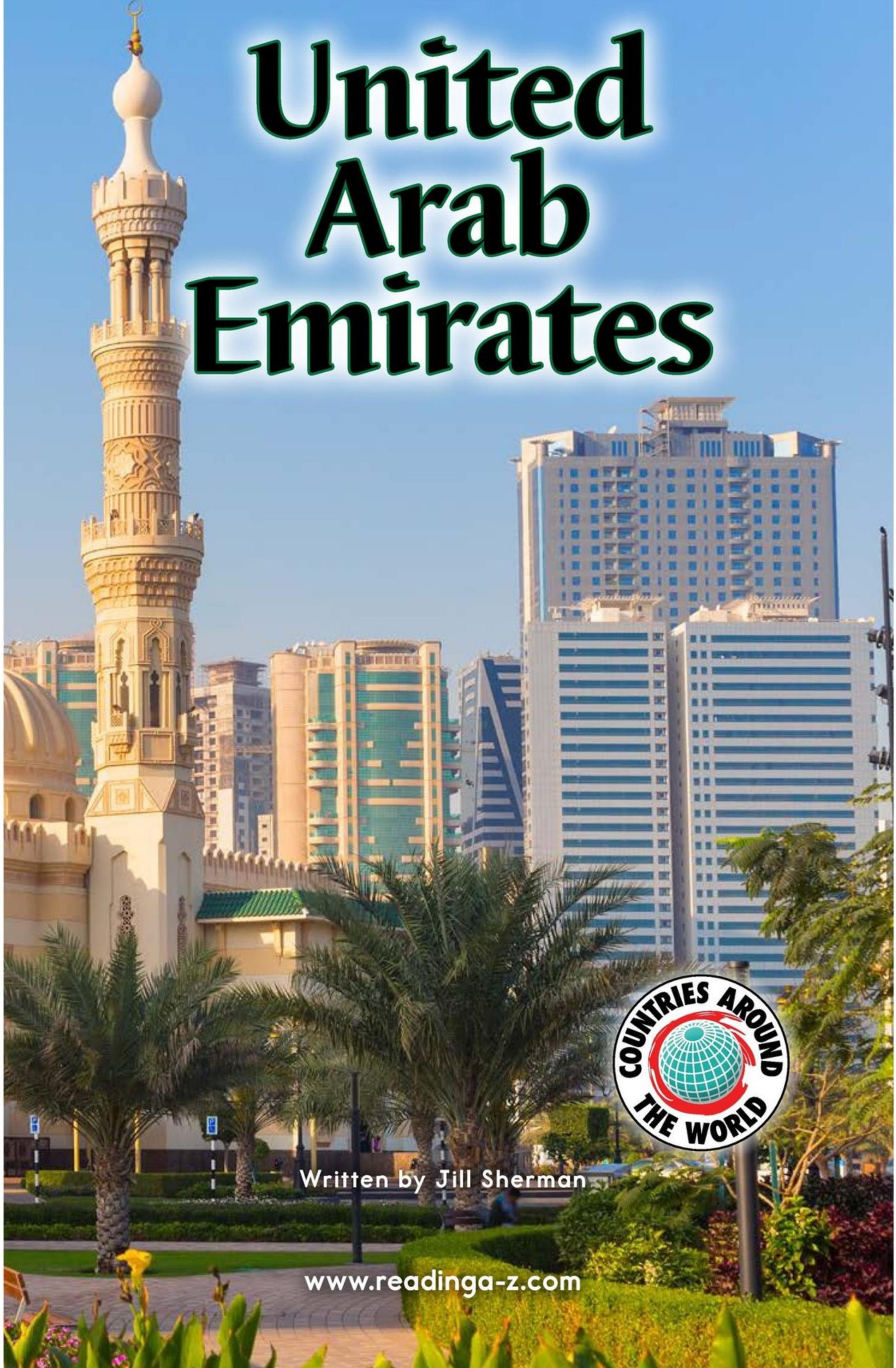


LEVELED Book • Z

United Arab Emirates

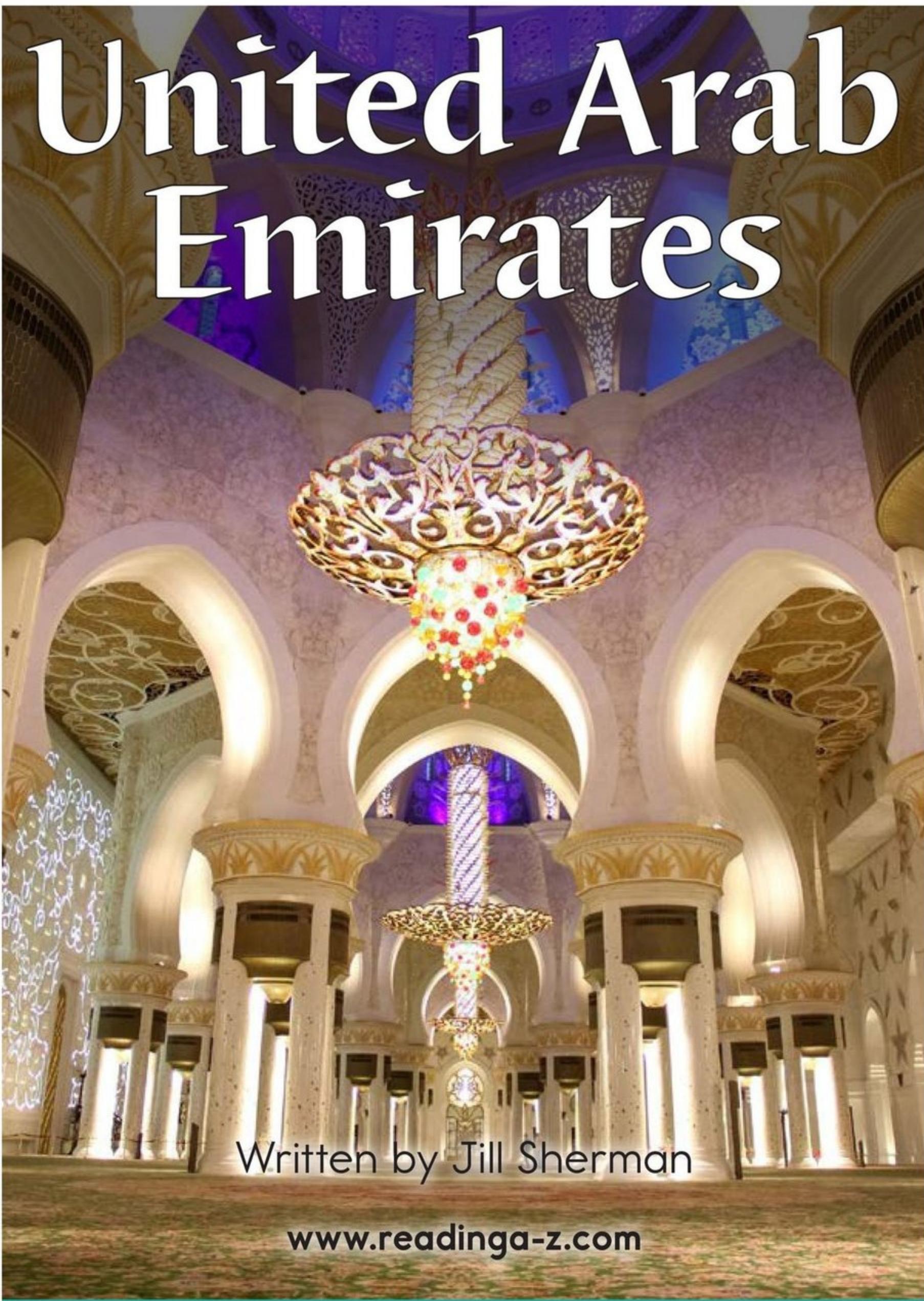


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United Arab Emirates



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Focus Question

How has the United Arab Emirates become a successful modern country while still holding on to its Arabic past?

Words to Know

architecture
dialects
economy
federation
fertile
immigrants
mosques

negotiated
reserves
rivalry
shoals
species
truce

Front cover: The Altaqwa Mosque in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates (UAE), stands out against the modern buildings of the area.

Title page: The white marble interior of the UAE's Shaikh Zayed Mosque glows with purple light.

Page 3: A family shops in a mall in Dubai.

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Correlation

LEVEL Z	
Fountas & Pinnell	U-V
Reading Recovery	N/A
DRA	50



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Where Is It?

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a Middle Eastern country. The Middle East region is located at the hub of three continents: Asia, Africa, and Europe. Most of the countries in the Middle East are entirely in Asia, though some lie either completely or partially in Africa and Europe. The UAE is entirely in Asia. It covers about 83,600 square kilometers (32,278 sq. mi.) of the Arabian Peninsula and shares borders with Saudi Arabia and Oman.

The majority of the UAE coastline runs along the Persian Gulf, which is called the Arabian Gulf by people in the region. It flows outward to the Indian Ocean. A small part of its eastern coast lies directly on the Gulf of Oman. In all, the UAE has 1,318 kilometers (819 mi.) of coastline.

The UAE is a **federation** of seven independent Arab states, which include Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah (SHAR-juh), Ajman (ej-MAHN), Umm al Quwain (OOM AHL ky-WAYN), Ras al Khaimah (RAHS AHL KY-muh), and Al Fujairah (AHL foo-JY-ruh). Each state has its own capital city, which shares the name of the state. The federation's capital city, Abu Dhabi, lies on an island in the gulf.

Abu Dhabi, the UAE's second-largest city, dates back to 3,000 BCE. Modern Abu Dhabi blends its ancient culture with contemporary **architecture**. The city has both stately white-domed **mosques** and shining skyscrapers.

Northeast of Abu Dhabi stands the country's largest city, Dubai, which serves as a center for trade and tourism. Though both cities show off their wealth, Dubai shines brightly. It is home to the world's tallest building, the only seven-star hotel, and one of the largest artificial islands.

Do You Know?

Dubai is one of the fastest-growing cities in the world. In 1968, there were just thirteen cars in the entire city. Today, planners are building double-decker roads for the city's 1.4 million vehicles.

A modern roadway in Dubai



People

Although millions of people live in the UAE, most are not citizens; **immigrants** make up a majority of the UAE's total population. Most hail from other Arab countries or South Asia, and have relocated to the UAE for work.

The UAE's citizens, called Emirati, are descended from the Arab tribes that settled the region long ago, and although these tribes have a history of **rivalry**, many share certain traditions. For example, most UAE citizens prefer to wear traditional Arab clothing. The men wear a long, white, cotton, ankle-length garment, a head covering, and a light scarf (either white or red checkered). Traditional women don two kinds of dress: At home, they might wear a dress with loose pants. Outside, they must dress modestly and usually wear a dark cloak and use a scarf to cover their head. At times women also cover their faces. The scarves have religious meaning but also serve as protection from the sun.



A UAE family poses for a portrait. Children wear traditional clothing at more formal occasions.

Islam is the most common religion in the UAE, and in 2005, Muslims made up the majority of the UAE population.

In the UAE, most people speak Arabic, which is the country's official language. In schools, students learn Modern Standard Arabic, but most Emiratis also speak **dialects** of surrounding countries. Many people speak English as well.

The UAE's biggest businesses—oil and construction—are traditionally male-dominated industries, and many of the foreign workers who move to the UAE for jobs are young men without families. Because these foreign workers make up so much of the population, more men than women live in the UAE. Men make up two-thirds of the total population.

A construction worker on a skyscraper in Abu Dhabi.



Landforms of the United Arab Emirates



Land

On the coast, the UAE is hot and humid; swamps and marshes thickly cover the land, while **shoals** and islands spot the coastline. In the east, the Hajar Mountains rise 2,000 meters (6,500 ft.). Overall, the country receives very little rainfall—the UAE's yearly rainfall amounts to just 10–15 centimeters (4–6 in.)—but what little it gets falls in the cooler mountain areas. The mountains make up just a small part of the UAE.

Inland desert makes up the majority of the UAE's geography. Here the sun beats down even hotter than on the coast, with desert temperatures that soar as high as 49°C (120°F). Winds from the north sometimes blast the region with dust and sand, which may carry for miles. These winds help create some of the world's largest sand dunes.

Although most of the desert is unlivable, oases offer some relief. These desert areas are **fertile** spots that allow plants and some animals to thrive. The fourth-largest city in UAE is Al Ain, which lies about 160 kilometers (100 mi.) east of Abu Dhabi and has a population of more than 614,000. In the middle of the city is the largest UAE oasis, also called Al Ain, where fruit trees grow.

In the desert, plant life is limited to grasses and thorny bushes, but in oases, date palms, alfalfa, mangoes, and other crops are harvested. The UAE's desert wildlife includes the Arabian oryx, Gordon's wildcat, sand fox, and sand gazelles. Overhunting has threatened some **species**, such as the Arabian oryx, with extinction. People came to the oryx's rescue by taking the animals into captivity and placing them in breeding groups to keep the species going.



Arabian Oryx



Gordon's Wildcat



Sand Fox



Sand Gazelle

History

Humans have lived on the Arabian Peninsula for thousands of years. Wandering groups settled in the area and eventually adopted Islam around 600 CE. Over several centuries, the gulf became an important trade route linking Europe to Asia. In the 1600s, England established itself as one of the strongest powers in the region.

In the 1700s, the Arab states that make up what we know today as the UAE began to form as sheikhdoms, or areas ruled by leaders called *sheikhs*, which fought each other for control of the region. Britain took control of trade routes in the region in the early 1800s. In 1820, Great Britain signed a peace treaty, or **truce**, with the sheikhs of the coastal tribes. Later, these states signed additional truces, and the sheikhdoms came to be called the Trucial States.

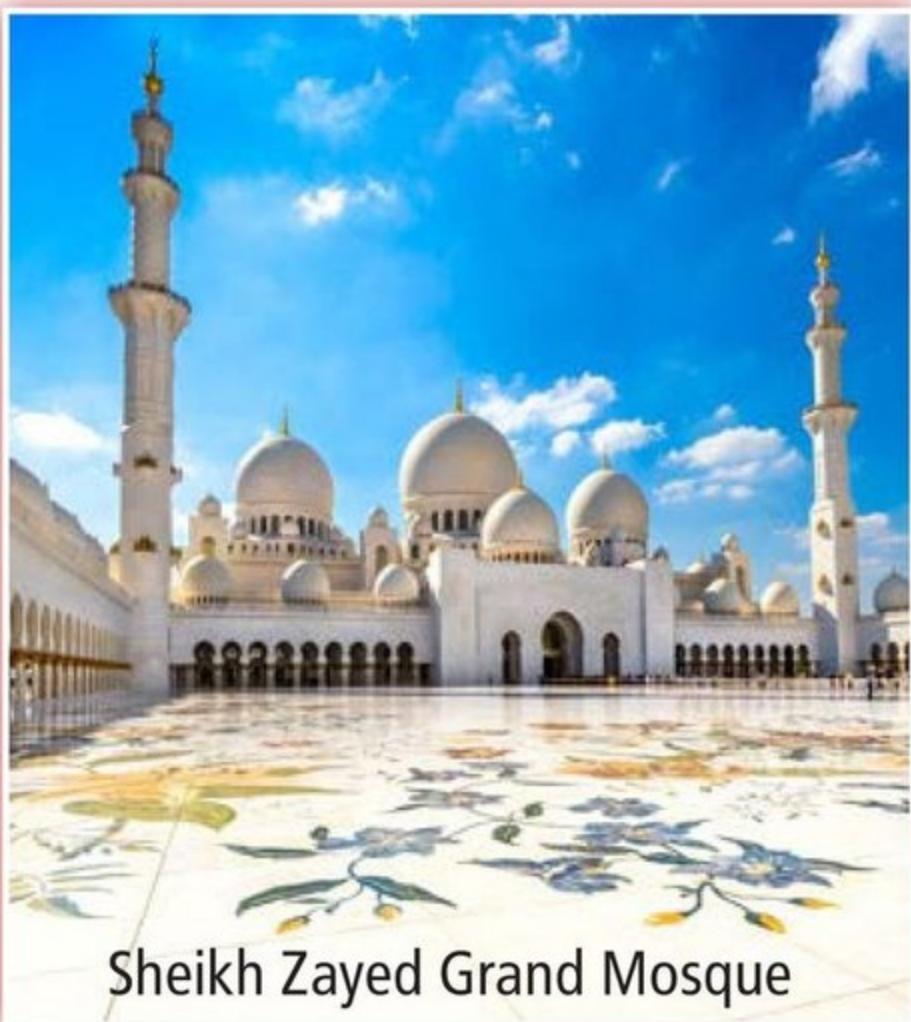
In the mid-1900s, the Sheikh in control of Abu Dhabi agreed to let British-owned oil companies look over the land. After several decades of searching, the oil company Abu Dhabi Marine Areas detected a large oil deposit in 1958. In the years that followed, oil was also discovered in Dubai and Sharjah, and foreign oil companies quickly began drilling in the Trucial States. The **economy** of the UAE improved dramatically and quickly.

Due to financial problems, Great Britain was no longer able to afford to keep a military presence in the region. In 1968, Great Britain announced its plan to withdraw from the gulf. The Trucial States, along with Qatar and Bahrain, decided to form a federation, so they **negotiated** to decide what the Trucial States would become. Qatar and Bahrain eventually decided to become independent countries, but six of the Trucial States joined together as the UAE in 1971. A seventh state, Ras al-Khaymah, joined in 1972. At this point, all the states had gained independence from Britain and became the UAE.

The UAE is also a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Along with Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Oman, the GCC works together on security and economic projects. For example, the organization has strengthened military cooperation between member countries.

Emirati girls carry their country's flag in a parade on National Day on December 2. Each year, the UAE celebrates its independence on this day.





Landmarks

The Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Dubai is one of the largest and most famous landmarks in the country. The Mosque honors Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, who helped build the UAE's

strong economy while preserving its Islamic culture. As a building that keeps the traditional domes of Islamic mosque style, the mosque symbolizes Islam's focus on respect, love, and peace.

Emirates Palace Hotel, though not home to royalty, is a landmark of Arab culture. In Dubai, marked by luxury hotels, the palace stands out. It is located on 85 hectares (210 acres) of landscaped garden space and 1.3 kilometers (0.8 mi.) of private beach property. The palace has 348 luxury rooms, 14 world-class restaurants, and a host of other offerings for visitors to enjoy.

At an incredible 830 meters (2,723 ft.), the Burj Khalifa skyscraper in Dubai sets the record as the tallest building in the world. Unlike the Grand Mosque or Emirates Palace, Burj Khalifa is an entirely modern construction, which, for the growing UAE, represents the future of Dubai.

The Burj Khalifa tower took six years to build and opened in 2010.



Palm Jumeirah

Another record-breaking landmark in Dubai is Palm Jumeirah, one of the world's largest human-made islands. When viewed from above, the design looks like a palm tree. Originally billed as the eighth wonder of the world, this first-class tourist destination houses four thousand luxury villas and apartments, which some people have made their permanent homes.

Parks and ski resorts are tourist spots in most places, but in the desert country of the UAE their mere presence, combined with their enormous size, makes them worthy landmarks. Ferrari World in Abu Dhabi is a huge indoor theme park at 86,000 square meters (925,696 sq. ft.) and the first Ferrari-themed park. Visitors enjoy thrill rides and drive miniature cars. Ski Dubai has slopes, slides, and jumps in its 3,000-square-meter (32,292 sq. ft.) machine-made snow park.

Conclusion

The UAE has a long and interesting history. When oil companies uncovered its vast **reserves**, the UAE began to flourish economically, and opportunities there drew immigrants. As immigrants continue to move to the UAE, the culture is constantly changing. While it holds onto its Arabic past, modern citizens remain ready to build the UAE bigger and better. The future of the UAE looks bright.



Mosques that are hundreds of years old are often surrounded by modern skyscrapers creating a beautiful contrast in the UAE.



Population: 5,927,482

Land: 83,600 sq km (32,278 sq. mi.)

Capital City: Abu Dhabi

Primary Language: Arabic

Primary Religion: Islam

Name of Currency: UAE dirham



Source: CIA World Factbook (2016)

Glossary

architecture (<i>n.</i>)	the design and construction of buildings (p. 5)
dialects (<i>n.</i>)	forms of language that are used in specific regions or by specific groups of people (p. 7)
economy (<i>n.</i>)	the circulation of money in industry, trade, and finance in a country or area (p. 10)
federation (<i>n.</i>)	a large, political group made up of smaller groups united by a common goal (p. 5)
fertile (<i>adj.</i>)	producing or able to produce a lot of plants or crops (p. 9)
immigrants (<i>n.</i>)	people who come to live in a new country, especially for the purpose of settling there (p. 6)
mosques (<i>n.</i>)	places of worship in the Islamic faith (p. 5)
negotiated (<i>v.</i>)	tried to reach a formal agreement through discussion (p. 11)
reserves (<i>n.</i>)	supplies of things set aside or stored for future use (p. 14)
rivalry (<i>n.</i>)	the state of being in competition, often for a prize or superiority (p. 6)
shoals (<i>n.</i>)	high ground under water that is dangerous to boats (p. 8)
species (<i>n.</i>)	groups of living things that are physically similar and can reproduce (p. 9)
truce (<i>n.</i>)	an agreement not to fight (p. 10)

United Arab Emirates

A Reading A-Z Level Z Leveled Book

Word Count: 1,551

Connections

Writing

Research more about the history of the United Arab Emirates. Write an essay explaining what led to the formation and the independence of the country.

Social Studies

Make a travel brochure for the United Arab Emirates. Highlight important facts about the history and culture, places to visit, and what tourists should consider when planning their trip.

The logo for Reading A-Z features the word "Reading" in a red, sans-serif font. The letter "R" has a small sun-like icon above it, consisting of several short lines radiating from a central point. To the right of "Reading" is a vertical green bar with the letters "A-Z" in white. The entire logo is set against a background of palm trees and modern buildings under a clear blue sky.

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