

Name _____ Date _____

The Leaning Tower of Pisa

The Leaning Tower of Pisa, in Pisa, Italy is famous because it looks like it might fall over.

This circular bell tower stands next to Pisa's cathedral. It is 187 feet high and has 8 floors. Over 293 steps lead to 7 bells at the top. The outside is decorated with arches and columns.

Construction began in 1173. After the first three floors were finished in 1178, the tower leaned to the north. Construction then stopped until 1275 because Pisa was at war. The next three floors were built even with the ground, instead of the bottom floors to try and correct the lean. When they were finished about 1319, the tower leaned to the south. The last two floors were added about 1350.

During the long building delays, the tower's weight compressed the ground under it. This strengthened its base enough to keep it from falling, but it still leaned a bit more each year. The tower leans because it is too heavy for the ground it is built on. The uneven layers of soft sand and clay beneath it have caused the tower to sink more in certain places.

Over the years, the tower became a symbol of Italy and an important tourist attraction. Several attempts were made to straighten the tower, but some just made it worse. By 1990, the top floor leaned 17 feet to the south.

In 1990, the government closed the tower to the public and began a 10-year effort to stabilize it. International experts tried different solutions but nothing worked. Then, in 1999, a British engineering professor suggested that soil be removed slowly from the high side so that the tower could settle back into the ground. This worked and, by 2001, the tower was 16 inches straighter. Experts believe it is now safe for another 300 years.

The tower re-opened to the public in June 2001.

Name _____ Date _____

The Leaning Tower of Pisa

Circle True or False

- | | | |
|--|------|-------|
| 1. The Leaning Tower of Pisa is in Italy. | True | False |
| 2. The outside of the tower is decorated with arches and circular. | True | False |
| 3. The tower leans because the ground is too weak to support it. | True | False |
| 4. There is sand and weight beneath the tower. | True | False |
| 5. The Tower is not a tourist attraction for Italy. | True | False |

Choose the correct word from the word box to complete the sentences below.

compress	lean	tourist attraction	attempt	symbols
public	delayed	famous	construction	decorate

The Statue of Liberty is a _____ in The United States.

1.

2. Please do not _____ on the walls.
3. Darryl didn't go to a _____ school. He went to a private school.
4. A lot of people _____ their house for the holidays.
5. How many _____ do you know for different companies?
6. There are a lot of _____ actors and actresses.
7. The statue will _____ the ground to make it hard.
8. The airplane will be _____ for 2 hours.
9. They have been doing _____ on the street for almost three weeks.
10. Mary will _____ to climb Mount Everest for the first time.

Name _____ Date _____

The Leaning Tower of Pisa

Circle True or False

- | | | |
|--|------|-------|
| 1. The Leaning Tower of Pisa is in Italy. | True | False |
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| 5. The Tower is not a tourist attraction for Italy. | True | False |

Choose the correct word from the word box to complete the sentences below.

- The Statue of Liberty is a **tourist attraction** in The United States.
- Please do not **lean** on the walls.
- Darryl didn't go to a **public** school. He went to a private school.
- A lot of people **decorate** their house for the holidays.
- How many **symbols** do you know for different companies?
- There are a lot of **famous** actors and actresses.
- The statue will **compress** the ground to make it hard.
- The airplane will be **delayed** for 2 hours.
- They have been doing **construction** on the street for almost three weeks.
- Mary will **attempt** to climb Mount Everest for the first time.