

Sound Out
City Secrets

Sinking City

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High Noon Books

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ITALY



A Hiding Place

The robbers needed a place to hide. They steered their boat into the Floating City. They knew that no one could find them there!

The Floating City was also known as Venice

(VEN-iss). It was not just one place. Up to the year 900, Venice was a group of islands. The islands were close to each other. A boat could sail back through the islands. Venice was a good place to hide.

The islands were small. The land was flat and muddy. It was not

firm. People could build small houses with straw roofs. But big houses would sink quickly in the mud.

Venice was in a good spot. It was by the sea. Ships liked to stop there. People traded cloth and grain that came from the ships.

More and more people



Venice was in a good spot. It was by the sea.

wanted to live in Venice.
The people wanted the
city to grow. They would
need tall buildings to
hold more people. But
tall, heavy buildings
would sink. They had to
come up with a plan.

How to Grow?

The city leaders worked on plans for building Venice. They needed to make a base for the city. But how would they do it?

First, they drained the wet land that spread all

around. This was a very hard job. They poured tons of rock to make the land firm.

Building the soil helped. But it did not do the whole job. That is because Venice is next to the sea. When the tide comes in, the land gets soft again.

The city planners sent

workers to a far-off land.
The land had lots and
lots of trees. The
workers camped in the
woods. They cut down
many, many trees. When
they were done, there
were no trees left in that
place.

Then the workers put
the trees on long boats.
They shipped the trees



The land had lots and lots of trees.

to Venice. The city would use the trees to make the city bigger.

Holding it All Up

What did the people of Venice do with all those trees? Workers cut them into long, thick poles.

The poles were sunk deep into the mud. They put the poles right next to each other so that the

sides touched.

Then the tops of the poles were sawed off. They were cut to be flat on top. These poles are called pilings. The pilings made a wide, strong base.

The workers did this same thing over and over. Would the new pilings make the land



Then the tops of the poles were sawed off.

firm? Would the pilings
sink some day in the
mud? No one knew. But
the city planners did not
care. They would make
Venice a great city now.
Who cared what might
go on later in time?

High Frequency Words

a	how	them
and	into	there
around	it	they
as	just	to
but	like(d)	up
by	make	want(ed)
came	no	was
come	not	were
could	one	with
do	stop	work(ed)
find	that	would
from	the	
good	their	