

Facts and figures

Listen to the lecturer giving some facts and figures to practise and improve your listening skills.

Before listening

Do the preparation task first. Then listen to the audio and do the exercises.

Preparation task

Write the words in the correct group.

kilometres	to cross	canal
goods	trade	ship
waterway	ocean	commercial

Water	Economy and industry	Travel and transport

Tasks

Task 1

Write a number (1–4) to put the topics in order.

- _____ History of the construction of the canal
- _____ Length of the Panama Canal
- _____ How many ships cross the Panama Canal
- _____ Who controls the Panama Canal

Task 2

Complete the sentences with correct numbers.

99	1881	8 to 10	2000	2
40,000	82	25,000	1914	15,000

1. The Panama Canal connects oceans.
2. It is kilometres long.
3. It is kilometres to travel around South America.
4. It takes hours to cross the canal.
5. The canal was started in
6. It was finished in
7. Almost people died while they were building the canal.
8. The control of the canal returned to Panama in
9. Every year, about ships come through the canal.
10. Now the canal is bigger, and per cent of ships can pass through it.

Discussion

Are you good with numbers?

Transcript

... and the next part of this talk is on the Panama Canal. It's amazing how this one small section of a small country can be so important to the world. Let's learn a little bit about the canal itself, before we look at how it connects to everything else.

The Panama Canal is an artificial waterway in the Central American country of Panama that connects the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean. It is only 82 kilometres long. If you go around South America by ship then you need to travel another 15,000 kilometres. So the canal saves a lot of travel time. It takes around 8 to 10 hours to cross the canal.

The French started building the canal in 1881, but they couldn't finish it. The project was started again in 1904 by the United States and the canal was finally finished in 1914. Many people died while they were building the canal, some say up to 25,000. For the rest of the 20th century, the United States controlled the canal, but gave control back to Panama in 2000.

Every year, around 40,000 ships come through the canal. These are mostly commercial ships. They transport goods for trade between Asia and America, or Europe. In 2016 the government of Panama made the canal bigger, so that now 99 per cent of ships can pass through it.

Let's now turn to the role of the Panama Canal in the global economy ...

Answers

Preparation task

Water	Economy and industry	Travel and transport
canal	commercial	kilometres
waterway	trade	to cross
ocean	goods	ship

Task 1

- 2 History of the construction of the canal
- 1 Length of the Panama Canal
- 4 How many ships cross the Panama Canal
- 3 Who controls the Panama Canal

Task 2

1. 2
2. 82
3. 15,000
4. 8 to 10
5. 1881
6. 1914
7. 25,000
8. 2000
9. 40,000
10. 99