Berlin

Level: B1 Intermediate | Reading worksheet

Before you read

What is Berlin famous for? Why is there a bear on the city flag? And what food do Berliners love? Read about Germany's capital city and find out!

Instructions

Do the preparation task first. Then read the article and do the exercises to check your understanding.

Preparation

Match the vocabulary with the correct definition and write a-h next to the numbers 1-8.

1. ____ a capital	a. a special or famous object or place
2. ____ a landmark	b. a place where people from many cultures live
3. ____ multicultural	c. the most important city where a country's government works
4. ____ a district	d. a system of trains, buses and trams people use in a city
5. ____ public transport	e. one part of a town or city
6. ____ a symbol	f. something that represents an idea, place or group
7. ____ a gallery	g. a place where you can see paintings or other art
8. ____ a speciality	h. a food or product that is typical of a place

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Reading text

Geography and people

Berlin is the capital and largest city of Germany. It is in the north-east of the country, and the River Spree runs through the city. Around 3.9 million people live in Berlin. It is both a city and one of Germany's sixteen federal states. Berlin is a very international place: people from about 190 nations live there, so you can hear many different languages in the streets, on the underground and in cafes.

History and landmarks

Berlin has a long and complicated history. For many years after the Second World War, the city was divided into East Berlin and West Berlin. The Berlin Wall became a symbol of this division. Today, parts of the Wall are still there, and visitors can see colourful paintings on the East Side Gallery. The Brandenburg Gate is probably Berlin's most famous landmark. During the Cold War it stood near the Wall, but today it is a symbol of peace and unity. Another important building is the Reichstag, where the German parliament works.

Culture

Berlin is famous for art, museums and creative people. Museum Island is in the centre of the city, between the River Spree and the Spree Canal. It has five museums and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Students, tourists and local people also enjoy small galleries, street art, bookshops, cinemas and music events. On Alexanderplatz, you can see the Berlin TV Tower. It is 368 metres high and is one of the best-known sights in the city.

Language

The official language is German, but Berlin is a good place to hear other languages too. Many people speak English in tourist areas, and there are large communities from Turkey, Ukraine, Poland and many other countries. Because Berlin is multicultural, its language and culture are always changing. You can see this in the names of shops, restaurants and festivals.

Sport and transport

Football is popular in Berlin. The city has well-known clubs such as Hertha BSC and Union Berlin. People also like running, cycling, basketball and swimming. Berlin is a big city, but it is easy to move around. You can use the U-Bahn, S-Bahn, trams and buses. Many people also travel by bike because there are parks, wide streets and cycle paths in different districts.

Food

Berlin food is a mix of old traditions and international flavours. Currywurst is one of the city's most famous fast foods. It is sausage with curry sauce, usually served with chips or bread. Doner kebab is also very popular and shows the strong influence of Turkish culture in Berlin. You can also try Pfannkuchen, a sweet doughnut with jam, and many dishes from Vietnamese, Syrian, Italian, Indian and Ukrainian restaurants.

Symbols

Berlin's best-known symbol is the bear. You can see a black bear on the city's flag and coat of arms. The bear also appears in street art, souvenir shops and city events. For many visitors, the Brandenburg Gate, the TV Tower and the Berlin bear are the three symbols they remember most.

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1. Check your understanding: matching

Match the names with what they are and write a-j next to the numbers 1-10.

1. ____ The River Spree	a. a sweet doughnut
2. ____ Brandenburg Gate	b. a football club
3. ____ The Berlin Wall	c. a river
4. ____ East Side Gallery	d. a famous fast food
5. ____ Museum Island	e. a symbol of division in the past
6. ____ Berlin TV Tower	f. a symbol of peace and unity
7. ____ Hertha BSC	g. a place with colourful paintings on the Wall
8. ____ Currywurst	h. an animal on the city flag
9. ____ Pfannkuchen	i. a group of five museums
10. ____ The bear	j. a very high landmark on Alexanderplatz

2. Check your understanding: multiple choice

Circle the best answer to these questions.

1. Berlin is ...	a. the capital of Germany. b. the capital of Austria. c. a small town in Germany.
2. The River Spree ...	a. runs through Berlin. b. is in Italy. c. is a mountain near Berlin.
3. Around how many people live in Berlin?	a. 900,000 b. 3.9 million c. 39 million
4. In the past, the Berlin Wall was a symbol of ...	a. sport. b. division. c. food.
5. Today the Brandenburg Gate is a symbol of ...	a. peace and unity. b. rain and cold weather. c. shopping.
6. Museum Island is famous because it has ...	a. five museums. b. five football stadiums. c. five airports.
7. The Berlin TV Tower is ...	a. 36 metres high. b. 368 metres high. c. 3,680 metres high.
8. In Berlin, many people use ...	a. only taxis. b. only boats. c. the U-Bahn, S-Bahn, trams and buses.
9. Currywurst is ...	a. a German fast food. b. a museum. c. a football team.
10. The bear is ...	a. a symbol of Berlin. b. the name of the river. c. a famous train station.

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3. Check your grammar: gap fill

Complete the sentences with a word from the box.

in through on between from to by with around of

1. Berlin is _____ the north-east of Germany.
2. The River Spree runs _____ the city.
3. Museum Island is _____ the River Spree and the Spree Canal.
4. The Brandenburg Gate became a symbol _____ peace and unity.
5. Many people travel _____ bike in Berlin.
6. Currywurst is usually served _____ chips or bread.
7. Visitors can see paintings _____ the East Side Gallery.
8. People from about 190 nations live _____ Berlin.
9. Berliners can travel _____ one district _____ another by public transport.
10. You can move _____ the city by U-Bahn, S-Bahn, tram or bus.

4. Vocabulary in context

Choose the best word to complete each sentence.

1. Berlin is very _____, with people from about 190 nations.
a. multicultural b. rural c. traditional

2. The Brandenburg Gate is a famous _____.
a. language b. landmark c. speciality

3. Currywurst is a Berlin _____.
a. district b. symbol c. speciality

4. The bear is a _____ of Berlin.
a. symbol b. gallery c. canal

5. The U-Bahn and S-Bahn are part of Berlin's _____.
a. public transport b. parliament c. museum

5. True or False

Write T for True or F for False.

Statement	T / F
1. Berlin is one of Germany's federal states.	_____
2. The Berlin Wall divided the city for part of the twentieth century.	_____
3. Museum Island is outside Berlin.	_____
4. The Berlin TV Tower is on Alexanderplatz.	_____
5. Currywurst is usually a sweet dessert.	_____
6. The bear is connected with Berlin's symbols.	_____

Discussion

- Have you ever been to Berlin? Would you like to go? Why / why not?
- Which place from the text would you like to visit first?
- Is your city similar to Berlin in any way?

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