**The Statue of Liberty - Script**

Hi. Good morning everybody. Thanks for coming. I hope you're well. Today, I want to talk to you about the Statue of Liberty. I'm going to give myself ten minutes for this one. I find if I don't time these talks, I just tend to go on and on and on. Waffle on. So, I'm going to give myself ten minutes. OK. Are you ready? Here we go. The Statue of Liberty in ten minutes. Three, two, one, go.

OK. You all know the Statue of Liberty, I'm sure. It's an iconic symbol of America. It's based in New York, and it's the statue of a lady holding a torch and a book in one hand. I'm sure you've all seen it on TV, or seen pictures of it, even if you haven't actually seen the real thing. The Statue of Liberty's full name is “Liberty enlightening the world”, and it was a gift from France. Now, the idea for this gift came around in 1865, when two French people were talking. The American Civil War had just finished, 1861 to 1865, and the North, the Union had won. And America was now technically free. Slaves were freed. America was free. France had also had a revolution, a civil war of sorts, and France was a republic and was free. And French people valued their freedom, their liberty. So, in France, two people: Edouard Rene de Laboulaye and Frederic Auguste Bartholdi, they had a conversation. One of them said to the other, “Well, America has just had this civil war, and now they've finished and they're free. We should give them a gift to celebrate their freedom, their liberty.” And Bartholdi said, “That's an excellent idea. I think I will.” Now, Bartholdi was a sculptor, so he went away, and he designed the statue. But, he's a sculptor. He works with clay. He works with rock. He doesn't work with metals. So, he turned to his friend, Gustave Eiffel, and he said to him, “Can you design the structure?” And Eiffel said, “Sure. OK.” Now, Eiffel is famous for working with metal. You've probably heard about him before. He designed a very famous building in France: the Eiffel Tower. Eiffel Tour. So, he designed the central structure for it.

Now, the idea for the statue came from a building, well a statue, called the Colossus of Rhodes. In the world, a long time ago, there were seven wonders of the natural … well, Seven Wonders of the world. Only one of them is still standing: The Great Pyramid of Giza, the other six have disappeared or fallen down. One of them was the Colossus of Rhodes. This was a giant statue 33m high, that stood on the island of Rhodes, just off Greece. It stood with its legs either side of the harbor. So, any ships coming in to Rhodes would have to go through the legs of this giant statue 33m high. And Bartholdi, he looked at that idea and he thought, “That's really good. I'll do something similar to that. I’ll make a statue of a giant person.”

So, place. Where to put it? He went to America to talk to them about the idea and as he sailed into New York, his ship went past an island called Bedloe Island. And he thought, “Well, what an excellent place. Any ship that comes in to New York will have to sail past this island. I’m going to put it there.” And he asked the American government, and they said, “Yeah. We own that land. We can use that land. No problem.” Of course, now the name's been changed to Liberty Island, but that's how he decided where to put it.

Now, the design. He was copying the Colossus of Rhodes of course, but he didn't want something exactly the same. He thought, “What's a symbol of America?” And Columbia is the symbol of America. Columbia is basically a woman, and she is the female symbol of America. The word Columbia comes from the discoverer of America, who was Christopher Columbus of course. Plus “ia”, which in Latin means a country. For example, Italy in Latin is Italia, I think. The “ia” is the country. So, Christopher Columbus, “ia”, Columbia. Columbia is the symbol of America. You can see Columbia in a few places, and if you watch a movie by the Columbia production company, they always start their movies with Columbia holding a torch. The District of Columbia. The … Washington … The capital of America. Washington D.C. District of Columbia. The Columbia is again Columbia. So, he thought, “I will build a statue of Columbia.”

Oh, incidentally, America is called America, not Columbia, because Amerigo Vespucci, the explorer, as I'm sure you all know, he was the first person to prove that America, the Americas, were not part of Asia. Christopher Columbus always thought they were part of Asia, but of course they're not, and Amerigo Vespucci was the first person to prove that. So, Amerigo … Amerigus in Latin … America, the country. I think.

OK. So, Bartholdi decides to start work on this sculpture. 1875, he finishes the design. 1876, they begin working. 1878, the head is finished, but they're running out of money. So, they go to the French government to get funding and France has no problem paying for this. France has a lottery. Regular people buy lottery tickets. They win great prizes. France very easily raises 250,000 francs, which is about six million of today's U.S. dollars. However, the French are only going to pay for the statue. The pedestal … the thing that the statue stands on, the Americans are going to pay for. And this is agreed. But, when it comes time to pay for it, the Americans don't want to pay. “It's a present from France! Why should we have to pay for it?” they say. And the civil war has just finished. There is uncertainty in the country. Economic uncertainty. There is an economic panic in 1873. People don't have a lot of money. The government doesn't have a lot of money. They don't want to pay for this. So, the people in charge of the statue, they have a huge problem trying to raise money for this statue and it becomes quite embarrassing for New York. In fact, other cities, Boston and Philadelphia, say, “we’ll pay, we’ll pay, bring it here.” But they want to put it in New York, but New Yorkers won’t pay. So, Joseph Pulitzer, you may have heard of Pulitzer, there's a Pulitzer prize, the prize is named after him. He was the publisher of The New York World, the newspaper. He said to people, “I will publish the name of anybody that donates money towards this pedestal. No matter how small. Even if it's only one cent.” And he does. And he starts publishing the names and he starts publishing the letters he receives. “So and so, an eight-year-old girl donated three cents, which is her entire pocket money for the week.” “John. He donated his beer money for the week.” He publishes all these names and all these letters, and it takes off. And people start finally giving the money and he manages to raise a hundred and two thousand dollars, which is about two and a half million of today's dollars. So, finally, after about three years, they can pay for the pedestal.

So, 1885, the statue is shipped from France. It's built. 18 … 1886, October 28th it's opened, and we have the Statue of Liberty.

A few statistics for you. The pedestal is 47m high, the statue is 46m high, which gives a grand total of 93m, I think. It’s 225 tons. There are 324 steps. Liberty is holding a book. On the book it says, “July I V M D C C L X X V I”. You know what that means? Those are Roman numerals. It says, “July 4th, 1776,” which is obviously an important day in American history. It's America's Independence Day. Their day of freedom. And liberty is a statue of freedom. She also has a broken chain in front of her. If you look at her feet, she's walking over a broken chain symbolizing freedom. And, if you look, I can’t show you, but her back foot is raised symbolizing she's walking forwards. So, she's walking over a broken chain. OK? So, it's all about freedom, at the end of slavery.

OK. Since then, obviously, it's over a hundred years old now, the statue, and metal does corrode. There have been a few problems, and in 1984 the statute was closed for refurbishment. There were quite a few problems. I mean, it's a copper skin with … copper obviously oxidizes. Copper is basically a golden color but once it’s exposed to the air it goes green. So, Liberty is not actually green. She’s supposed to be like a golden color. So, the skin had oxidized. Metal had corroded in places. The skin had holes. Some bits were broken. The head wasn't on quite straight. One of the arms was loose and swayed way too much in the wind.

So, in 1885 … sorry … so, in 1984 the statue was closed for refurbishment. They fixed almost everything. They fixed the skin. They took copper off a roof nearby and they fixed the skin. They repainted it. They fixed the torch. They realigned the torch. They put a new torch on. They fixed all the holes. They replaced the structure. Eiffel had used iron, of course, they didn't have steel back then, he’d used iron, and iron of course corrodes and it's not very strong. So, they replace the core with a steel structure that actually moves in the wind. They put in a lift … an elevator. They widen the doors. They reangled the light so it reflects the sun better. They refixed the head. Everything. And in 1986 the statue was reopened after one hundred years. Is it the same statue? That’s hard to say because pretty much everything was changed. But, the statue was reopened, and today you can go to visit the statue, if you want.

At the base of the statue there is a quotation which is taken from a poem. A poem by an American lady called Emma Lazarus. She wrote this poem as fund raising for the pedestal. When they were trying to get money for the pedestal, they asked her to write an original poem and she wrote this one called “The New Colossus”. And, at the bottom is a famous quote, which I am going to read for you. Are you ready?

“Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door.”

So, Liberty is welcoming everybody from around the world. America at that time was a safe haven, was a refuge for anybody in the world that had problems. After the First World War, after the Second World War, when Europe was destroyed, all the refugees went to America. Even now refugees … ah … You see. That's why I have to time myself. Even now refugees from all over the world they want to go to America. They want to go to America for safety, for the American dream. And when you sail into New York, you go past this statue and she's saying, “Come to me. Come to me. I will take you. I will help you.” And that's the ideal. That's the ideal of freedom. Does it still apply? Does America still accept anybody from around the world? Well, Donald Trump would like to stop that, if he possibly could. But, in general, yes, I think America does. Americans are very kind, very welcoming, very friendly.

So, that's ten minutes about the Statue of Liberty. I hope you could understand all that. If you have any questions or comments or ideas, put them down below here in the comments section. If you have any ideas for things you'd like me to talk about, please put them in the comments section below. If you liked this click “like”. In the description down here there's a link for the script, questions, answers, the MP3. Have a look. If you want to subscribe click “SUBSCRIBE”, looks like my head, and you can get these talks whenever I make them. Thank you very much. See you next week. Bye.

**The Statue of Liberty – Questions**

1. Why did Edouard Rene de Laboulaye and Frederic Auguste Bartholdi want to give a present to America?

A: Because France had helped the Union win the American Civil War.

B: Because it would let many French people emigrate to America.

C: Because Americans valued liberty as much as the French did.

D: Because it was the 100th anniversary of America.

2. Where did Bartholdi get the idea for the Statue of Liberty?

A: The Great Pyramid of Giza

B: The Colossus of Rhodes

C: The Eiffel Tower

D: The Republic of France

3. Why did Bartholdi choose Bedloe Island to build the statue on?

A: Because that was the only place they could build the pedestal.

B: Because the American government insisted on it.

C: Because it was the largest island that he could find.

D: Because anybody sailing into New York would have to pass it.

4. Who proved that America was a new continent?

A: George Washington

B: Christopher Columbus

C: Amerigo Vespucci

D: Frederic Bartholdi

5. He said to people, “I will publish the name of anybody that **donates** money towards this pedestal. No matter how small. Even if it's only one cent.” Which of these words is closest in meaning to **donate**?

A: Suppress

B: Refrain

C: Withhold

D: Contribute

6. How does Josephs Pulitzer get people to give money for the pedestal?

A: He promises to print the names of people who give money.

B: He promises to make the largest pedestal.

C: He promises to hold a lottery with excellent prizes.

D: He promises to build the statue in Boston.

7. Why is July I V M D C C L X X V I significant?

A: It is the date the constitution was written.

B: It is the date America declared independence.

C: It is the date the statue was opened.

D: It is the date the Civil War ended.

8. Why is the broken chain a symbol of freedom?

A: Because Liberty doesn’t know how to fix the chain.

B: Because chains are often broken in a war.

C: Because chains are heavy.

D: Because when someone is chained up they are not free.

9. Why is Liberty green?

A: Because the copper she is made of turns green on contact with air.

B: Because she was painted green in 1984.

C: Because green is a color that stands out very clearly.

D: Because green is the color of freedom.

10. When Liberty was repaired in 1984, why did they realign the torch?

A: So people could climb inside it.

B: So it would be stronger.

C: So it wouldn’t make a hole in her arm.

D: So it would reflect the sun more.

11. Describe a famous manmade landmark in your country.

12. America is a melting pot. Has this made the country stronger or weaker?

13. After the repairs, 1984 to 1986, the statue has been rebuilt. Steven asks if it is still the same statue. What do you think?

14. “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door.” Analyze this poem.

15. Should people be able to move freely among countries?

**The Statue of Liberty – Answers**

1. C 2. B 3. D 4. C 5. D 6. A 7. B 8. D 9. A 10. D

11. Describe a famous manmade landmark in your country.

I live in Japan and the most famous manmade landmark used to be Tokyo Tower, but now is probably the Tokyo Sky Tree. The tower is 634m high and was opened in 2012. It is supposed to resemble a pagoda whilst being extremely futuristic. It represents the melding of the old and the new Japan. It is a symbol of the way that the city wishes to go. I think it will be the way that the city goes, whether it wants to or not. As one of the world’s biggest and most crowded cities, the future of Tokyo is most definitely going to be up. Taller and taller buildings. Until the declining population hits. The building is attracting a lot of attention and over a million people visited it in the first week. It is surprisingly expensive, and usually crowded, yet I want to visit one day. The views must be stunning.

12. America is a melting pot. Has this made the country stronger or weaker?

Most definitely stronger. When you accept immigration on such levels as America has done, you inevitably get problems, but the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages. When you accept immigrants or refugees you can get large numbers of uneducated and poor. Your welfare programs will be tested and there might be more unemployment, poverty and crime. This spike isn’t always caused directly by the immigrants, though. Uneducated immigrants are often willing to do any job they can find, often for a low wage. This ultimately causes an unemployment rise in the native population who are unwilling to work for so little money. This unemployment rise will then cause a rise in crime and poverty. So, you could argue the rising crime is caused by immigration, but indirectly.

On the other hand, when you accept immigration you get two things. You get knowledge and you get gratitude. A lot of America’s technical innovation, and the reason it is the most powerful country on Earth, has come about due to immigration. Before and after WW2, many university scholars, inventors, chemists, and other highly intelligent people fled to the US to escape Nazi Germany. These people brought with them knowledge that has given the US a tremendous advantage. It is not an exaggeration to say that without immigration, the US wouldn’t be as strong as it is now. The second thing, gratitude, is a surprising element, but one that gives the US its strength. You often find that some of the people who identify most strongly as “American” are immigrants. And the people who are most eager to fight and defend their adopted homeland are immigrants. This ability to assimilate, to take people from so many different backgrounds and sew them together into an American society, gives America a strength and resilience that many other countries don’t have. It is a shame that Trump and many of his supporters cannot see that.

13. After the repairs, 1984 to 1986, the statue has been rebuilt. Steven asks if it is still the same statue. What do you think?

There is an old joke. A man sees a road sweeper cleaning the road. They start talking. “How do you get the roads so clean?” the man asks.

“Well,” the road sweeper replies. “I couldn’t do it without my trusty broom. She’s been by my side for twenty years.”

“Twenty years!! That’s amazing!”

“Yep. And in that time, I’ve only had to replace her head 17 times and her handle 15.”

I guess the Statue of Liberty is similar to that because almost everything has been repaired or replaced. So, is it the same statue? Yes, it is. But, only because the statue is more important than just the frame and skin. The idea of the Statue of Liberty hasn’t changed and her appearance hasn’t changed. She still stands over the entrance to New York and welcomes people in. She carries the same book and has the same expression on her face. As long as there is no change to her appearance, she is still the same statue.

14. “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door.” Analyze this poem.

Emma Lazarus wrote the poem in 1883. Through her, Liberty is making an entreaty to the countries of the world. Lazarus is imagining people who are fleeing their countries because of oppression, famine, or any other of a host of reasons. “The wretched refuse” are the people who have been thrown away by their own country and “the teeming shore” means there are so many of them trying to flee that the beaches are heaving with people. This is surprisingly presentient. Lazarus wrote this way before WW1 and WW2. She couldn’t have imagined how true these words would turn out to be as hundreds of thousands of people, if not millions, fled the danger and oppression in Europe and made for America.

“Tempest-tost” could refer to the rough weathers that the immigrants have suffered on their voyage across the sea but probably more accurately refers to the political tempests they are running from.

And the final line, “I lift my lamp beside the golden door.” must refer to the land of promise and safety that is America. Liberty is holding her light high to show the refugees the way to come. She is shining brightly, a beacon, a lighthouse, to guide the poor and the hungry and the suffering to a golden place where they can be safe, heal and prosper. It is a beautiful poem.

15. Should people be able to move freely among countries without limit?

That is a difficult question. I personally believe that they should. However, I can see various problems with the ideas that would have to be overcome. I do believe that as our civilization evolves, these problems will fix themselves.

As humans, we identify very strongly with a group. Our family, our friends, our class, our town, our state, our country. To allow people from other countries to freely move, live and work in our group would mean giving up a part of our identity. We need the “them and us” idea. On a more practical level, the free movement of people would make tax collection and country defense difficult. If you are living and working in many different countries, where do you pay tax? And, if a war were to break out, to which country do you own allegiance?

However, with the march of globalization comes a world-wide economy which is making a situation where people can move freely far more likely. The Internet enables us to live in one country and work in another. High speed travel means we can be in Tokyo in the morning then London by night. The world is seemingly moving towards this goal, whether we want it to or not. So, it will happen. The problems of tax would solve themselves. And in a truly global world, war would be less likely, so that would become a non-problem as well. But, we still have to overcome people’s ideas. And that will happen.

Of course, it does bear saying that just because it will become possible doesn’t mean it will happen. The majority of the people on the planet could not afford to move around even if they were allowed to. What will they do?