

## Unit 7

# Sultan Ahmad Masjid

### Learning Outcomes:

**By the end of this unit students will:**

- know about the Blue Masjid (Istanbul – Turkey)
- appreciate the Muslim architecture
- utilize the dictionary skills/thesaurus skills
- recognize varying positions of adverbs in sentences
- illustrate the use of the present perfect continuous tense
- know about the essentials of descriptive writing

### Pre-reading:

- Name some of the historical places in Pakistan.
- Tell the names of some important masajid in Pakistan.
- What do you know about Turkey?



### For the Teacher:

- Conduct pre-reading activity to arouse the students' interest in the topic.

1. The Sultan Ahmad Masjid is one of the most impressive monuments in the world. It is also known as the Blue Masjid because of the blue tiles that embellish its interior. Situated in Istanbul, the largest city in Turkey and the capital of Ottoman Empire from 1453 to 1923, it has become the most popular tourist attraction.
 

Who started the construction of the Blue Masjid?
2. It was constructed between 1609 and 1616, during the rule of Ahmad I. As was the custom, this masjid like the other masajid of the time, comprises a tomb of the founder, a madrassah and a hospice.
3. The construction of the masjid started in 1609. The royal architect Sedefhar Mehmat Aga, was appointed by the Sultan as in-charge of the project. The opening ceremony was held in 1616. Unfortunately, the Sultan could not see the completion of the masjid in his life. It was completed in the reign of his successor Mustafa I.
 

In whose reign was the construction of the Blue Masjid completed?
4. The Blue Masjid reflects the architectural style of both the Ottoman masjid and Byzantine church. Hagia Sophia, a masjid, one of the wonders of the Muslim architecture, was also kept in view as a model. The Blue Masjid even today is considered to be unmatched in splendour, majesty and size.
5. The masjid has a spacious forecourt surrounded by a continuous vaulted arcade. It has ablution facilities on both the sides. In the centre, there is a fountain which is rather small in contrast with the magnitude of the courtyard. A heavy iron chain is hung at the upper part of the court entrance at
 

For what purpose does a heavy iron chain hang there?



### For the Teacher:

- While-reading activity may be conducted to interact with the text. More while-reading questions may be asked.
- Explain the contribution of the Muslim rulers to art and architecture.
- Briefly tell about the Ottoman Empire.
- Give an introduction of Ahmad I.

the western side. This side was meant for the Sultan alone. The chain was put there so that the Sultan had to lower his head every time he entered the court. It was the symbolic gesture to ensure the humility of the ruler in the face of the divine power.

6. The interior of the masjid at the lower level is lined with more than 20,000 hand-made ceramic tiles in more than 50 different tulip designs. At the gallery level, the design becomes flamboyant with representation of flowers, fruit and cypresses.
7. The upper level of the interior is adorned with blue paint. More than 200 stained glass windows with intricate designs allow natural light to brighten up its interior and the chandeliers further illuminate it with their glow. The decorations include A'yat from the Holy Quran. The floors are covered with carpets.
8. The most important element in the interior of the masjid is the *mehrab*, which is made of finely carved marble. To the right of the *mehrab* is a richly decorated pulpit. The masjid is so designed that even when it is most crowded, everyone in the masjid can listen to and look at the *Imam*.
9. The royal room is situated at the south east corner. It has its own pulpit that used to be decorated with jade and roses. Where is the royal room situated?
10. The Blue Masjid has six minarets. Four minarets stand one each at the four corners of the masjid. Each of these pencil shaped minarets has three balconies, while the other two at the end of the forecourt, have only two balconies.
11. In the evening, a large number of tourists and Turks gather in the park facing the masjid to listen the call to the evening namaz. The masjid is flooded with lights and so are the hearts of the believers with divine love. Though much has been lost of the Blue Masjid over the years yet it has not lost the love of its visitors. The masjid is still one of the most visited monuments of the world.

**Theme:**

The theme of this unit is to highlight the significance of the Islamic architecture. The world of Islam has a splendid heritage of art and architecture in which they excelled throughout the history. Masajid have always been the prominent feature of the Islamic architecture. The essay not only highlights the glory of the Sultan Masjid but also throws light on the skill and ability of the architects of the time.

**Glossary:**

impressive	-----	remarkable
hospice	-----	an inn, a short living place for travellers
embellish	-----	decorate
flamboyant	-----	colourful, bright
interior	-----	inside
carved	-----	imprinted
adorned	-----	decorated
appointed	-----	selected

**Oral Activity:**

**Form groups and discuss the following.**

- What makes the Blue Masjid famous in the world?
- Which feature of the masjid does appeal to you the most and why?

**Prepare a class presentation on "The Role of Masjid in the Islamic Culture".**

**Comprehension****A. Answer the following questions.**

1. Why is the Sultan Ahmad Masjid also known as the Blue Masjid?
2. Who was appointed as the architect of the masjid?
3. What was the purpose of hanging a heavy iron chain at the entrance of the court?
4. How does the interior of the masjid look?
5. Why do you think the madrassah and the hospice were part of the masjid?
6. Who constructed Masjid Sophia?

**For the Teacher:**

- Ask the students to follow guidelines to prepare presentation given on page 53.
- Consult an encyclopedia or surf the internet to find information about famous masajid in Pakistan.

**Vocabulary****A. Consult a thesaurus and find out the synonyms of the following words.**

embellish, integrate, splendour, majesty, illuminate

**B. Circle the correct antonyms from the given choices of the underlined words.**

- The Sultan Ahmad Masjid is one of the most impressive monuments in the world.  
a. ugly                      b. unimpressive              c. remarkable
- Situated in Istanbul, the largest city in Turkey.  
a. smallest                  b. greatest                      c. populated
- A heavy iron chain is hung at the upper part of the court entrance on the western side.  
a. big                          b. bold                          c. light
- The upper level of the interior is adorned with blue paint.  
a. lower                      b. outer                          c. higher
- The floors are covered with carpets.  
a. spread                      b. exposed                      c. decorated

**C. Use the following words in sentences.**

impressive, dexterously, spacious, humility, flamboyant

**D. What do the following abbreviations stand for?**

USA, UK, UAE, ICU, MBBS, Ph.D, M. Phil, PAF, NADRA, UN, ISSB, WAPDA, PCTB, MNA, MPA, IMF, WHO, WTO, UNESCO, UNICEF

**Grammar****Position of Adverbs****A. Place the adverbs at appropriate positions.**

- She comes here. (often)
- He goes to Lahore. (sometimes)

3. The teacher was late. (hardly ever)
4. We are tired by the end of the day. (usually)
5. I have posted a letter to them. (just)
6. He did his work. (carefully)

### Degrees of Comparison

Some adverbs, like adjectives also have three degrees of comparison.

#### Example

The masjid is so designed that even when it is **most crowded**, everyone in the masjid can listen to and look at the *Imam*.

The masjid still remains to be one of the **most visited** monuments of the world.

### B. Complete this table with appropriate degree of adverbs.

Positive degree	Comparative degree	Superlative degree
kept much		
sang beautifully		
slept little		
looked good		
arrived early		

### C. Use the above degrees of comparison in sentences as given in example.

1. They came early this morning.
2. I came earlier than him.
3. He came earliest of all.



#### For the Teacher:

- Help students recognize **varying positions of adverbs in the sentences** according to their kinds and importance.
- Help them **to use the degrees of comparison of adverbs**.

## Present Perfect Continuous Tense

The structure of the Present Perfect Continuous Tense is:

**Subject + auxiliary verb + auxiliary verb + main verb**

has/have

been

base + ing

There are basically two uses of the Present Perfect Continuous Tense:

### 1. An action that has just stopped or recently stopped

We use the Present Perfect Continuous Tense to talk about an **action** that started in the past and stopped recently.

#### Examples

1. I'm tired <sup>[now]</sup> because I've **been running**.
2. Why is the grass wet <sup>[now]</sup>? **Has it been raining?**
3. You don't understand <sup>[now]</sup> because you **haven't been listening**.

### 2. An action continuing up to now

We use the Present Perfect Continuous Tense to talk about an **action** that started in the past and is continuing **now**. This is often used with **for** or **since**.

We often use **for** and **since** with the Present Perfect Continuous Tense.

- We use 'for' to talk about a **period** of time - 5 minutes, 2 weeks, 6 years.
- We use 'since' to talk about a **point** in past time - 9 o'clock, 1<sup>st</sup> January, Monday.

#### Examples

1. I **have been reading for** 2 hours. [ I am still reading now. ]
2. We've **been studying since** 9 o'clock. [ We're still studying now. ]
3. For how long **have you been learning** English? [ You are still learning now. ]

**D. Put *for* or *since* in the blanks.**

1. I have been studying \_\_\_\_\_ 3 hours.
2. I have been watching TV \_\_\_\_\_ 7pm.
3. Tara hasn't been feeling well \_\_\_\_\_ 2 weeks.
4. Tara hasn't been visiting us \_\_\_\_\_ March.
5. He has been playing football \_\_\_\_\_ a long time.
6. He has been living in Bangkok \_\_\_\_\_ he left the school.

**E. Make five sentences using the present perfect continuous tense and convert them into negative and interrogative sentences.****Writing Skills****A. Write down the summary of the unit. Focus on the following points.**

- history of the masjid
- architecture
- importance

**B. Describe in your own words the architecture of any historical place in Pakistan.****Oral Communication Skills****Litter Bug!**

**Ahmad:** Hey! Did you see what that boy did?

**Naem:** Yeah! He threw a plastic bag into the street. He doesn't care about our environment. He's a litter bug.

**Ahmad:** Do you care about our environment?

**Naem:** Yes, I do. There's too much pollution. Everybody should care about environment.

**Ahmad:** I agree. "Hey, litter bug! Pick up that trash"!

**Naem:** Look! He's picking it up! Thanks for caring about the environment!

**For the Teacher:**

- Help students make a mind map for summary writing to develop focus on their writing.
- Make pairs and give students good practice in presenting the dialogue with proper stress and intonation patterns.