

Reading

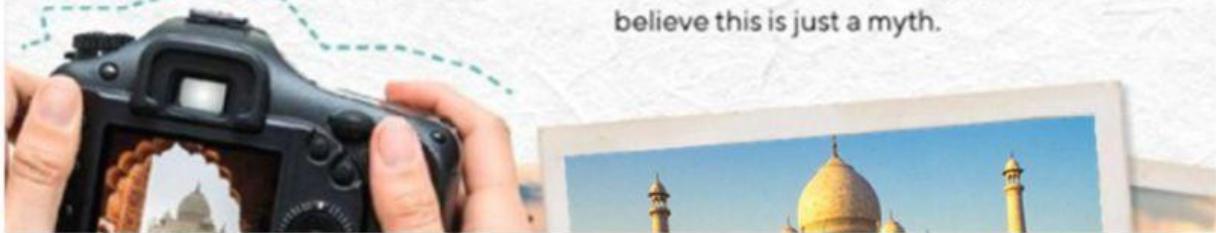
- I. Read the following reading and complete the questions



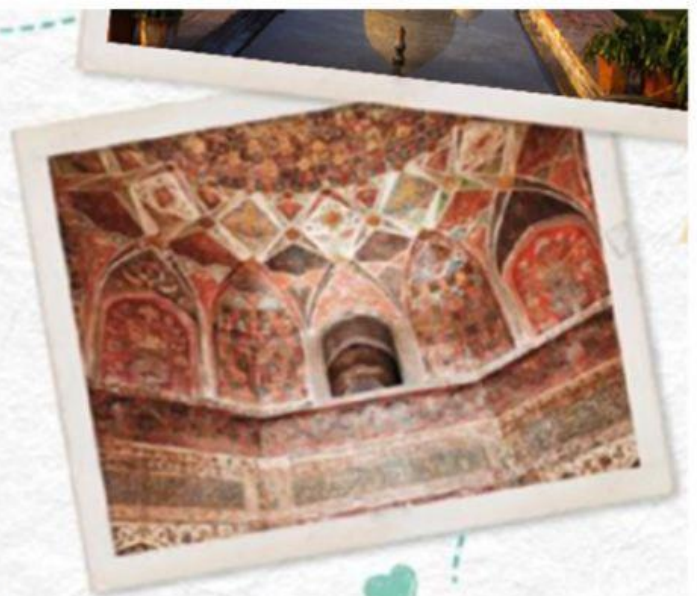
A MONUMENT to Love

Each morning, thousands of tourists flock to Agra, India. They come at sunrise to watch a building as it reflects a pink color. In the afternoons, it is a bright white. Each evening, it takes on a golden hue. The building is one of the Seven Wonders of the World. It is the Taj Mahal, which means "crown of palaces" in Arabic. It is a modern-day marvel that truly lives up to its name.

The Taj Mahal is 171 meters tall. It is made of white marble. It is covered with detailed designs and precious stones. The artists who worked on it were truly gifted. Some people say the Taj Mahal was their last work of art. It is rumored that the artists' hands were chopped off, so they could not create anything more beautiful. However, many people now believe this is just a myth.



The Taj Mahal is more than just a building. It is a mausoleum. A mausoleum is a building that has tombs for the deceased. These are usually built to honor someone important. Sir Edwin Arnold, an English poet, once said that the Taj Mahal is "not a piece of architecture, as other buildings are, but the proud passion of an emperor's love wrought in living stones."



The love story begins with Shah Jahan in 1607. One day, this king walked through a bazaar. He saw a girl selling beads and silk. He fell in love at first sight. After five years, they were married. Although Shah Jahan had three wives, Mumtaz Mahal was his favorite. His nickname for her meant "Jewel of the Palace." They did everything together. In 1631, she died while giving birth to their 14th child. Before she died, Shah Jahan promised her that he would never remarry, and that he would build the most beautiful mausoleum around her grave.

After her death, Shah Jahan used most of his wealth to build the mausoleum he had promised. It was not a simple project. It took over 20,000 people and 1,000 elephants to build it. It took 20 years to finish. The central building has a large dome, which is often called the onion dome due to its shape. On either side are smaller red sandstone buildings. One is a mosque, and the other is a former guesthouse. The grounds also have lush gardens. A small reflecting pool is just in front of the Taj Mahal. Shah Jahan lived to see the completed monument. When he died, his tomb was placed inside next to his wife's.

The Taj Mahal was built as a monument to love. It is India's most admired work of art. The love story from the 1600s still amazes the two to four million people who come to visit the Taj Mahal every year. Although the building itself is beautiful, the story behind it makes it even more special.



What are some unique facts of the Taj Mahal?

Why was the Taj Mahal built?

How is the Taj Mahal a "monument to love"?

Write if it is true or false



Taj Mahal is made with yellow marble

Taj Mahal is 171 meters tall

Taj Mahal is a mausoleum

The myth starts in 1607

Th wife of Shah Jahan died when she was giving birth to their 24th child

Taj Mahal took over 1,000 elephants and 20,000 people to visit it

When Shah Jahan died, his tomb was placed next to his brother

+1= What is a mausoleum?

