

## 7

# Architecture

## 7.1 ICONIC BUILDINGS

### IN THIS UNIT

**GRAMMAR**

- the passive

**VOCABULARY**

- describing buildings
- idioms
- prefixes

**SCENARIO**

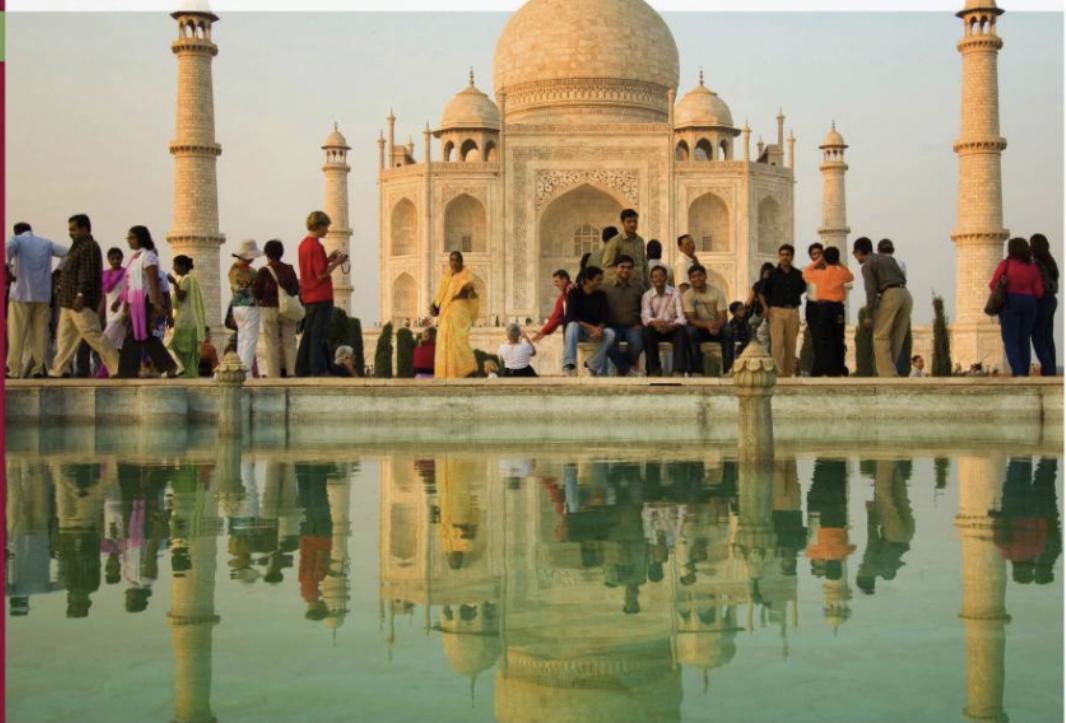
- talking about requirements
- deciding on facilities in a hotel

**STUDY SKILLS**

- identifying fact and opinion

**WRITING SKILLS**

- an opinion-led essay



*A house is a machine for living in.* Le Corbusier (Charles-Edouard Jeanneret-Gris), 1887–1965, Swiss architect

### VOCABULARY

**DESCRIBING BUILDINGS**

**1** What is your favourite building? Why do you like it?



**2a** Are these adjectives for describing buildings positive, negative or neutral?

- |             |            |              |          |
|-------------|------------|--------------|----------|
| ancient     | classical  | contemporary | derelict |
| dilapidated | elegant    | graceful     | imposing |
| impressive  | innovative | magnificent  | ornate   |
| run-down    | stylish    | traditional  | ugly     |



**2b** Decide which adjectives in Exercise 2a can describe a building which is:

- 1 not in good condition
- 2 not modern
- 3 unattractive
- 4 new and different
- 5 attractive
- 6 decorative
- 7 modern
- 8 important-looking

### PRONUNCIATION



**3** **7.1 Word stress** Underline the stress on the adjectives in Exercise 2a. Put them in groups of words with first- and second-syllable stress. Compare your ideas with a partner, then listen and check.

### A THE COLOSSEUM

I always visit the Colosseum when I'm in Rome; it's magnificent. I suppose it's what many people think of when you say classical architecture. It's an incredibly impressive building, and to me represents the power of the Roman Empire. It was constructed way back in AD 80. It's a vast amphitheatre and big crowds used to go there to watch gladiators and fights between wild animals. It's made of stone and concrete, and although it was damaged by earthquakes in the 15th century, the main structure has survived for almost 2,000 years. It used to look rather run-down, but recently it has been renovated and partly restored.



**4** Look at the photos on these pages. Describe each building. Which do you like most? Why?



**5a** Match verbs 1–8 with their meanings a–h.

- |              |                                       |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 damage     | a repair to put in original condition |
| 2 rebuild    | b keep in good condition              |
| 3 construct  | c build                               |
| 4 demolish   | d ask someone to build                |
| 5 maintain   | e erect again                         |
| 6 restore    | f plan                                |
| 7 commission | g harm                                |
| 8 design     | h knock down                          |



**5b** Put the verbs in order to show the stages in the life of a building.

## READING

**6a** Read the statements. Are they true or false? Guess the answers from your knowledge. Compare your ideas with a partner.

### The Colosseum

- 1 was built in the 15th century.
- 2 was a place where people watched fights.
- 3 is older than the other two structures.
- 4 is currently in very bad condition.

### The Taj Mahal

- 5 was built as a palace for an emperor.
- 6 was constructed over 500 years ago.
- 7 is in danger.

### The Eiffel Tower

- 8 has always been popular.
- 9 was the world's tallest building.
- 10 was never intended to be permanent.

**6b** Read the website texts and check your answers.

### B THE TAJ MAHAL

I love the Taj Mahal in Agra, India. Seeing it for the first time was a breathtaking moment. It was built by Emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his wife, who died in childbirth. Although it looks like a palace, it is a tomb. It's strange that something so beautiful was built for such a sad reason. It looks very traditional with the huge dome, but actually the design also feels very contemporary, even though it was finished in 1653. The white marble exterior and its carvings look amazing in the sun. The interior decoration is also very detailed and ornate. It was built using materials from all around India and Asia, and using over 1,000 elephants. I read that in the 19th century it was looking quite dilapidated, but was then restored. It seems environmental pollution is the biggest threat today as it is making the marble yellow.

**7** Match words in the texts with their meanings 1–10.

- 1 a circular building with seats arranged on a slope (text A)
- 2 continued to exist in difficult conditions (text A)
- 3 repair a building so it is in good condition (text A)
- 4 a place for a dead person (text B)
- 5 a round roof on a building (text B)
- 6 the outside (text B)
- 7 the inside (text B)
- 8 a building which is easily noticed (text C)
- 9 not lasting or needed for very long (text C)
- 10 something ugly or very unpleasant to look at (text C)



## SPEAKING AND WRITING

**8** Work with a partner. Describe a building in your country or a country you know well. Talk about these topics.

- where it is
- why you like it
- what is special about it
- why you would recommend a visitor to see it

**9** Interpreting ideas Discuss the questions with your partner.

- 1 What do you think is the most iconic building in your country?
- 2 Do you think it is a good representation of your architectural culture? Why?/Why not?
- 3 What buildings in other countries do you consider to be iconic?

**10** Write a paragraph about the building you discussed in Exercise 8 or 9.



### MEET THE EXPERT

Watch an interview with Laura Mark, an architectural journalist, about innovative designs.

Turn to page 152 for video activities.

### C THE EIFFEL TOWER

My favourite building, or structure, I suppose, is the Eiffel Tower in Paris. It's one of the world's best-known landmarks and it captures the atmosphere of Paris for me. It looks so elegant and graceful rising above the city. It was commissioned and designed as a temporary structure for the 1889 Universal Exhibition, but has never been taken down, although apparently at the time there was a lot of opposition from the public to it, with many people calling it an eyesore. It's massive. I think it's about 300 metres tall – and it was the world's tallest structure until about 1930. When it was built, it was a very innovative design, but it takes a lot to maintain – each part of it is repainted every seven years!



## SPEAKING AND READING

**1** Work with a partner to discuss the questions.

- 1 Where do most people live in your country? In houses or apartments?
- 2 How large is the average house/apartment? Is limited space a common problem?
- 3 Do young people tend to live with their parents or live alone? Why?

**2a** Look at the photos and describe them. Which looks the most interesting building, and why?

**2b** Read the article and match the photos with parts 1–4.

**3** Read the article again and complete the table.

	1	2	3	4
Who designed it?				
Where is the building?				
What materials are used?				
How big is the building?				
Why is the building special?				

**4 Evaluating** Work in small groups to discuss the questions.

- 1 What are the advantages and disadvantages of living in each house?
- 2 Which house would you most like to live in, and why?
- 3 Which of the following do you think are the most important problems facing architects in your country?
  - insulation (maintaining heat in cold climates)
  - keeping cool in hot climates
  - efficient use of space
  - being environmentally friendly
  - fitting in with the local surroundings
  - being visually attractive

**5** Match words in the article with their meanings 1–6.

- 1 excellent and unusual (part 1)
- 2 extremely clever (part 1)
- 3 many (part 2)
- 4 not having enough space (part 3)
- 5 the shape or arrangement of the parts of something (part 3)
- 6 tiny (part 4)

## GRAMMAR

THE PASSIVE (1)

**6a** Look at the three highlighted examples of the passive in the article. Match them with statements a and b.

- a We use the passive if the agent is unimportant, obvious or unknown.
- b If the agent is specified, this comes at the end of the clause and follows by.

**6b** Match the highlighted examples with the tenses.

- present simple
- present continuous
- future simple

**6c** How are the passives formed?

→ Language reference and extra practice, pages 126–149

**7** Complete the sentences with the correct passive form of the verb (present simple, present continuous or future simple). Sometimes there is more than one possible answer.

- 1 At present, several space-saving houses \_\_\_\_\_ (manufacture) by our firm.
- 2 Triangular floating schools \_\_\_\_\_ (build) in Nigeria in the near future.
- 3 The house \_\_\_\_\_ (make) mainly of glass.
- 4 New apartments \_\_\_\_\_ (build) across the street.
- 5 Next year, the disused garages \_\_\_\_\_ (convert) into affordable homes.
- 6 Research \_\_\_\_\_ (carry out) by the R&D team into the living needs of young adults.
- 7 The project \_\_\_\_\_ (not finish) on time if we don't get the information we need.

## LISTENING

**8a** **7.2** Marta Gattarosa, an architect, is answering questions from students of architecture. Listen and write the three questions they ask.

**8b** Listen again and take notes on her answers.

**8c** Compare your notes with a partner.

## SPEAKING

**9** Work in small groups. Why do young people increasingly live with their parents till later in life? Think about these questions and discuss.

- Is it more expensive for young people these days (college loans, expensive car insurance)?
- What percentage of their income do people spend on rent/mortgage?
- Is there a lack of affordable housing?
- Are there other reasons why young people might choose to stay at home?
- Are people getting married and having families when they are older?

**A**

**B**

**C**

**D**

## Who wants to live in a house like this?

**From the 'Sliding House' to Poland's narrowest house, Sachiko Kimura chooses her favourite homes that solve space problems or deal with the challenge of the climate.**

**1 The Sliding House**  
This remarkable building was built in Suffolk, UK, by architects dRMM. They were asked by the owners to prioritise three things: light, space and a connection with the outdoors. The architects came up with a space that changes, using a huge, 20-tonne sliding glass cover on railway tracks. The cover protects the building and also transforms it. The building lives and breathes and is an ingenious solution. But most of all, I think it is fun and makes people smile when they see it. At present, several sliding houses are being manufactured by dRMM.

**2 Reflection of the Mineral**  
I have always loved Japanese space-saving architecture and especially the brilliant capsule hotels. This 146m<sup>2</sup> house, built in Nagano, Tokyo, is proof that 'less is more'. It was designed by Yasuhiro Yamashita and I like the successful use of modern architectural ideas combined with clever use of space as well as structural design. It really has made use of every inch of space available. Even the furniture and appliances have been constructed keeping the contours of this extraordinary building in mind. The house has won numerous architectural awards and experts think it will soon be recognised as a landmark in its own right.

**3 Domestic Transformer**  
Hong Kong is one of the world's most densely populated cities. Architect Gary Chang grew up there in a tiny flat with six others. Chang has come up with an innovative answer to the increasingly cramped lives of many urban dwellers. I think he has transformed his cramped apartment into something really special. The tiny 32m<sup>2</sup> rectangular apartment has polished chrome walls that can change into 24 different configurations, each serving a specific need. The space available can change into a home theatre, spa, kitchen, bedroom or a chill-out room with a hammock, depending on what Chang needs at any moment. Chang hopes his dwelling offers a viable life-enhancing alternative for people in Hong Kong who can't afford anything bigger.

**4 Keret's House**  
I was intrigued by Poland's narrowest house. The tiny house measures just 91cm across at the narrowest point and is wedged into the gap between two buildings in Warsaw. It is clearly not designed with family life in mind and is only just big enough for one person to inch their way from the single bed through the minuscule kitchen and into the tiny toilet. The building started life as an art installation designed by film maker Etgar Keret, who then decided to use the property as a workplace when he was in Poland. There is only a total floor space of 46 square feet in the two-floor structure which is made of iron.

## GRAMMAR

**G1 THE PASSIVE: PRESENT SIMPLE AND CONTINUOUS, FUTURE SIMPLE AND -ING FORMS**

Form the present simple passive with *am/is/are + past participle*.

The castle **is protected** by high walls.

Form the present continuous passive with *am/is/are being + past participle*.

We're **being watched**.

! Form the future simple passive with *will be + past participle*.

The new bridge **will be opened** next year.

! The form of *be* agrees with the subject of the passive verb.

A bag **was** stolen.

Ten bags **were** stolen.

! Form the passive of *-ing* forms with *being + past participle*, for example after prepositions.

The children **insisted on being taken** to the zoo.

I don't like **being watched**.

Intransitive verbs (verbs which don't have an object) cannot be made passive.

The train **was arrived** on time. ✗

We often use the passive when:

- the agent is obvious from the context.

The man **was arrested** yesterday. (obviously by the police)

I'm **going to be given** a promotion. (obviously by my boss)

- the agent is unknown or isn't important.

My watch **has been stolen**.

The house **has been demolished**.

**G2 THE PASSIVE: PAST SIMPLE AND CONTINUOUS, PRESENT PERFECT, INFINITIVES**

Form the past simple passive with *was/were + past participle*.

The building **was demolished** in 2005.

Form the past continuous passive with *was/were being + past participle*.

The rooms **were being decorated** so we couldn't go in.

Form the present perfect passive with *has/have been + past participle*.

The factory **has been designed** by a Spanish architect.

Form the past perfect passive with *had been + past participle*.

The flight **had been cancelled** because of fog.

Form the passive of infinitives with *to be + past participle*.

The builders are scheduled **to complete** the work within two years. (The work is scheduled **to be completed** within two years.)

I wanted somebody **to help** me. (I wanted **to be helped**.)

**G3 USE OF THE PASSIVE**

In English we prefer to start a new sentence with a familiar subject (something that has already been mentioned). The passive can help us do this.

**The house** is in Illinois. It was designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. ✓

**The house** is in Illinois. Frank Lloyd Wright designed **it**. ✗

We usually prefer to put short subjects at the beginning of a sentence and longer expressions at the end. The passive helps us do this.

The new bridge was designed by an engineer who had previously worked on a bridge in Spain. ✓

An engineer who had previously worked on a bridge in Spain designed the new bridge. ✗

## KEY LANGUAGE

**KL TALKING ABOUT REQUIREMENTS**

## ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

We really must have ...

... it's vital we have ...

It's absolutely essential to offer ...

It's a priority ...

We've got to offer them ...

We certainly need ...

## DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS

It'd be very popular with ...

We should offer them (something) ...

## POSSIBLE REQUIREMENTS

It might be a good idea to have ...

We could also consider ...

Another possibility would be to ...

## VOCABULARY

**V1 DESCRIBING BUILDINGS**

ancient, classical, contemporary, cramped, derelict, dilapidated, elegant, graceful, imposing, impressive, ingeneous, innovative, magnificent, minuscule, numerous, ornate, remarkable, run-down, stylish, temporary, traditional, vast, ugly  
amphitheatre (n), configuration (n), dome (n), exterior (n), eyesore (n), interior (n), landmark (n)

**V2 VERBS USED WITH BUILDINGS**

commission, construct, damage, demolish, design, maintain, rebuild, restore, renovate, survive

**V3 IDIOMS**

build bridges, burn one's bridges, cross a/that bridge when we come to it, water under the bridge

**V4 PREFIXES IN-, MIS-, OVER-, RE-, UN-**

indisputable, insensitive, insignificant, insoluble, misplaced, misunderstand, overcome, overcrowded, redefine, revitalise, uncrowded, unimportant, unusual

## READING



**1** Do you recognise the bridges in the photos? What is the most impressive bridge in your country?

**2** Read the introduction to the article. Which of these reasons account for the importance of bridges?

- 1 They are essential for transporting goods and trade.
- 2 They have military significance.
- 3 They bring beauty into our lives.
- 4 They symbolise people or places.
- 5 They give people more belief in their ability to achieve things.



**3** Read the rest of the article and answer the questions.

- 1 Which bridge was made with soft stone?
- 2 Which was built to resist disasters?
- 3 Which changes its dimensions according to the temperature?
- 4 Which looks like a musical instrument?

**4 Comparing features** Read the article again and make notes. Compare the bridges in terms of age, length, appearance and use.

Alamillo Bridge



Akashi Kaikyo Bridge



## VOCABULARY



**5** Read the introduction again. Complete the sentences with the correct form of the idioms in the article.

- 1 I'm not leaving this job till I've got something to go to. I don't want to \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 We don't need to look at the problem of falling sales yet. Let's \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3 Don't worry about it anymore. It's \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 I've had a few arguments with colleagues. If I want to get promoted, I need to \_\_\_\_\_.



**6a** Look at the words in the box. Underline the prefixes, then match them with meanings 1–4.

indisputable    misplaced    overcome    revitalise  
unusual

- 1 again
- 2 not (x2 prefixes)
- 3 wrongly
- 4 be too strong / too much



**6b** Add prefixes to the words to change the meaning.

- 1 important
- 2 understand
- 3 crowded
- 4 significant
- 5 define
- 6 sensitive

## BRIDGING THE GAP

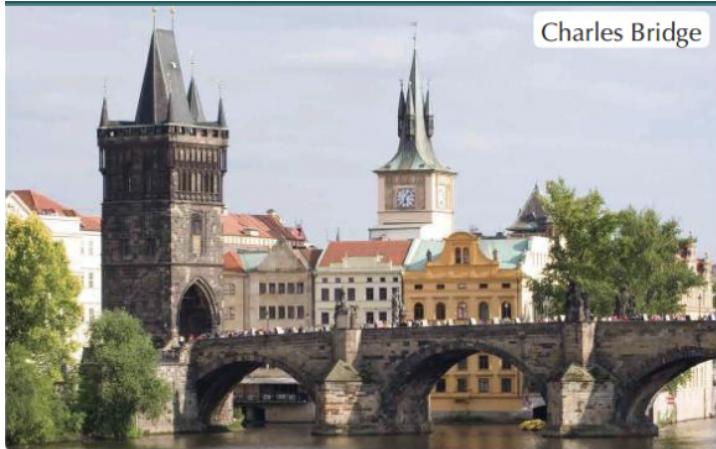
**M**easured by the effect they have on our spirits and imagination, bridges are the highest form of architecture. They stand as metaphors for so much in life. 'Let's cross that bridge when we come to it,' I remark, when I want to put off thinking about some nasty dilemma. If I quit a secure job, I am 'burning my bridges'. If I make friends with strangers, I am 'building bridges'. If I argue with someone, but want to forget it and be friends again, I say, 'It's all water under the bridge.'

Why do we hold bridges in such regard? One reason is surely that, because of their strategic importance, they are often scenes of fierce battles and thrilling heroics. Another is that a bridge can often embody the spirit of a city, even an entire nation, as the Sydney Harbour or Brooklyn Bridges do, or the Stari Most did until it was destroyed in the Bosnian conflict. (Fortunately, it has since been rebuilt and is now listed as a World Heritage Site.)

But perhaps the chief reason is that a bridge is a leap of daring: a symbol of mankind's belief in its ability to overcome any natural obstacle, no matter how wide, deep or windswept. That belief has occasionally been tragically misplaced, for example the collapse of the Hintze-Ribeiro bridge in Portugal killing fifty-nine people, but it has never been shattered.

What's indisputable is that our own age has seen one of the most innovative bursts of bridge-building ever.

Charles Bridge



Golden Gate Bridge



- Built for Expo 92, the Alamillo Bridge across the River Guadalquivir in Seville demonstrates how a striking new bridge can revitalise an old city. **The bridge**, which was designed by Santiago Calatrava, is supported by a pylon and cables which form the graceful shape of a harp. It has a span of 200 metres and was painted in Calatrava's trade mark bright white.
- The Akashi Kaikyo Bridge in Japan is the longest, tallest and costliest suspension bridge ever constructed. It took around ten years to be completed. Connecting Kobe with Awaji-Shima Island, **this bridge has been built to** withstand hurricanes, tidal waves and earthquakes. In 1995, an earthquake added a metre to the bridge's length while it was still being built. It has a total length of 3,910 metres.
- The famous Charles Bridge (Karlov Most) was built in the 14th century and named after the king. It is unusual because it is made of sandstone, not hard granite, which required some maintenance work in the 15th century after a flood. Street vendors, street artists and tourists can always be seen along its 500-metre length.
- The Golden Gate Bridge spans the mile-wide mouth of San Francisco Bay. The total length of the bridge is 2,739 metres. The bridge expands on hot days and contracts when it is cold. On hot days, the heat lengthens the cable. As a result, the bridge becomes 4.9 metres lower and 1.8 metres longer. **The bridge was opened on 21 May 1937** with a 'pedestrians' day', during which 200,000 people walked across the bridge. On the morning of the following day it was opened to traffic.

## GRAMMAR

## THE PASSIVE (2)

**7a** Look again at the article and underline examples of the past simple passive and the present perfect simple passive. How are they formed?

**7b** Look at sentences 1 and 2 from the article. Match them with forms a and b.

- 1 An earthquake added a metre to the bridge's length while it was still being built.
  - 2 It took around ten years to be completed.
- a passive infinitive  
b past continuous passive

→ Language reference and extra practice, pages 126–149

**8** Correct the mistakes in bold in the report.

Complaints <sup>1</sup>have received about the recent construction of the Sheridan Hotel. It <sup>2</sup>was completing in November last year. While it <sup>3</sup>was constructing, many residents and business people of the town suffered great inconvenience. Building materials <sup>4</sup>were delivering at all hours of the day and night, and the noise level was unbearable. When the foundations <sup>5</sup>were digging, the air became polluted and the streets were very dusty. Complaints <sup>6</sup>were making daily to the Council, but nothing <sup>7</sup>was doing. As a result, several shops <sup>8</sup>have been closed for some weeks during the worst period and now several claims for compensation <sup>9</sup>have received by the Council. The hotel <sup>10</sup>has now built and the Council is meeting next week to discuss the complaints and what <sup>11</sup>is be done about compensation. We expect the conclusions <sup>12</sup>to publish by the end of the month.

**9a** Look at examples 1 and 2 of the passive. Match them with uses a and b.

- 1 The 'Gherkin' is an impressive example of modern architecture. It was designed by Lord Foster and Ken Shuttleworth.
  - 2 Many tourists have been impressed by the strange-shaped building in the City of London.
- a It is more natural to put subjects which consist of a long expression at the end of a sentence.  
b We prefer to start a new sentence with a familiar subject (something already mentioned).

**9b** Look at the highlighted passives in the article. Which use from Exercise 9a does each one illustrate?

## SPEAKING AND WRITING

**10** Work with a partner. You have a photo of one bridge and information about two. Share your information, then write a paragraph about your bridge.

Student A: look at page 155.

Student B: look at page 158.



**V3 7 Match the sentence halves.**

- 1 We should forgive that past mistake. It's
  - 2 You don't need to deal with that now – you can
  - 3 If you do that, you'll never be able to work there again, so don't
  - 4 After their past disagreements, they all need to
- a cross that bridge when you come to it.
  - b build bridges.
  - c burn your bridges.
  - d water under the bridge.
-

## SITUATION

**1** Work with a partner. Discuss what facilities you would expect to find in a top-class hotel and conference centre.



**2** Read the 'Invitation to Tender' document. What facilities are mentioned?



**3a** Read the document again and answer the questions.

- 1 What sort of reputation does HHCC have?
- 2 What will the ground floor look like?
- 3 What will the main purpose of the hotel be?
- 4 How will HHCC decide which architectural firm to choose for the design of the building?

**3b** Why do you think HHCC has chosen to build the hotel and conference centre in Rio de Janeiro?



## INVITATION TO TENDER

*Contract for the design of a luxury hotel and conference centre in Rio de Janeiro*

### Horizon Hotel & Conference Centre – 5 stars

[www.hotelhorizon.br](http://www.hotelhorizon.br) | 320 rooms

Candidates are asked to submit their letter of intent before 24 June.

**Horizon Hotels and Conference Centres (HHCC)** invites the architectural firms listed below to present a plan for designing a Hotel and Conference Centre in Rio de Janeiro.

**HHCC** is an international chain of high-class hotels and conference centres. It is famous for providing luxury accommodation and outstanding service. We intend the hotel to be used for conferences and congresses by groups from all over the world.

Selected architectural firms are asked to submit a plan for the ground floor of the building, which will be L-shaped. Details of the project are as follows.

The hotel will have seven floors:

**Basement** – equipment and storage

**Ground floor** – facilities to be decided

**First floor** – a large conference room, three meeting rooms and a seminar room

**Second floor** – office accommodation

**Third–fifth floors** – bedrooms

**Sixth floor** – a large restaurant, available for guests and the general public

The contract to design the hotel and conference centre will be awarded to the architectural firm which produces the best plan for the ground floor.





## KEY LANGUAGE

### TALKING ABOUT REQUIREMENTS



**4 7.3** Listen to three architects talking about designing the ground floor of a hotel. Answer the questions.



- 1 What four suggestions do the architects make to meet the needs of health-conscious guests?
- 2 What do the architects finally decide to do?



**5a** Listen again and tick the phrases you hear.

#### Talking about essential requirements

- 1 We really must have ...
- 2 It's vital we have ...
- 3 It's absolutely essential to offer ...
- 4 It's a priority ...
- 5 We've got to offer ...
- 6 We certainly need ...

#### Talking about desirable requirements

- 7 It'd be very popular with ...
- 8 We should offer them ...

#### Talking about possible requirements

- 9 It might be a good idea to ...
- 10 We could also consider ...
- 11 Another possibility would be to ...



**5b** Listen again and complete the phrases you have ticked with information from the conversation. Then check your answers by looking at Audio script 7.3 on page 176.

**5c** Practise saying the phrases. Pay attention to stress and intonation.



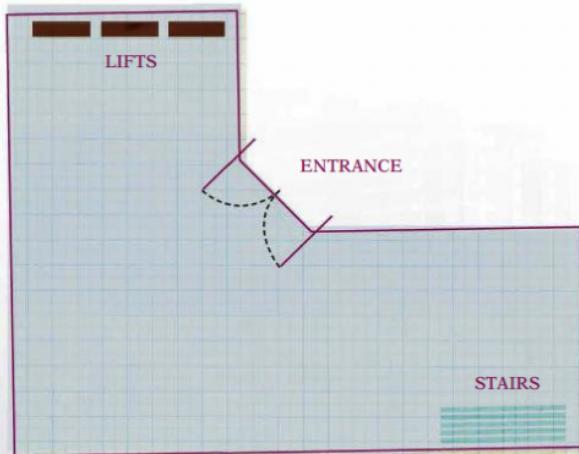
## TASK

### DECIDING ON FACILITIES IN A HOTEL

**6a** Two architectural firms are going to submit a plan for the ground floor. Work in three groups.

**Groups A (Lindsay Associates) and B (Jackson and Li Consultants):** You are the architectural firms. In your groups, discuss and decide what six facilities should be put on the ground floor and where each facility should be located. Study the diagram and draw a rough plan of the ground floor, with all its facilities.

**Group C (Representatives of Horizon Hotels and Conference Centres):** Discuss what six facilities should be on the ground floor. Think about where you might locate each facility.



**6b** The two firms (Groups A and B) present their plans for the ground floor to the HHCC representatives (Group C) and answer any questions.

**6c** HHCC representatives decide which architectural firm should be given the contract to design the ground floor, explaining the reasons for their choice.



## STUDY SKILLS

### IDENTIFYING FACT AND OPINION

**1a** Work in small groups. Read the definition of a 'high-rise apartment block'. Then discuss the essay question and give your opinions.

A high-rise apartment block can be defined as a building which has a large number of storeys and is equipped with elevators. It is generally 35 metres or greater in height.

**1b** Skim the essay. Does the writer agree with your opinions?

**2** Look again at the essay question. Which of the statements is the best description of this kind of essay? 

In an opinion-led essay, the writer:

- a presents the arguments objectively for and against a controversial issue.
- b discusses and evaluates the opinions of other writers on the essay topic.
- c states his/her opinions on the topic and supports them with evidence.

**'If they had a choice, few people would live in high-rise apartments.'**

**Discuss the statement and give your opinion.**

Because of expanding populations and the lack of space for building new houses, high-rise apartment blocks have become increasingly common in most of the world's major cities

5 and towns. However, some people say that residents in multi-storey buildings do not really enjoy living in them. It is claimed that they feel isolated, are often lonely and live in such blocks not by choice but out of necessity. This is a misconception. There are, in fact, many benefits of living in this type of accommodation and few disadvantages. Most people enjoy this style of living and do not crave for a house or low-level apartment.

10 The most significant advantage of choosing to live in a high-rise building is that the residents are close to most things they need for their everyday living. High-rise apartments tend to be in desirable, urban locations, near to the downtown area. As a result, residents have quick and easy access to shopping, nightlife, cultural institutions, transport facilities and often their place of work. However, there are also high-rise apartments situated in beautiful,

15 natural surroundings, such as parks, gardens and beach areas. These are generally outside the city centre and they will be chosen by people looking for an alternative to city life.

Another major advantage of high-rise accommodation is that it offers a wide range of shared amenities such as: doormen, controlled entry, fitness centres, swimming pools, recreation areas, morning coffee sessions and hosted events aimed at bringing residents together. These

20 provide opportunities for residents to get to know each other better. They develop a sense of community, which helps residents to avoid feelings of isolation and loneliness. The residents look out for each other, so that a sense of safety and security is fostered.

Critics of high-rise apartments point out that there are limited opportunities for gardening in such buildings. This is not entirely true since many residents have 25 balconies and they can use these to grow vegetables, plants and flowers. More importantly, there is a tendency nowadays for architects to design high-rise buildings which include 'green' spaces for trees, plants and shrubs. A high-rise building in Milan, Italy, 'BoscoVerticale' is typical of this trend. It will provide hundreds of new homes and bring a hectare of forest into the city's central business district. The building will 30 be a perfect model for architects designing tower blocks in the future.

To sum up, there are unquestionably many advantages of living in high-rise apartment buildings. Rather than creating feelings of isolation and loneliness, these buildings develop a sense of community and for many people they offer an ideal lifestyle. Such apartments will undoubtedly increase in the future because of the population growth 35 and lack of space in many countries.



**3** Read the essay again. In which paragraph(s) of the essay can you find the following?

- the writer's strongest argument to support his/her opinion
- a counter-argument which is challenged by the writer
- a strong opinion linking with the opening paragraph
- the opinion(s) of the writer on the topic
- additional arguments to support the writer's opinion



**4 Fact and opinion** What is the difference between a fact and an opinion? Complete the text with the words in the box.

belief emotions evaluation proved  
scientific subjective

A fact is true and based on <sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ testing or practical experience, not on ideas. It can be supported by objective evidence. An opinion is a <sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ that may or may not be true. It is normally <sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_. It can be based on a person's perspective, <sup>4</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ or understanding of something. The essential difference between a fact and an opinion is that a fact can be <sup>5</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ by study, research, <sup>6</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ or previous knowledge.



**5 Work in small groups.** Are the statements from the essay facts (F) or opinions (O)? Give reasons.

- Most people enjoy this style of living. (paragraph 1)
- High-rise apartments tend to be in desirable, urban locations. (paragraph 2)
- There are also high-rise apartments situated in beautiful, natural surroundings. (paragraph 2)
- These provide opportunities for residents to get to know each other better. (paragraph 3)
- There are limited opportunities for gardening in such buildings. (paragraph 4)
- There is a tendency nowadays for architects to design high-rise buildings which include 'green spaces'. (paragraph 4)
- The building will be a perfect model for architects designing tower blocks in the future. (paragraph 4)
- Living in such apartments will undoubtedly increase in the future. (paragraph 5)



**6 Find the phrases 1–6 in the essay. What can you infer about the writer's intention?**

- It is claimed that they feel isolated ... (paragraph 1)

You can infer from the phrase 'It is claimed ...' that the writer may not agree with this opinion.

- This is a misconception. (paragraph 1)
- This is not entirely true ... (paragraph 4)
- More importantly, ... (paragraph 4)
- Unquestionably ... (paragraph 5)
- Undoubtedly ... (paragraph 5)

## WRITING SKILLS

### AN OPINION-LED ESSAY



**7a Avoiding repetition – nouns** Most texts contain pronouns. These are used instead of a noun or noun phrase. Complete the lists with other pronouns that you know.

Personal pronouns: *I, she, him* ...

Possessive pronouns: *mine, hers, ...*

Demonstrative pronouns: *that, ...*

Relative pronouns: *who, ...*

Other pronouns: *one, ...*

**7b Look at the essay again. What do the highlighted pronouns refer to?**

*them* (line 6) = *high-rise apartments*

- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1 This (line 7)   | 5 which (line 21) |
| 2 their (line 14) | 6 This (line 24)  |
| 3 These (line 15) | 7 these (line 25) |
| 4 These (line 19) |                   |



**8a Avoiding repetition – nouns/noun phrases** It is common to avoid repeating nouns and noun phrases by using phrases with similar meanings. Find three alternative phrases in paragraph 1 which avoid repeating *high-rise apartment blocks* and one alternative in paragraph 4 for *tendency*.



**8b Avoiding repetition – verbs and adverbs** Find the following in the essay.

- two verbs in paragraph 3 which avoid repeating *offers*.
- an adverb in paragraph 5 which avoids repeating *unquestionably*.



**9 Improve this paragraph about high-rise apartments** by avoiding repeating nouns phrases, verbs, verb phrases and adverbs.



Another great advantage of high-rise apartments is that they are generally cheaper to buy than a house. They are also cheaper for living and maintenance. Buying an apartment typically costs from \$200,000–300,000, but buying a house will cost a lot more. Maintenance costs are undoubtedly cheaper for high-rise apartments because the surface area of high-rise apartments is smaller than the surface area of houses. Also, living and maintaining a house is generally a lot more time-consuming. A great argument, too, is that living above the ground in an apartment is more peaceful and less noisy than living in a house.

**10 Write an opinion-led essay on one of these questions.**

- Too much money is spent on maintaining and repairing old buildings rather than on building new, modern, space-saving ones.
- It is more important for a building to serve its purpose than to be a work of art.
- In old towns, new buildings should always be in the traditional style.
- Modern architecture is ugly compared with classical styles.

# H.W.

1)

1. While the Colosseum in Rome may be the most famous amphitheatre built by the Romans, more than 200 others have **survived/tolerated** throughout Europe and North Africa.
2. London's Tate Modern is one of the world's most visited art galleries. The gallery was created by **reinventing/renovating** the **exterior/extinct** walls of the derelict Bankside Power Station while completely transforming the **intensity/interior** into floors and space for art exhibitions, cafés and shops. The iconic Tate Modern building became instantly recognisable as one of London's major **landmarks/markings**.
3. A small town with a population of less than 4,000, Eggenburg in Austria would be unremarkable if it weren't for its most famous building: the Eggenburg Charnel. This building, a kind of **funeral/tomb**, has been constructed with the bones of almost 5,800 men and women who lived between the 12th and 14th centuries.
4. If the rumours are true, the PoMo is set to become the world's newest and biggest outdoor music festival. A team of 800 builders will work night and day to create a vast **part-time/temporary** some **doom/dome** the main music stages.

2)

Complete the text with the words below. There are three extra words you do not need

⌨ Keyboard instructions ▾



If only you could bottle it ...

Energy, as we all know, is a global issue: there are not only more people on the planet but there are also more uses for the energy we do have. Not surprisingly then, electricity is often expensive and many of the very poorest communities in the world simply cannot afford it. **numerous** solutions to this problem have been investigated but few can be as DRAG ITEM HERE as that of Brazilian mechanic, Alfredo Moser.

Moser has come up with a truly ingenious way of trapping sunlight in bottles in order to light up the dark,

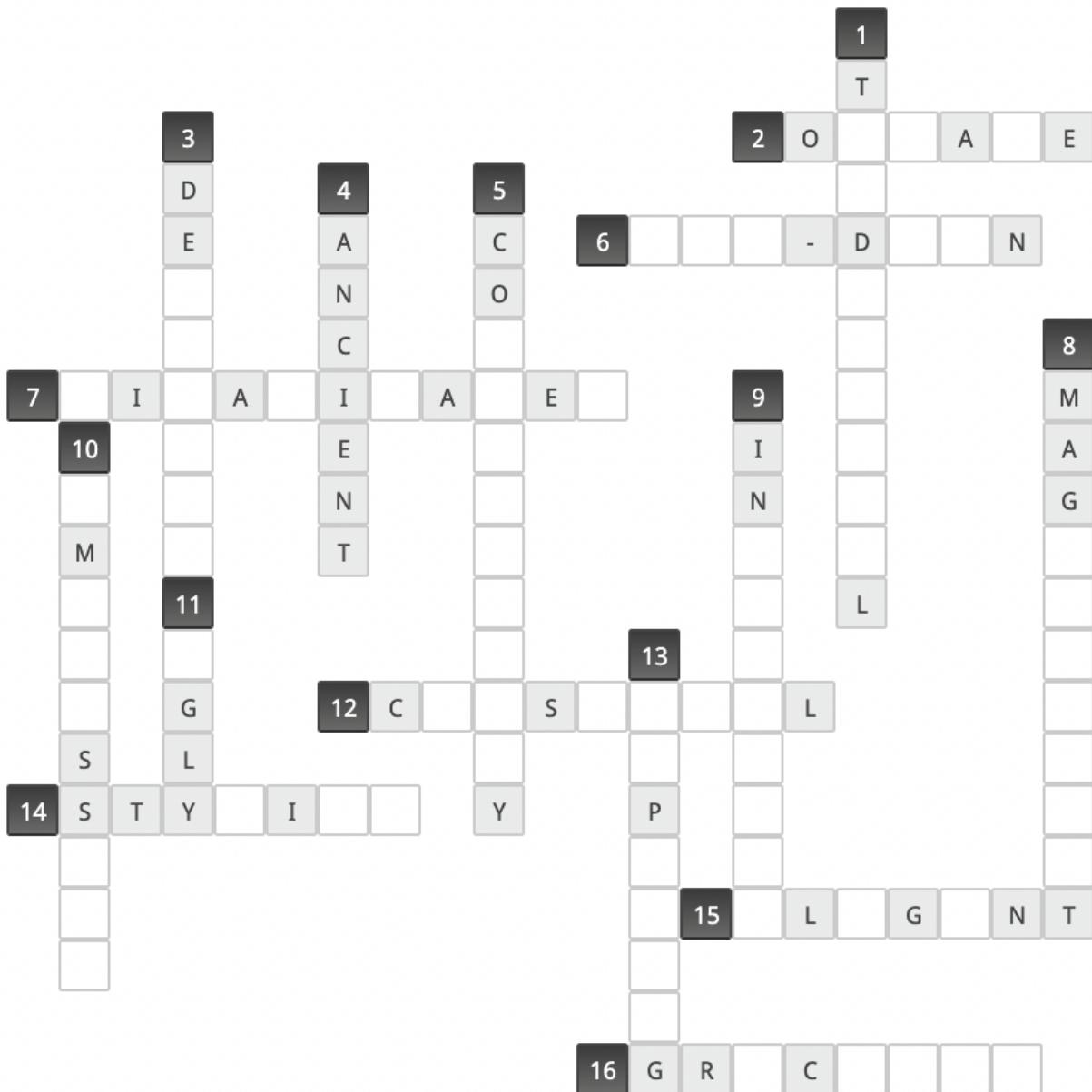
DRAG ITEM HERE of the small (so small that they are often uncomfortable and DRAG ITEM HERE) dark housing that is common in slum areas of major cities. Quite simply, you take a plastic bottle and fill it with water. You then add a small amount of bleach (this ensures that the water stays clear) and finally, cut a hole in the roof and fit the bottle in. Even a fairly small DRAG ITEM HERE of just four or five of these 'Moser lamps' is enough to light a home with the same power as electricity would.

The idea has spread around the world and Moser lamps are thought to provide a good source of bright light to more than a million homes for a DRAG ITEM HERE amount of time and effort and at almost no cost.

## Vocabulary: describing buildings (1)

Use the clues to complete the crossword.

1. following ideas and methods that have existed for a long time, rather than doing anything new or different
2. covered with a lot of decoration
3. a building or piece of land which is in very bad condition because it has not been used for a long time
4. belonging to a time long ago in history, especially thousands of years ago
5. belonging to the present time (modern)
6. a building or area which is in very bad condition
7. a building which is old and in very bad condition
8. very good or beautiful, and very impressive
9. an idea or a way of doing something which is new, different, and better than those that existed before
10. a building which you admire because it is very good, large, important
11. extremely unattractive and unpleasant to look at
12. belonging to a traditional style of beauty
13. large, impressive, and appearing important
14. attractive in a fashionable way
15. beautiful or attractive
16. having an attractive shape or form



## Vocabulary: describing buildings (2)

Complete the sentences with one letter in each gap.

1 The house isn't just old. It's a n c i e n t – it was built in about 1200.

2 The house is really d i   a   i   a   e . There's water dripping through the roof.

3 His company takes old, very u - d o houses and turns them into perfect places to live.

4 The design of the ceiling in the entrance is an example of the a s i a l French style.

5 It's such an e g a house. You would think the president lived there.

6 When the designs for the building were first shown, we all thought it was so new and i   a t i e .

7 The building design is a little out of date. I would have preferred a more c o e o a y style.

8 The castle looks g i c e t against the background of the mountains, especially in the evenings.

9 The e i c building across the road used to be a school. It's a pity it's still standing empty.

10 The windows in their new house are really u y . It's a pity they can't change them.

**Example:**

The Dolmabahçe Palace in Istanbul is one of the most impressive examples of late Ottoman architecture  
that can still be seen today

make He was graceful Versailles stylish as and as it to advised as

DRAG ITEM HERE

interior ceiling Fourteen of the palace tonnes of the used gold alone cover were ornate  
just to

DRAG ITEM HERE

sight of Another the the Bohemian crystal chandelier attraction is imposing

DRAG ITEM HERE

of largest traditional collection the has in the world crystal The Dolmabahçe Palace  
Bohemian and Baccarat chandeliers

DRAG ITEM HERE