

Name _____

Slip-Sliding Away

The city of Pisa, Italy, has a very unusual building. It leans 14 feet off center. The building is called the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

The Tower is round and is 180 feet tall. That is the height of a seven-story building. There are 300 steps from the first floor to the top floor. At the top are the bells for the church next door.

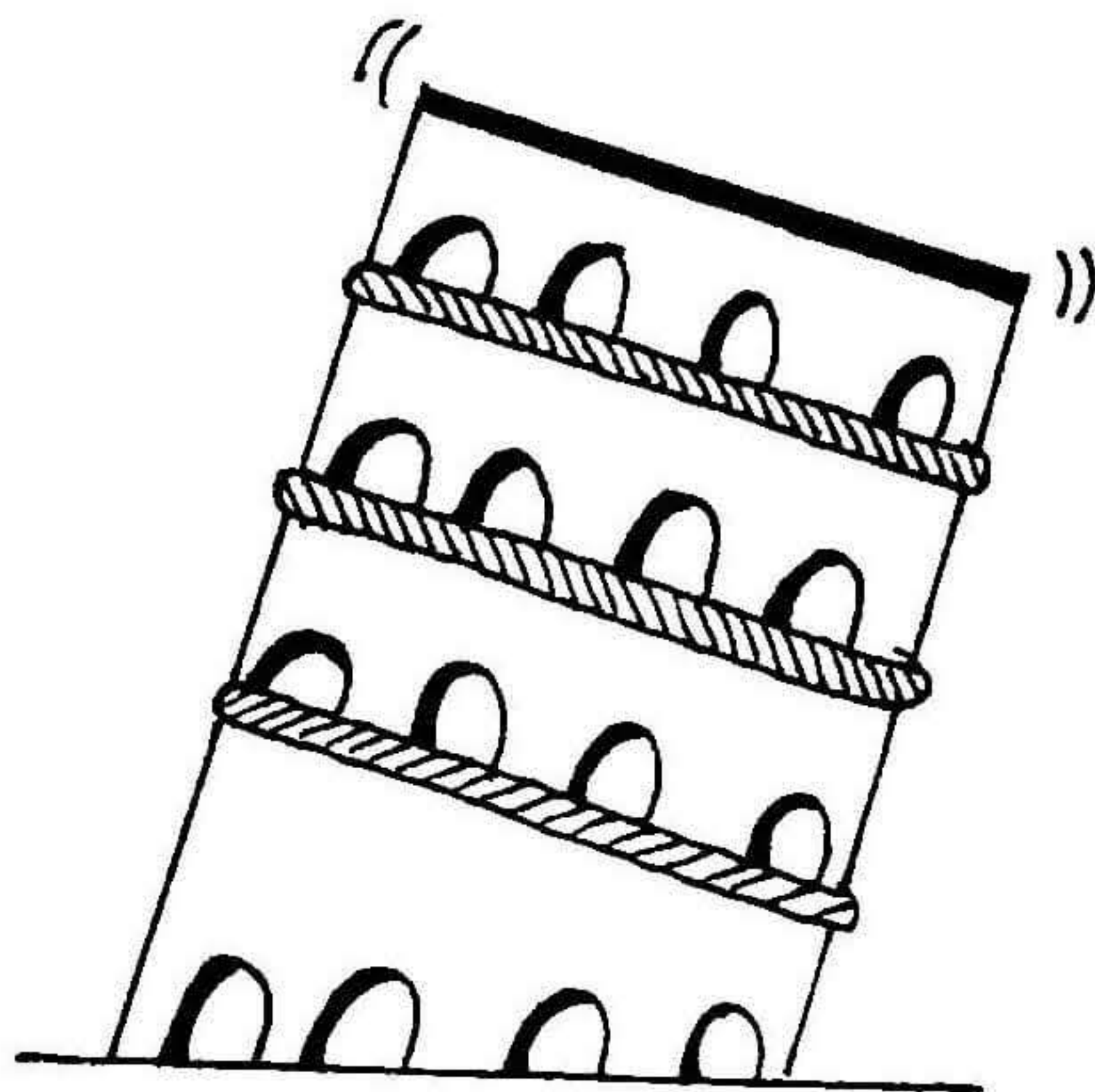
The Tower is very old. It took just under 200 years to complete (from 1173-1372). The building started to lean after the third story was built. The reason is the soft ground underneath. The Tower is built on sand, clay, and water.

The marble used in the Tower gives the building a beautiful, soft color. Rows of arches and columns go around each floor. The walls at the bottom are 13

feet thick. At the top, they are 6-7 feet thick. These are some of the thickest walls in any building.

As time passed, the building shifted even faster. It leaned about one inch every 20 years. It was feared the Tower was in danger of falling down.

In 1990, the Tower was closed to the public so repairs could be made. After trying many ways to straighten it, it was discovered that by digging earth from under the foundation, the Tower tilted back to a more upright position. The tilt is now about 18 inches less than it was before. Engineers believe the Leaning Tower of Pisa is now good for another 300 years. It was reopened to the public in 2001.



Write one or more facts about the Leaning Tower of Pisa for each topic below.

1. where it is found: _____
 2. what is at the top: _____
 3. how long it took to build it: _____
 4. when the building started to lean: _____
 5. why the Tower leans: _____
 6. how fast the building was leaning: _____
 7. what was done to help straighten the Tower: _____
-