

FRANCE Reading Comprehension

Versailles is the site of the Palace of Versailles, one of the most storied buildings in the history of France. It was originally built as a hunting chateau by King Louis VIII in 1624. In 1669, King Louis XIV began searching for a grand site where he could conduct the affairs of France and control the government. He settled on the hunting palace and expanded it into the world's largest palace. In addition, the king hoped to build a governmental center apart from Paris.

The palace took 36,000 workers 50 years to build. The palace is spread out over 280 acres and can house 20,000 people! The palace features over 700 rooms and 67 staircases. There are dozens of unique rooms, features, gardens, and halls. One of the most renowned rooms of the Palace of Versailles is the Hall of Mirrors. Recently restored, the Hall of Mirrors is the centerpiece of the dazzling building. Originally added to the palace in 1684, the Hall of Mirrors was built to be a dazzling display of the power and wealth of the French monarchy. The hall, which measures 73 meters in length, features 357 gold-coated stucco mirrors, ornate paintings, crystal chandeliers, marble fixtures, a parquet floor, and ceilings with colorful murals painted by artist Charles Le Brun. The Hall of Mirrors has also played a prominent role in history. Both the Proclamation of the German Empire in 1871, after the Franco-Prussian War, and the signing of the Treaty of Versailles that formally ended World War I, were signed there.

1.) When was the Palace of Versailles originally built?

- a.) 1684
- b.) 1786
- c.) 1624
- d.) 1669

2.) Why did King Louis XIV want a grand palace?

- a.) He wanted to impress his wife.
- b.) As a hunting chateau
- c.) As a place to conduct his nation's business
- d.) So he and his queen could retire comfortably.

3.) How many palaces were larger than the Palace of Versailles after it was built?

- a.) 0
- b.) 1
- c.) 3
- d.) 2

4.) The Palace took _____ workers _____ years to build.

- a.) 50; 36,000
- b.) 280; 20,000
- c.) 36,000; 50
- d.) 20,000; 280

5.) The Palace of Versailles can hold _____ people.

- a.) 280
- b.) 20,000
- c.) 700
- d.) 50,000

6.) What would you NOT find at the Palace of Versailles?

- a.) beaches
- b.) stairwells
- c.) gardens
- d.) mirrors

7.) The Hall of Mirrors contains _____ mirrors.

- a.) 573
- b.) 357
- c.) 375
- d.) 280

8.) Which of the following is NOT true?

- a.) The Hall of Mirrors has not been restored since 1684.
- b.) The Hall of Mirrors features a parquet floor.
- c.) The Hall of Mirrors is considered the centerpiece of the Palace of Versailles.
- d.) Two major treaties were signed in the Hall of Mirrors.

9.) Which of the following is not mentioned as a feature of the Hall of Mirrors?

- a.) ornate paintings
- b.) bronze moldings
- c.) crystal chandeliers
- d.) marble fixtures

10.) Which of the following could be an appropriate title for this passage?

- a.) The Ceilings of the Hall of Mirrors
- b.) Louis XIV and the Palace of Versailles
- c.) A History of France
- d.) The Amazing Palace of Versailles