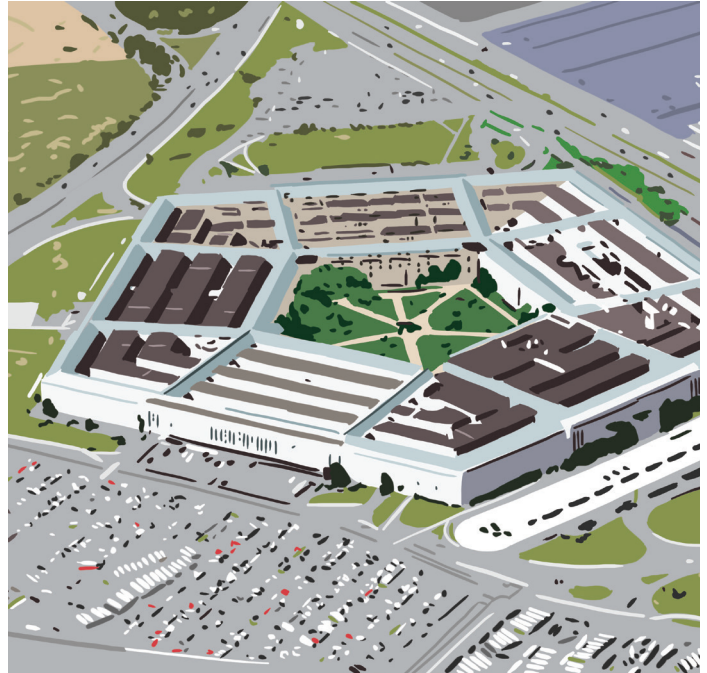


The Pentagon

Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. Do you know what the Pentagon is and where it is located?
2. Have you ever been to Washington, DC? If so, what sights did you see?
3. Do you know what the prefix "penta" means?
4. Look at the picture of the Pentagon. Can you guess how many square feet of office space it has?
5. How many people do you think work in the Pentagon?
6. What do you think the Pentagon represents to many people around the world?



B. Vocabulary Preview

Match the words on the left with the correct meanings on the right.

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| _____ 1. defense | a) a grassy area |
| _____ 2. provide | b) a specific measure of land |
| _____ 3. swampland | c) help, assistance |
| _____ 4. dump | d) the study of something |
| _____ 5. gravel | e) to do or give what is necessary |
| _____ 6. construct | f) a group of workers in a company or department |
| _____ 7. acre | g) protection against danger |
| _____ 8. military | h) an everyday person, not a member of the military or police force |
| _____ 9. civilian | i) soft, wet land |
| _____ 10. support | j) to build |
| _____ 11. staff | k) small stones and pieces of rock |
| _____ 12. lawn | l) the army, soldiers |
| _____ 13. research | m) a place to put garbage |

Reading

1. The Pentagon is the home of the United States Department of **Defense**. It is located in Arlington, Virginia, although its mailing address is Washington, DC.
2. It was built during the Second World War to **provide** more space for the War Department. Built on **swampland** that had been used as a **dump**, the builders used sand and **gravel** from the nearby Potomac River to **construct** it. It took only 16 months to complete and cost about \$83 million. It was opened in January 1943.
3. The building is composed of five wedge-shaped sections that together form a five-sided pentagon. These sections surround a five-**acre** open space, or plaza. A snack bar is in the middle of the plaza.
4. The Pentagon has almost four million square feet (about 371,612 square meters) of office space, which is more office space than any other office building in the world. There are five floors above ground, two floors below ground, 131 stairways, 19 escalators, and more than 17 miles (about 27 kilometers) of corridors. It takes a maximum of only seven minutes to get from one point to another in the building.
5. About 23,000 **military** and **civilian** employees and 3,000 **support staff** work in the Pentagon. As well as offices, the building has a dining room, two cafeterias, six snack bars, 284 restrooms, 691 water fountains, and 4,200 clocks. It is surrounded by 200 acres (about 0.81 square kilometers) of **lawn** and has almost 9,000 parking spots in 16 parking lots.
6. It also has several **research** libraries, a post office that processes more than one million pieces of mail each month, and 100,000 miles of telephone cable. Employees make a total of more than 200,000 phone calls on an average workday.
7. On September 11, 2001, the Pentagon was attacked by terrorists. A hijacked 747 jet flew into the west side of the building. All 59 passengers and crew members, as well as 125 occupants from the Pentagon, died. Between 2001 and 2011, the Pentagon underwent major renovations to repair damage and enhance security. The Pentagon Memorial was also added outside the building on the southwest side.

*"Self-defense is
not only our right,
it is our duty."*

—Ronald Reagan

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.

- _____ 1. The Pentagon is the home of the president of the United States.
- _____ 2. The Pentagon was built during World War I to give the US War Department more space.
- _____ 3. There is a huge open space in the middle of the Pentagon.
- _____ 4. The Pentagon is the tallest office building in the world.
- _____ 5. Only military people work in the Pentagon.

B. Ask and Answer

Practice asking and answering the following questions with your partner.

Then write your answers in complete sentences in your notebook.

- 1. Why was the Pentagon built?
- 2. Where is the Pentagon located?
- 3. Briefly describe the Pentagon.
- 4. Besides office space, what other facilities does the Pentagon have?
- 5. Why does the Pentagon require so much telephone cable?
- 6. Who works in the Pentagon?
- 7. What happened at the Pentagon in 2001?

Vocabulary Review

Choose the word or phrase with the closest meaning to the underlined word or phrase in the following sentences.

1. The Pentagon is composed of five wedge-shaped sections.
 - a) is painted
 - b) is made up of
 - c) employs
2. The Pentagon is composed of five wedge-shaped sections.
 - a) shaped like a V
 - b) round
 - c) square-shaped
3. A snack bar is in the middle of the plaza.
 - a) exercise room
 - b) place to buy alcohol
 - c) place to buy light meals, candy, etc.
4. There are more than 17 miles of corridors in the Pentagon.
 - a) telephone cables
 - b) hallways
 - c) lawn
5. The Pentagon is a very impressive building.
 - a) big
 - b) leaving a strong effect on the memory
 - c) having a lot of soldiers
6. There are 284 restrooms in the Pentagon.
 - a) washrooms
 - b) places to relax
 - c) staffrooms

Discussion

1. Have you ever been to the Pentagon?
If so, tell your classmates what it was like.
2. What other buildings around the world represent great power?
Where are they located? Have you visited any of these?
If so, describe them.
3. Why do you think the September 11 terrorists chose the Pentagon as a place to crash the plane?
4. Why do you think the Pentagon has a mailing address of Washington, DC, but is actually located in Arlington, Virginia?