

Lessons 1–2 The Arab dhow

1 Read and complete this extract from the presentation.

boats hull masts sails boat building navigate rope seafarers planks

Dhows are traditional Arabian boats. There are a number of different styles, but their key features are two _____¹ and triangular _____², called *lateens*. These let the boats travel faster when they are sailing against the wind. Modern commercial boats now have engines, whereas dhows for racing still use sails.

_____³ is important in the UAE, as it is part of a long tradition. In the past, the people of the Arabian Peninsula were the most advanced _____⁴ in the world. They used innovative techniques, and had instruments to help them _____⁵ the seas. They traded with many other countries, such as India and Sri Lanka.

There are some dhow-building boatyards around the UAE, in Dubai and Abu Dhabi for example, which build boats in the same way it's been done for generations, using traditional materials and tools. The outer shell of the boat is constructed from _____⁶ first. This is different to the European technique, where the frame of ribs is constructed first, so that the planks can be attached to it. Until around 70 years ago, the planks which make up the _____⁷ were stitched together using coconut _____⁸, although thin nails are used now. The holes for the nails are drilled by hand, so the wood doesn't split. The work is managed by a highly skilled master craftsman, and the boat builders work without using plans, since they have so much experience.