

UNIT 3 WORLD GEOGRAPHY LESSON 1

Summary

- In this lesson, students will read "Superstructure" (pp. 16-23) to understand how the people of Dubai overcame the challenges of landscape, climate, and technology to build the tallest skyscraper in the world.

Social Studies Background

The United Arab Emirates is a federation of seven emirates, or states, that lies along the eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula. Dubai is the second largest state, both in population and area. Its capital city is also called Dubai.

Dubai is a port city on the Persian Gulf. For centuries, it was a small fishing village where people came to trade. Then in 1966, an offshore oil field was discovered. Simultaneous booms in oil and real estate transformed the country. Today, its capital is a mecca of concrete, glass, and steel towers that rise from the scorching sand.

Burj Khalifa is the tallest of those towers. The skyscraper has 162 floors and stands 828 meters (2,717 feet) high. Currently, it is the tallest building in the world.

ENGAGE

Encourage students to flip through the article and turn and talk with a partner to discuss what they see. Invite students to ask questions or share what they already know about skyscrapers and Dubai.

EXPLORE

Instruct students to examine the photo on pages 16-17 of their Readers. **Ask:** *Which building do you think this article is about?* (the tall one) Brainstorm a list of reasons why this building could be described as a superstructure.

EXPLAIN

Point out to students that Burj Khalifa, currently the tallest building in the world, is located in Dubai. **Ask:** *Where is Dubai?* (United Arab Emirates, in the Middle East) Have students turn and talk to discuss what the landscape and climate are like in this part of the world. (sandy ground; hot, dry, windy desert) Encourage them to then describe the city of Dubai. (big, wealthy city) Have students identify both natural and technological problems engineers encountered and the solutions they found as they built Burj Khalifa. Then have students discuss reasons why Dubai is a likely setting for this type of development. (It has the population, space, wealth, and technology to build a superstructure.)

ELABORATE

Inform students that by the year 2050, Dubai wants to have the smallest ecological footprint of any city in the world. Invite students to read the National Geographic article "The World's Most Improbable Green City" (www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/urban-expeditions/green-buildings/dubai-ecological-footprint-sustainable-urban-city/) to learn how the city hopes to get there. Encourage students to conduct research to learn more about the city and its plans for the future.

EVALUATE

Have students complete the **Content Assessment** for this lesson. Encourage them to share and compare their results in small groups.

CONTENT ASSESSMENT: Middle East and North Africa, Lesson 1

Identify four problems engineers encountered as they built Burj Khalifa.
Explain how they solved each issue.

Problem	Solution