

# THE LONDON EYE



In the 1990s, a contest was held in London, England. They wanted to make a new monument for the start of a new millennium (muh lin e um). They wanted to celebrate a new century. Two architects, David Marks and Julia Barfield, had an idea for a ride which was like a Ferris wheel. The ride would let people look over the city of London. No one won this contest but British Airways agreed to pay for the project. In 1998, they started to build the London Eye.

The London Eye took over a year and a half to build. It took about 5,000 tons of steel for the base and for the ride itself. It cost about 100 million dollars. The London Eye is 443 feet tall. The wheel is 394 feet across. The former Prime Minister, Tony Blair, helped to celebrate the London Eye on New Year's Eve in 1999. It was opened to everyone in March of 2000.

The London Eye was built on the South Bank of the River Thames (temz). It was built near the Westminster and Hungerford Bridges. This site helped lots of people see the London buildings, the land, and some of London's most famous sights. The London Eye's 360 degree views are amazing. On a clear day you can see up to 25 miles in any direction. Some of the famous sights include Westminster Abbey, Big Ben, the Houses of Parliament, St Paul's Cathedral, and Buckingham Palace too. Evening rides are extra beautiful! People on the London Eye can see the sun set over London. They can see all of the city lights. It is very pretty to watch the New Year's fireworks display from the London Eye too! When Prince William and Kate Middleton got married, the wheel was decorated with red, white, and blue lights. These are the colors of the United Kingdom's flag.

The London Eye is not like a regular Ferris wheel. Each capsule is attached to the wheel. They are not dangling, like most Ferris wheel seats. Each of the 32 capsules are air-conditioned. The capsules have enough room for up to twenty-five people. People in the capsules may stand up or walk around to get the best views. This means that when the London Eye is full, it carries 800 people at a time! The ride takes thirty minutes. It is different from a regular Ferris wheel because you don't have to wait for it to stop and start when people get off and on. It moves so slowly (less than 1 mph) that most people can easily step on and off. If they need to, they may stop the wheel at any time for older people or for anyone who is disabled and needs more time.



The London Eye is the most popular paid attraction in London. About three and a half million people visit the London Eye each year. It is open every day except Christmas. It is also closed one week in January for upkeep.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is the main idea for the entire passage?

- A. The London Eye was finished in the year 2000
- B. The London Eye is an amazing attraction
- C. Ferris wheels are different than the London Eye

2. Look at the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph. Write **M** beside the main idea of this paragraph and **SD** beside each supporting detail.

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ It took about 5,000 tons of steel to build the London Eye
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ The London Eye took over a year and a half to build
- C. \_\_\_\_\_ The building of the London Eye

3. There are five paragraphs in this passage. Which paragraph has a main idea of *the London Eye is a very popular attraction* Circle one: 1 2 3 4 5

4. List one supporting detail for the *popular attraction* paragraph: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Look at the 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph. Write **M** beside the main idea of this paragraph and **SD** beside each supporting detail.

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ The London Eye lets people look at many London sights
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ The London Eye is near the River Thames
- C. \_\_\_\_\_ London Eye riders may see up to 25 miles away on a clear day

6. Look at the fourth paragraph. What is the main idea of this paragraph?

- A. The London Eye moves slowly
- B. The capsules do not dangle like Ferris wheel seats
- C. The London Eye carries people in large capsules

7. Look at the fourth paragraph. Which one is NOT true?

- A. There are 32 capsules
- B. People must sit down all the time in the capsule
- C. A total of 800 people may ride the London Eye at one time

8. What is the main idea for the first paragraph?

- A. The London Eye was first designed as part of a contest
- B. The architects for the London Eye were David Marks and Julia Barfield
- C. British Airways paid for the London Eye