

The Statue of Liberty

Imagine leaving home forever to live in America. You say goodbye to your family and friends for the last time. Then you travel thousands of miles across the Atlantic Ocean on a boat full of immigrants. The first thing you see when you arrive in the United States is a tall woman holding a torch. She is a symbol of freedom, welcoming you to your new home. She is the Statue of Liberty.



THE FRENCH CONNECTION

The Statue of Liberty is one of the most famous monuments in the world. It was designed by a Frenchman, Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi, and it was a gift from the people of France to the people of America. The statue was built in France and then shipped to the United States. In October 1886 the Americans installed the statue on Liberty Island in New York Harbor. She still stands there today.

A SYMBOL

Millions of immigrants arrived in America by boat in the late 19th and early 20th century. The first thing many of them saw was the Statue of Liberty, which is enormous. The statue is 46 metres high, but so is the plinth, the structure underneath **which supports it**. The entire monument is 93 metres high and weighs more than 200 tonnes. The statue is of a female figure representing Libertas, the Roman goddess of freedom. She is wearing a robe and a crown with seven spikes.

INDEPENDENCE

The seven spikes represent the seven oceans and seven continents of the world. In her right hand, the statue is holding a torch. In her left hand, she is holding a tablet inscribed with the date of the American Declaration of Independence, July 4th 1776. A broken chain lies at her feet: this represents freedom from oppression.

TOURISM

If you want to visit the statue, you have to take a ferry from Manhattan to Liberty Island. Unfortunately, since the 9/11 attacks, officials have restricted access to the statue. They now allow only 240 people a day to climb the 354 steps inside the statue to look out of the 25 windows in her crown. If you want to climb the steps, you have to buy a special ticket up to a year in advance.

REAL LIFE

Many people who visit the statue also visit Ellis Island. The island was the country's busiest immigrant inspection station from 1892 until 1954. It is now home to an Immigration Museum, which has photographs and videos of early immigrants. In this way you can experience what it was like to be one of them.

READING COMPRHENSION

Complete the table with information from the article

1) means of transportation from Manhattan to Liberty Island	
2) what the statue holds in her left hand	
3) people leaving their country to live in America	
4) the main immigrant inspection station	
5) the first thing you see when you arrive in the US	
6) Roman goddess of freedom	
7) what the seven spikes on the crown represent	
8) symbol of freedom from oppression, at the statue's feet	
9) the place where the Statue of Liberty is located	
10) what the statue holds in her right hand	
11) inscription on the tablet in her left hand	
12) what Ellis Island hosts today	
13) the man who designed the Statue of Liberty	

KEY

- 1) ferry
- 2) a tablet
- 3) immigrants
- 4) Ellis Island
- 5) Statue of Liberty
- 6) Libertas
- 7) the seven oceans and the seven continents
- 8) a broken chain
- 9) New York Harbor
- 10) a torch
- 11) date of American Independence, July 4th 1776
- 12) an Immigration Museum
- 13) Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi