

Statue of Liberty Reading Comprehension

Name _____

The Statue of Liberty is one of America's most beloved symbols. Rising over 300 feet above New York Harbor, "Lady Liberty" has long been a symbol of freedom to immigrants looking for a better life in the United States.

In 1865, Edouard Rene de Laboulaye, the president of the Anti-Slavery Society of France, proposed that a monument representing liberty be created for the United States to honor its victory in the American Civil War and the end of slavery. He shared his idea with the prominent sculptor F.A. Bartholdi, who supported the plan and was eager to work on it. By 1870, Bartholdi had begun work.

In order to plan the sculpture, Bartholdi made several trips to the United States. He decided the statue should stand on Bedloe's Island in New York Harbor. In this way, immigrants entering the United States hoping for better lives would sail right past it. Bartholdi envisioned a massive copper statue. The statue would be constructed in France and shipped in pieces to the United States. American builders would construct the platform on which the statue would rest. Bartholdi built "Lady Liberty" with numerous symbols. Her crown has seven points to represent the seven seas and continents. Her torch represents the idea that enlightenment is needed for a nation to achieve freedom. In this way, freedom can be achieved only if one knows that it exists. Her tablet represents the idea that laws are needed to protect freedom. "July 4, 1776" is engraved on the tablet's cover to honor Independence Day. Her robe represents Libertas - the Roman goddess of freedom, whom the entire statue is modeled after. The platform was built with thirteen layers of granite to symbolize the original 13 colonies of America.

Bartholdi finished the statue in 1884. It was shipped to America and assembled in 1886. Its original name was "Liberty enlightening the world," but eventually came to be known simply as the Statue of Liberty. It was dedicated in New York's first ticker-tape parade in 1886, by president Grover Cleveland.

1. The inspiration for the idea of the Statue of Liberty came from...

- A. Libertas, the Roman goddess of Liberty.
- B. immigrants who would be sailing through New York Harbor.
- C. the ending of Slavery in the United States.
- D. the support of sculptor F.A. Bartholdi.

2. Why was Bedloe's Island chosen as the location for the statue?

- A. Because it was large enough to hold the massive statue
- B. So immigrants would know that they were in America
- C. So immigrants would be inspired by the statue as they began new lives in America
- D. So Americans would know that the Statue of Liberty was a gift from France

3. Which question is NOT answered in the passage?

- A. What is the Statue of Liberty made from?
- B. What do the points on her crown represent?
- C. When was the statue dedicated?
- D. When did the statue become known as the Statue of Liberty?

4. Which of the following best describes the term “enlightenment” as used in the passage?

- A. Enlightenment refers to achievement based on knowledge
- B. Enlightenment refers to victory based on circumstances
- C. Enlightenment refers to learning based on achievement
- D. Enlightenment refers to circumstances based on knowledge

5. Which of the following best describes why the statue was not conceived in 1864?

- A. Because the Civil War was occurring in America
- B. Because slavery still existed in parts of America
- C. Because slavery still existed in France
- D. Because the French people were not united in their stance on slavery

6. Which of the following quotes best describes the tablet's symbolism?

- A. “Immigrants from around the world have come to New York City for better lives.”
- B. “Opportunity abounds in New York City. That is why she is modeled after Libertas.”
- C. “You must know that freedom exists to be able to achieve it.”
- D. “Strong laws must be passed to preserve liberty.”

7. The third paragraph mainly discusses...

- A. the different symbols of the statue.
- B. the history of the statue.
- C. statistics regarding the statue.
- D. the inspiration for the statue.

