# Reading

## Reading Passage 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 1-13**, which are based on **Reading Passage 1.**

### Angkor Wat: History of Ancient Temple

*Built between roughly A.D. 1113 and 1150, and encompassing an area of about 500 acres (200 hectares), Angkor Wat is one of the largest religious monuments ever constructed. Its name means "temple city."*

**A.** Originally built as a Hindu temple dedicated to the god Vishnu, it was converted into a Buddhist temple in the 14th century, and statues of Buddha were added to its already rich artwork. Sometime later it was turned into a military fortification. Today it is a UNESCO World Heritage Site that scientists are struggling to preserve. Its 213-foot-tall (65 meters) central tower is, along with other four smaller towers, wrapped around by a series of enclosure walls, a layout that recreates the image of Mount Meru, a legendary place in Hindu mythology that is said to lie beyond the Himalayas and be the home of the gods.

**B.** The city where the temple was built, Angkor, is located in modern-day Cambodia and was once the capital of the Khmer Empire. This city contains hundreds of temples, and the population may have been over 1 million people. It was easily the largest city in the world until the Industrial Revolution. Angkor had an urban core that could easily have held 500,000 people and a vast hinterland that had many more inhabitants, as airborne laser scanning (lidar) research has shown. Researchers have also identified a "lost" city called Mahendraparvata, which is located about 25 miles (40 kilometers) north of Angkor Wat.

**C.** Angkor Wat itself is surrounded by a 650-foot-wide (200 m) moat that encompasses a perimeter of more than 3 miles (5 km). This moat is 13 feet deep (4 m) and would have helped stabilize the temple's foundation, preventing groundwater from rising too high or falling too low. Angkor Wat's main entrance was to the west (a direction associated with Vishnu) across a stone causeway, with guardian lions marking the way. Recently, archaeologists found the remains of eight towers made of sandstone and laterite by the western gateway. These towers may be the remains of shrines that were in use before Angkor Wat was fully constructed. To the east of the temple was a second, more modest, entrance.

**D.** The heart of the temple was the central tower, entered by way of a steep staircase, a statue of Vishnu at top. This tower "was at once the symbolic center of the nation and the actual center where secular and sacred power joined forces," writes researcher Eleanor Mannikka in the book "Angkor: Celestial Temples of the Khmer Empire" (Abbeville Press, 2002). "From that unparalleled space, Vishnu and the king ruled over the Khmer people."



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E. Hidden paintings have been discovered in the central tower. One chamber in the tower has a scene showing a traditional Khmer ensemble of musical instruments known as the pinpeat, which is made up of different gongs, xylophones, wind instruments and other percussion instruments. In the same chamber, there's also an intricate scene featuring people riding horses between two structures, which might be temples. These two paintings are among 200 that have been discovered in Angkor Wat since 2010.

**F.** A mile long sand structure containing a variety of spiral designs was recently discovered beside Angkor Wat by archaeologists using lidar. It would have existed for a brief period during the mid-to-late 12th century. Archaeologists are not certain what it was used for, and it's possible that the structure was never completed. The remains of homes and ponds used by workers who lived near Angkor Wat, and serviced the temple, were also found recently during lidar research.

**G.** Building Angkor Wat was an enormous undertaking that involved quarrying, careful artistic work and lots of digging. To create the moat around the temple, 1.5 million cubic meters (53 million cubic feet) of sand and silt were moved, a task that would have required thousands of people working at one time. To support them, a tough material called laterite was used, which in turn was encased with softer sandstone that was used for carving the reliefs. These sandstone blocks were quarried at the Kulen Hills, about 18 miles (30 km) to the north. A series of canals were used to transport the blocks to Angkor Wat, research shows.

**H.** Beneath the central tower was a shaft that leads to a chamber where, in 1934, archaeologists found "two pieces of crystal and two gold leaves far beneath where the Vishnu statue must have been," Coe writes, adding that deposits like these "spiritually 'energized' a temple, much as a battery will provide power to a portable electronic device."

**I.** Although Angkor Wat is dedicated to Vishnu, the full purpose of the temple is still debated. Researchers still wonder whether the ashes of Suryavarman II were interred in the monument, perhaps in the same chamber where the deposits were found. If that were the case, it would give the temple a funerary meaning.

**Questions 1 – 5**

**Reading Passage 1** has nine sections **A – I.**

Which section contains the following information?

Write the correct letter, **A – I**, in boxes **1 – 5** of your answer sheet.

1. Evidence of artistic works found in Angkor Wat.
2. A description of challenges during the construction of Angkor Wat.
3. A statement on the role of the central tower.



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4. The function of some items found under the central tower
5. A question on further uses of Angkor Wat.

**Questions 6 – 9**

Do the following statements agree with the information in **Reading Passage 1**?

In boxes **6 – 9** on your answer sheet, write

| | |
|---|---|
| ***TRUE*** | *if the statement agrees with the information* |
| ***FALSE*** | *if the statement contradicts the information* |
| ***NOT GIVEN*** | *if there is no information on this* |

6. At first, the Angkor Wat was not built as a place to worship Buddha.
7. The temples of Angkor Wat were believed to be the place where the gods lived.
8. The city Angkor was the largest in the world during the Industrial Revolution.
9. 500,000 people lived in the centre of Angkor during the Khmer Empire

**Questions 10 – 13**

Complete the following sentences.

Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes **10 – 13** on your answer sheet.

10. Besides stabilizing the temple's foundation, the moat also helped to control the level of _____
11. The eight towers next to the western gateway are thought to have been used as _____ before Angkor Wat was completed.
12. In order to help the workers making the moat, _____ was used.
13. Scientists still doubt whether the Suryavarman II's _____ were buried in the temple.



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