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Big Ben Goes Silent 🙉



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Big Ben is the symbol of London. But the famous clock needs major repairs.

People call the clock on the British Houses of Parliament "Big Ben". It is a famous <u>landmark</u>. "Big Ben" is really the name

of the gigantic bell in the clock tower. Every hour, the bell rings to tell the time.

The clock dates from 1856. Now the clock. and the tower, need repairs. The repairs will last from 2017 to 2020. Then Big Ben can continue working for 150 years!

Four people at the Houses of Parliament have a very special job:



Four people at the Houses of Parliament work to ensure that Big Ben works perfectly.

Help

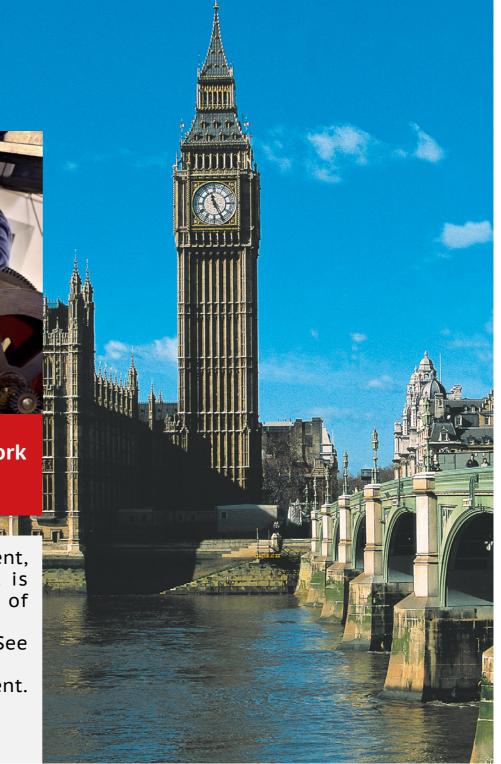
mountain climbing (n) Climbers use mountain-climbing techniques to get to the summit of Mount Everest. abseil (v, pronounced ab-sale) when you are suspended on cords and go down a building etc. Also called rappelling. repair (n/v) work to return something to good condition

landmark (n) an important monument, building or natural feature that is specific to one place. The Statue of Liberty is a New York landmark.

bell (n) metal musical instrument. See photo next page.

tower (n) a tall building or monument. The Eiffel Tower symbolises Paris.

work (v) here, function



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12,000 people normally visit Big Ben every year. See how big the bell is in comparison with the people! The bell is 2.7m in diameter, 2.2m in height, and weighs 13.7 tonnes.

they are <u>clockmakers</u> and they ensure that 2,000 clocks in Parliament work perfectly. The biggest clock is Big Ben.

The clock's mechanism has three parts. Each part gets its energy from an enormous <u>weight</u>, which slowly descends inside the tower. The three weights must be returned to the top of the tower every two days. The clockmakers must turn a giant <u>handle</u> to return one of the weights to the top.

The other two weights have an electric motor.

Time for Repairs

The work started in April 2017. One clock face <u>at a time</u> will be removed for renovation.

The Big Ben bell will stop ringing for part of the time. But for important occasions, Londoners will hear the sound of Big Ben as usual. ■



The metal-and-glass clock faces need repairs.

Help

weight (n, pronounced wate) here, a heavy object

one at a time (exp) in a series, first one face is removed, then when it comes back, another face is removed, etc.

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