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| **The Tower of Babel and the Hanging Gardens of Babylon  By Vickie Chao** |  | http://www.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/edhelp1.gif |

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**Directions:**  Fill in each blank with the word that best completes the reading comprehension.  
  
     In the *(1)*  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   days, Mesopotamia -- the bulk of it in present-day Iraq -- was where all the *(2)*  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   took place. More than 5,000 years ago, people in Mesopotamia built the world's first cities. They created the world's first written language. And they brought forth the world's first civilization. Back in their heyday, they had two buildings that were their pride and joy. The first was the Tower of Babel. The second was the Hanging Gardens of Babylon.  
     According to the Bible (the Book of Genesis 11: 1-9), the Babylonians had an *(3)*  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   plan. In order to make a name for themselves, they wanted to build a *(4)*  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   city and a giant tower in the land of Shinar (Babylonia). As they sketched out the blueprint, they decided that they wanted the top of their tower to reach the heavens. When God heard of the idea, He was not pleased. To *(5)*  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   the work, God made each of the workers speak a different language. Since they could no longer talk to each other, they had to stop the project. Eventually, those workers all moved away to settle in other parts of the world. God later called this city Babel because it sounded like the Hebrew *(6)*  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   *(7)  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* (meaning "to confuse"). Babel, thus, became an *(8)*  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   of Babylon. And Babylon was the capital of Babylonia.  
     While the Bible gives us a pretty detailed account about the Tower of Babel, we cannot be sure how truthful the story is. We only know that this tale was used to explain why there were so many languages on Earth. For centuries, scholars have been trying to find out if the Tower of Babel actually existed. So far, they have not been able to reach an agreement. Some believe that the Tower of Babel is a myth. Others think it is real. Those who do have argued over its exact *(9)*  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  .  
     The traditional image of the Tower of Babel is an unfinished step-pyramid-like structure. It had eight stories. Of course, given that we do not have any proof that this structure was ever built, we cannot know if that image is accurate!  
     Now that we know that the first landmark of Mesopotamia could be a legend, what about the second one?  
     In that *(10)*  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  , the Hanging Gardens of Babylon did not *(11)*  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   much better than the Tower of Babel.  
     According to ancient sources, a Babylonian King by the name of Nebuchadnezzar II (605 B.C. - 562 B.C.) built the Hanging Gardens of Babylon for his wife, Amytis. Amytis was the daughter of the Median king. Her homeland had beautiful mountains and lush green plants. After she married Nebuchadnezzar II, she found the new flat, *(12)*  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   landscape depressing. So she got homesick. To please his wife, Nebuchadnezzar II constructed a *(13)*  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  , *(14)*  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   building with rooftop gardens. It had pumps that could raise buckets of water from the nearby Euphrates River to the terraces on different levels. Each terrace had a waterproofed base that used lead and other materials. It was covered with soil deep enough to grow all types of plants.  
     For the longest time, many scholars wondered if the Hanging Gardens of Babylon really existed. They pointed out that while the Greeks made several references to the building, the Babylonians never left any written record about it. Since the Babylonians liked to keep a detailed account of everything, it was quite strange that they would choose to remain silent on the subject. It was very likely that the Greeks exaggerated the gardens they saw in Babylon. As a result, it was their wild imagination that made the elusive Hanging Gardens of Babylon one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.  
     To make matters even more confusing, some historians said that Nebuchadnezzar II never built the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. They gave the credit to the Assyrian Queen Sammu-ramat or Semiramis. If that was indeed the case, then the Hanging Gardens of Babylon were built around 810 B.C.  
     Because of the lingering doubt about the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, many scientists took it upon themselves to solve the mystery. One of them, Robert Koldewey (1855-1925), spent *(15)*  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   two decades in Iraq. After years of digging, he believed that he found the ruins of the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. His discovery, however, is in dispute. Some scholars argued that Robert's site is too far from the Euphrates River. So as it stands right now, we still don't know who built the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. And we have no clue if it was real!

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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | 1. | Which of the following about the Tower of Babel is correct? http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubblea.jpg  According to the Bible, it was never completed. http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubbleb.jpg  Nebuchadnezzar II built it around 600 B.C. http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubblec.jpg  It was a vaulted, multi-storied structure with rooftop gardens. http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubbled.jpg  Queen Sammu-ramat built it around 810 B.C. | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | 2. | What materials did the Babylonians use to prevent water from seeping through the terraces of the Hanging Gardens of Babylon? http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubblea.jpg  Plastic http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubbleb.jpg  Lead http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubblec.jpg  Soil http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubbled.jpg  Glass | |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | 3. | Which book in the Bible described the Tower of Babel? http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubblea.jpg  The Book of Genesis http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubbleb.jpg  The Book of Daniel http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubblec.jpg  The Book of Titus http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubbled.jpg  The Book of Matthew | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | 4. | Which of the following about the Hanging Gardens of Babylon is correct? http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubblea.jpg  Nebuchadnezzar II built it to please his mother, Queen Sammu-ramat. http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubbleb.jpg  It was never completed because Nebuchadnezzar II changed his mind. http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubblec.jpg  The Babylonians never mentioned anything about it. http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubbled.jpg  It stood on the bank of the Tigris River. | |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | 5. | What did God do to end the work on the Tower of Babel? http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubblea.jpg  He killed all the workers. http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubbleb.jpg  He destroyed the blueprint. http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubblec.jpg  He made every worker speak a different language. http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubbled.jpg  He burned it to the ground. | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | 6. | According to the Bible, where was the Tower of Babel? http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubblea.jpg  In Assyria http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubbleb.jpg  In Babylonia http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubblec.jpg  In Egypt http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubbled.jpg  In Anatolia | |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | 7. | Which of the following about Mesopotamia is **not** correct? http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubblea.jpg  The bulk of Mesopotamia was in present-day Iran. http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubbleb.jpg  The world's oldest civilization was in Mesopotamia. http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubblec.jpg  People in Mesopotamia were the first to build a city. http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubbled.jpg  People in Mesopotamia were the first to develop a written language. | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | 8. | The discovery of Robert Koldewey confirmed the existence of the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubblea.jpg  False http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubbleb.jpg  True | |

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| **Answer Key** |

     In the *(1)*  olden   days, Mesopotamia -- the bulk of it in present-day Iraq -- was where all the *(2)*  action   took place. More than 5,000 years ago, people in Mesopotamia built the world's first cities. They created the world's first written language. And they brought forth the world's first civilization. Back in their heyday, they had two buildings that were their pride and joy. The first was the Tower of Babel. The second was the Hanging Gardens of Babylon.  
     According to the Bible (the Book of Genesis 11: 1-9), the Babylonians had an *(3)*  ambitious   plan. In order to make a name for themselves, they wanted to build a *(4)*  splendid   city and a giant tower in the land of Shinar (Babylonia). As they sketched out the blueprint, they decided that they wanted the top of their tower to reach the heavens. When God heard of the idea, He was not pleased. To *(5)*  disrupt   the work, God made each of the workers speak a different language. Since they could no longer talk to each other, they had to stop the project. Eventually, those workers all moved away to settle in other parts of the world. God later called this city Babel because it sounded like the Hebrew *(6)*  verb   *(7)  balal* (meaning "to confuse"). Babel, thus, became an *(8)*  alias   of Babylon. And Babylon was the capital of Babylonia.  
     While the Bible gives us a pretty detailed account about the Tower of Babel, we cannot be sure how truthful the story is. We only know that this tale was used to explain why there were so many languages on Earth. For centuries, scholars have been trying to find out if the Tower of Babel actually existed. So far, they have not been able to reach an agreement. Some believe that the Tower of Babel is a myth. Others think it is real. Those who do have argued over its exact *(9)*  location  .  
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     According to ancient sources, a Babylonian King by the name of Nebuchadnezzar II (605 B.C. - 562 B.C.) built the Hanging Gardens of Babylon for his wife, Amytis. Amytis was the daughter of the Median king. Her homeland had beautiful mountains and lush green plants. After she married Nebuchadnezzar II, she found the new flat, *(12)*  sun-baked   landscape depressing. So she got homesick. To please his wife, Nebuchadnezzar II constructed a *(13)*  vaulted  , *(14)*  multi-storied   building with rooftop gardens. It had pumps that could raise buckets of water from the nearby Euphrates River to the terraces on different levels. Each terrace had a waterproofed base that used lead and other materials. It was covered with soil deep enough to grow all types of plants.  
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Answers to Reading Comprehension Questions  
  
**1**  http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubblea.jpg  According to the Bible, it was never completed.  
**2**  http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubbleb.jpg  Lead  
**3**  http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubblea.jpg  The Book of Genesis  
**4**  http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubblec.jpg  The Babylonians never mentioned anything about it.  
**5**  http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubblec.jpg  He made every worker speak a different language.  
**6**  http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubbleb.jpg  In Babylonia  
**7**  http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubblea.jpg  The bulk of Mesopotamia was in present-day Iran.  
**8**  http://stories.edhelperclipart.com/clipart/bubblea.jpg  False