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Dubai tower tallest building in the world

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Contents

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| The Article | 2 |
| Warm-ups | 3 |
| Before Reading / Listening | 4 |
| While Reading / Listening | 5 |
| Listening Gap Fill | 6 |
| After Reading / Listening | 7 |
| Student Survey | 8 |
| Discussion | 9 |
| Language Work | 10 |
| Writing | 11 |
| Homework | 12 |
| Answers | 13 |

23rd July, 2007

THE ARTICLE

Dubai tower tallest building in the world

A building developer in the United Arab Emirates has claimed the record for the world's tallest building. Emaar Properties says its Burj Dubai tower, still under construction, has reached a height of 512.1 metres and 141 storeys. The current record holder, Taiwan's Taipei 101 building is 508 metres and 101 storeys. The Burj Dubai is expected to be finished in 2008 and will reach nearly 700 metres in height, with approximately 160 storeys. The exact final height is being kept a closely guarded secret by the developer, presumably to prevent other constructors from challenging the record. Taipei 101 will keep the official "tallest building" record until the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat, which sets the criteria for achieving height records for buildings, evaluates the Burj Dubai in late 2008.

Dubai is currently undergoing a construction boom and the Burj Dubai is the centrepiece of a \$20 billion residential and commercial project, which will boast the world's largest shopping mall. However, there have been many criticisms of the working conditions for builders in Dubai. In 2006, a Human Rights Watch report on the treatment of migrant workers, entitled "Building Towers, Cheating Workers", documented labour abuses. It highlighted "extremely low wages...the withholding of employees' passports, and hazardous working conditions that result in apparently high rates of death and injury." The salaries of migrant construction workers in Dubai range from \$106 to \$250 per month, while the national average wage is over \$2,000 per month. Trade unions remain illegal in the UAE.

WARM-UPS

1. TALL BUILDINGS: Walk around the class and talk to other students about tall buildings. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your original partner(s) and share what you found out.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

buildings / tall buildings / construction / Dubai / Taiwan / secrets / records / booms / residential projects / shopping malls / criticism / human rights / wages

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. BUILDINGS: In pairs / groups, talk about how useful these are in apartment buildings. Rank them in order of which you would prefer to have.

- shopping mall
- hospital
- train station
- cinema
- swimming pool
- rooftop park
- restaurants
- other _____

4. WORLD BUILDINGS: What do you know about these buildings? Talk about them with your partner(s). What goes through your mind when you see them? Change partners and share what you said and heard.

- The Pyramids
- The White House
- Buckingham Palace
- The Eiffel Tower
- Sydney Opera House
- The Kremlin
- The Taj Mahal
- The Burj Al Arab Hotel

5. DUBAI: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with Dubai. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

6. QUICK DEBATE: Students A think it's a great idea to build record-breaking buildings. Students B think the opposite. Change partners often. Share your findings.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. A UAE sheikh has said the world's tallest building is in his country. T / F
- b. The tall building was completed last week. T / F
- c. The exact height of the building is top secret. T / F
- d. The height record will be confirmed towards the end of 2008. T / F
- e. Dubai is currently experiencing a slowdown in construction growth. T / F
- f. The tall building will also house the world's largest shopping mall. T / F
- g. A human rights group is concerned about working conditions. T / F
- h. Dubai builders earn around a tenth of the national average wage. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. building | a. metropolitan |
| 2. storey | b. dangerous |
| 3. guarded | c. experiencing |
| 4. presumably | d. floor |
| 5. urban | e. probably |
| 6. undergoing | f. traveling |
| 7. boast | g. construction |
| 8. migrant | h. possess |
| 9. hazardous | i. outlawed |
| 10. illegal | j. protected |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. claimed the record | a. residential and commercial project |
| 2. still under | b. employees' passports |
| 3. being kept a closely | c. the world's largest shopping mall |
| 4. prevent other constructors from | d. a construction boom |
| 5. sets the criteria for | e. challenging the record |
| 6. Dubai is currently undergoing | f. illegal |
| 7. the centrepiece of a \$20 billion | g. achieving height records |
| 8. boast | h. for the world's tallest building |
| 9. the withholding of | i. guarded secret |
| 10. Trade unions remain | j. construction |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Dubai tower tallest building in the world

A building developer in the United Arab Emirates has _____ the record for the world's tallest building. Emaar Properties says its Burj Dubai tower, still _____ construction, has reached a height of 512.1 metres and 141 storeys. The current record _____, Taiwan's Taipei 101 building is 508 metres and 101 storeys. The Burj Dubai is _____ to be finished in 2008 and will reach nearly 700 metres in height, with approximately 160 storeys. The _____ final height is being kept a closely _____ secret by the developer, presumably to prevent other constructors from _____ the record. Taipei 101 will keep the official "tallest building" record until the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat, which sets the _____ for achieving height records for buildings, evaluates the Burj Dubai in late 2008.

Dubai is currently undergoing a construction _____ and the Burj Dubai is the centrepiece of a \$20 billion residential and commercial project, which will _____ the world's largest shopping mall. However, there have been many _____ of the working conditions for builders in Dubai. In 2006, a Human Rights Watch report on the _____ of migrant workers, entitled "Building Towers, Cheating Workers", documented labour _____. It highlighted "extremely low wages...the withholding of employees' passports, and hazardous _____ conditions that result in apparently high rates of death and injury." The salaries of migrant construction workers in Dubai _____ from \$106 to \$250 per month, while the national average wage is over \$2,000 per month. Trade unions _____ illegal in the UAE.

exact
expected
under
challenging
claimed
guarded
criteria
holder

working
criticisms
remain
boom
abuses
boast
range
treatment

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Dubai tower tallest building in the world

A building developer in the United Arab Emirates has _____ the world's tallest building. Emaar Properties says its Burj Dubai tower, still under construction, has _____ 512.1 metres and 141 storeys. The current record holder, Taiwan's Taipei 101 building is 508 metres and 101 storeys. The Burj Dubai is _____ in 2008 and will reach nearly 700 metres in height, with approximately 160 storeys. The exact final height is being kept _____ by the developer, _____ other constructors from challenging the record. Taipei 101 will keep the official "tallest building" record until the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat, _____ achieving height records for buildings, evaluates the Burj Dubai in late 2008.

Dubai is _____ construction boom and the Burj Dubai is the centrepiece of a \$20 billion residential and commercial project, which will _____ shopping mall. However, there have been many criticisms of the working conditions for builders in Dubai. In 2006, a Human Rights Watch report _____ migrant workers, entitled "Building Towers, Cheating Workers", documented labour abuses. It highlighted "extremely low wages..._____ employees' passports, and hazardous working conditions _____ high rates of death and injury." The salaries of migrant construction workers in Dubai range from \$106 to \$250 per month, while the national average wage is over \$2,000 per month. Trade _____ in the UAE.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'building' and 'developer'.

| | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| building | developer |
|-----------------|------------------|

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

| | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• claimed• under• current• exact• urban• late | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• boom• boast• criticisms• abuses• rates• remain |
|--|---|

STUDENT TALL BUILDINGS SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about TALL BUILDINGS in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

| | STUDENT 1 | STUDENT 2 | STUDENT 3 |
|------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Q.1. | | | |
| Q.2. | | | |
| Q.3. | | | |
| Q.4. | | | |
| Q.5. | | | |

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) Are you interested in tall buildings?
- c) Would you like to live at the top of the world's tallest building?
- d) Why do cities want to boast the world's tallest building?
- e) Do you think buildings need to be so tall?
- f) What are the good and bad things about living in a skyscraper?
- g) How high do you think developers can build buildings?
- h) Why do you think the developer is keeping the exact height of the building a closely guarded secret?
- i) How do you think the owners of Taipei's 101 building feel about being second tallest?
- j) What tall buildings are there in your town?



STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What do you know about the construction boom in Dubai?
- c) Is there a lot of construction going on in your town?
- d) Would you like to visit the world's largest shopping mall?
- e) How are construction workers treated in your country?
- f) Do you think Human Rights Watch has any impact in protecting the rights of migrant workers?
- g) Why do you think construction workers are still treated so badly in the twenty-first century?
- h) Is it right that builders in the UAE receive a tenth of the national average wage?
- i) What do you think of making trade unions illegal?
- j) Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a) What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b) Was there a question you didn't like?
- c) Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d) What did you like talking about?
- e) Which was the most difficult question?

LANGUAGE

CORRECT WORD: Put the correct words from a–d below in the article.

Dubai tower tallest building in the world

A building developer in the United Arab Emirates has (1) _____ the record for the world's tallest building. Emaar Properties says its Burj Dubai tower, still (2) _____ construction, has reached a height of 512.1 metres and 141 storeys. The current record (3) _____, Taiwan's Taipei 101 building is 508 metres and 101 storeys. The Burj Dubai is expected to be finished in 2008 and will reach nearly 700 metres in height, with approximately 160 storeys. The exact final height is being kept a (4) _____ guarded secret by the developer, (5) _____ to prevent other constructors from challenging the record. Taipei 101 will keep the official "tallest building" record until the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat, which sets the criteria for achieving height records for buildings, evaluates the Burj Dubai in (6) _____ 2008.

Dubai is currently (7) _____ a construction boom and the Burj Dubai is the centrepiece of a \$20 billion residential and commercial project, which will (8) _____ the world's largest shopping mall. However, there have been many (9) _____ of the working conditions for builders in Dubai. In 2006, a Human Rights Watch report on the treatment of migrant workers, entitled "Building Towers, Cheating Workers", (10) _____ labour abuses. It highlighted "extremely low wages...the (11) _____ of employees' passports, and hazardous working conditions that result in apparently high rates of death and injury." The salaries of migrant construction workers in Dubai range from \$106 to \$250 per month, while the national average wage is over \$2,000 per month. Trade unions (12) _____ illegal in the UAE.

1. (a) claimed (b) clapped (c) clammed (d) clamped
2. (a) with (b) under (c) over (d) by
3. (a) holding (b) holds (c) hold (d) holder
4. (a) closet (b) closed (c) closely (d) close
5. (a) presume (b) presumption (c) presuming (d) presumably
6. (a) latter (b) last (c) late (d) lately
7. (a) undergoing (b) under (c) underage (d) underground
8. (a) boost (b) boast (c) beast (d) best
9. (a) criticizes (b) critic (c) critical (d) criticisms
10. (a) documented (b) document (c) documentary (d) documents
11. (a) within (b) withering (c) withholding (d) withdrawn
12. (a) still (b) remain (c) remains (d) continue

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information about the Burj Dubai tower. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. TALL BUILDINGS: Make a poster about the tallest buildings in the world. Show your poster to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

4. MAGAZINE ARTICLE: Write a magazine article about life in the tallest building in the world. Include imaginary interviews with the residents and the developer.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Which article was best and why?

5. LETTER: Write a letter to the developer of the Burj Dubai tower. Ask them three questions about the new record. Give them three suggestions about how to make the building the best building in the world to live in. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. F b. F c. T d. T e. F f. T g. T h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. building | a. construction |
| 2. storey | b. floor |
| 3. guarded | c. protected |
| 4. presumably | d. probably |
| 5. urban | e. metropolitan |
| 6. undergoing | f. experiencing |
| 7. boast | g. possess |
| 8. migrant | h. traveling |
| 9. hazardous | i. dangerous |
| 10. illegal | j. outlawed |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. claimed the record | a. for the world's tallest building |
| 2. still under | b. construction |
| 3. being kept a closely | c. guarded secret |
| 4. prevent other constructors from | d. challenging the record |
| 5. sets the criteria for | e. achieving height records |
| 6. Dubai is currently undergoing | f. a construction boom |
| 7. the centrepiece of a \$20 billion | g. residential and commercial project |
| 8. boast | h. the world's largest shopping mall |
| 9. the withholding of | i. employees' passports |
| 10. Trade unions remain | j. illegal |

GAP FILL:

Dubai tower tallest building in the world

A building developer in the United Arab Emirates has **claimed** the record for the world's tallest building. Emaar Properties says its Burj Dubai tower, still **under** construction, has reached a height of 512.1 metres and 141 storeys. The current record **holder**, Taiwan's Taipei 101 building is 508 metres and 101 storeys. The Burj Dubai is **expected** to be finished in 2008 and will reach nearly 700 metres in height, with approximately 160 storeys. The **exact** final height is being kept a closely **guarded** secret by the developer, presumably to prevent other constructors from **challenging** the record. Taipei 101 will keep the official "tallest building" record until the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat, which sets the **criteria** for achieving height records for buildings, evaluates the Burj Dubai in late 2008.

Dubai is currently undergoing a construction **boom** and the Burj Dubai is the centrepiece of a \$20 billion residential and commercial project, which will **boast** the world's largest shopping mall. However, there have been many **criticisms** of the working conditions for builders in Dubai. In 2006, a Human Rights Watch report on the **treatment** of migrant workers, entitled "Building Towers, Cheating Workers", documented labour **abuses**. It highlighted "extremely low wages...the withholding of employees' passports, and hazardous **working** conditions that result in apparently high rates of death and injury." The salaries of migrant construction workers in Dubai **range** from \$106 to \$250 per month, while the national average wage is over \$2,000 per month. Trade unions **remain** illegal in the UAE.

LANGUAGE WORK

1 - a 2 - b 3 - d 4 - c 5 - d 6 - c 7 - a 8 - b 9 - d 10 - a 11 - c 12 - b