

The LEGO® House

A few years ago in August, there was a very long queue of people in the countryside near London, in England. Some people started queuing at 4.30 in the morning. Why were they there? They wanted to help James May, a TV presenter, to build a house. But this was not an ordinary house. No, this was a LEGO house.

Together, 1,200 people used 3.3 million (yes, 3,300,000) LEGO toy bricks to make a real house.

It was part of a TV show called Toy Stories. In the programmes, James May used traditional toys to make 'real' things. Why LEGO? Well, because when he was young, James May loved LEGO and played with it all the time.

The people finished building the house on 17 September, almost seven weeks after they started. Everything was LEGO. All the walls, doors and windows were LEGO. There was a LEGO bedroom and a LEGO bed. There was a LEGO bathroom with a LEGO toilet and a shower – and they worked! In the kitchen there was a LEGO fridge (but no cooker) and there were LEGO tables and chairs. There was even a LEGO cat. James May stayed in the house one night and was surprised because the bed was quite comfortable.

At first, a theme park called LEGOLAND planned to buy the house, but later they decided not to. James May tried to find another buyer. He started a Facebook page and asked other people to buy it, but nobody wanted it. So on 22 September, they started to take the house to pieces. A few days later, there wasn't a LEGO house any more.

James May was not happy about it as more than 1,000 people worked hard to build the house and everything inside it. Other people were not so sad. The television company donated the three million LEGO pieces to a charity for children.

Look at the pictures below. What can you say about them? What are they about? What does it take to build that?

EXERCISE 47 Read and listen to the magazine article. Choose the correct option A, B or C.

- 1 The queue of people wanted to help James May to buy a house.
A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say
- 2 They finished building the house in one month.
A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say
- 3 The LEGO fridge worked.
A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say
- 4 James May liked the bed.
A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say
- 5 There were photos of the house on a Facebook page.
A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say
- 6 A charity for children has got the pieces of LEGO now.
A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say

THINK VALUES

Community spirit

Read what people said about the LEGO house. Match the activities a–d with the comments 1–4.

- a working together c having fun
b being creative d caring for others

- 1 *We really enjoyed this – we laughed a lot.* ☐
- 2 *The idea of building a LEGO cat was really interesting.* ☐
- 3 *I loved being with so many people, doing the same thing!* ☐
- 4 *I think it's great that they donated the LEGO pieces to a charity for children.* ☐

SPEAKING Put the activities a–d in Exercise 1 in order of importance for you.

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

What values from the previous exercise do you think would help us to face the situation we're all living in (lockdown/quarantine)? How would those values help us?

