

Name _____

Date _____

The Eiffel Tower

The Eiffel Tower is one of the most known structures ever constructed and is sometimes called the “Grand Iron Lady.” It is a national symbol of Paris, France. It is a massive tower made of iron and is located on the *Champ de Mars* in Paris overlooking the Seine River.

For the Universal Exhibition, which was a World Fair, and to mark a hundred years (the centennial) of the French Revolution, a competition was launched. Out of a total of 107 entries, the design of an engineer called Gustave Eiffel won.

At the time, Gustave Eiffel was already famous for his many constructions and aqueducts in Europe, as well as the construction of the complex internal structure of the Statue of Liberty.

The construction of the Eiffel Tower was carried out by Gustave Eiffel, two engineers named Maurice Koechlin and Emile Nouguier, and one architect by the name of Stephen Sauvestre. The construction started on 26th January 1887 and was inaugurated on 31st March 1889. It took them 2 years, 2 months, and 5 days to complete it and have it ready. To inaugurate the Tower, Gustave climbed the 1710 steps to place the French flag at the top of the Tower.

During the construction, there was a lot of debate about whether or not the Eiffel Tower would be solid enough and whether or not it would be an eyesore. Some people believed that its construction would be a feat in design and architecture; others felt that it would be a tremendous eyesore. Now, it is considered an icon.

The height of the Eiffel Tower is 324 meters and the metal structure weighs around 7,300 tons. Until 1930 with the construction of the Chrysler Building in New York City, the Eiffel Tower, which originally was 312 meters, was the tallest building. 2,500,000 rivets were used to fix the beams in place. There are 1710 steps and the Tower consists of three floors. The first floor stands at 57 meters and is 360 steps from the ground. The second floor is at 115 meters and 1060 steps from the ground. The third floor stands at 274 meters from the ground. The third floor can only be reached by elevators. For the time, the construction of elevators was extremely impressive. There are two restaurants in the Eiffel Tower. One at 95 meters of the ground and is called ‘Altitude 95’ and another very famous and expensive one on the second floor called ‘Jules Verne’ after the famous writer. In recognition of some of the main scientists, Gustave Eiffel had seventy-two names of French scientists inscribed, which means written, on the side of the first floor under the balcony. Though it was painted over the names, the organization called ‘*Société Nouvelle d'Exploitation de la Tour Eiffel*,’ which runs the business of the Tower, restored the names in 1986-1987.

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The Eiffel Tower (Cont'd)

Initially, the Eiffel Tower was only supposed to last for 20 years. However, to ensure that it would last longer, Gustave Eiffel pushed that it be also used for scientific purposes. He thought it could be used as an observatory and a laboratory for physical, astronomical, and meteorological experiments.

An antenna was also set up at the top of the Tower to transmit radio signals. Then over the years, a number of antennas were set up to be used for radio and television broadcasting.

The Eiffel Tower is open every day of the year and has been visited by over 200 million people. It is repainted every seven years in three different shades of bronze/brown. It takes over 50 tons of paint and around 15 to 18 months to be completed.

Since its construction, there have been many cultural, athletic, and artistic events and exhibitions held at the Eiffel Tower. In addition, many artists have sung, painted, and written about the Tower.

The Eiffel Tower Questions

Multiple Choice:

1. The Eiffel Tower is also referred to as:
 - a. Iron Man
 - b. Grand Iron Lady
 - c. Lady Iron
 - d. Lady Lights

2. The competition launched for the Universal Exhibition also marked:
 - a. The centennial anniversary of the French Revolution
 - b. The centennial anniversary of the World Fair
 - c. The centennial anniversary of the
 - d. The 21st century

3. The duration to construct the Eiffel Tower took over:
 - a. Two years
 - b. Three years
 - c. Four years
 - d. Five years

4. The Eiffel Tower serves as:
 - a. A tourist attraction
 - b. A radio and broadcasting transmission tower
 - c. An observatory and laboratory
 - d. All of the above

True or False:

- ___ 5. The restaurant Jules Verne is named after a famous scientist.
- ___ 6. Since the construction of the Eiffel Tower, there have been no cultural or artistic events held at the Eiffel Tower.
- ___ 7. The Eiffel Tower was the tallest building until the construction of the Chrysler building in New York City.
- ___ 8. Everyone agreed at the time of the construction of the Eiffel Tower that it would be a great feat of architecture and design.

The Eiffel Tower Answers

Multiple Choice:

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- b. **Grand Iron Lady**
- c. Lady Iron
- d. Lady Lights

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