



The Fall of the Berlin wall

B2-C1

Module 7

Here's What We
Will Be Learning
in this
Presentation:



SUMMARY

- Introduction.
- “Wall of Shame”.
- Fall of the Berlin Wall.
- Conclusion.
- Exercises.

Vocabulary

Fakir bed: a bed of nails.

Fascism: a political system based on a very powerful leader, state control, and being extremely proud of country and race, and in which political opposition is not allowed.

(To be) completely cut-off: to make a place difficult or impossible to enter, leave, or communicate with.

Up in the air: (of a plan or issue) still to be settled; unresolved.

Introduction

The Berlin Wall was a guarded concrete barrier that physically and ideologically divided Berlin into the East and West from 1961 to 1989. The barrier included guard towers—placed along large concrete walls—which circumscribed a wide area (later known as the "death strip"). The guard towers contained, anti-vehicle trenches, "fakir beds" and other defenses.



"Wall of Shame"

In practice, the Wall completely cut off Berlin and served to prevent the massive emigration and defection that had marked East Germany and the Communist Eastern Bloc, during the post-World War II period. It was officially referred to as the "Anti-Fascist Protective Wall" by GDR (German Democratic Republic) authorities. The West Berlin city government sometimes referred to it as the "Wall of Shame"—a term coined by mayor Willy Brandt—while condemning the Wall's restriction on freedom of movement.



Residents of West Berlin show children to their grandparents who reside on the eastern side.

Fall of the Berlin Wall

Anti-Communist revolutions in countries like Hungary, Poland and Romania, caused a chain reaction in East Germany, which eventually resulted in the fall of the Berlin Wall. Though the announcement was made on 9th November 1989—amidst mass celebration—its demolition officially began on 13 June 1990 and was completed in 1992. People used hammers and picks to knock away chunks of the wall—they became known as “mauerspechte,” or “wall woodpeckers”—while cranes and bulldozers pulled down section after section.



Conclusion

To many of the earlier generation whose lives had been overshadowed by the two World Wars, a divided Germany seemed to be the best way to safeguard peace in Europe. However, this bi-polar world cruelly separated millions of families. Across the continent, it fragmented a shared cultural inheritance, which dated back to the Roman empire. For hundreds of years the ebb and flow of people from great cities like Prague, Dresden and Leipzig enriched every aspect of life, including, music & art, food & wine, across Europe. It is believed, the fall of the Berlin Wall did more than just unite people, it liberated Europe and the human imagination.

Documentary

Watch a short documentary on the Berlin Wall and answer the questions:

<https://youtu.be/ube21r7l2oM>

Exercise 1

- 1) Why was the wall referred to as the wall of Shame?
- 1) How did the fall of the Berlin Wall emerge?
- 1) What was the people's reaction to the demolishing of the wall?
- 1) Explain the phrase "to be completely cut-off", in the context of the Berlin wall.
- 1) How did the wall affect European people and culture?
- 1) If the Berlin Wall hadn't fallen, what would be the scenario in Europe today?
- 1) Who were "mauerspechte," or "wall woodpeckers"?

Exercise 2

- 1) For how many years was Germany divided by the wall?
- 1) What tool is being mainly used to hammer at the wall?
- 1) Every East German coming to the West post the fall of the wall will receive how many Marks?
- 1) What are the East German leaders hoping for, with the dismantling of the wall?
- 1) Explain the phrase "Up in the air"
- 2) When was the wall built?
- 3) How do drivers and passengers plan to use their freedom?
- 4) What did you learn about pronunciation after listening to this documentary? Or any other learning?