

UNIT 4: SOMETHING TO SAY

LESSON 2: QUESTIONS ABOUT A TALK

Lesson aims:

- Express ideas using facts and figures
- Make statements using superlatives about world facts
- Understand a basic talk containing facts and figures
- Speculate about information in a talk
- Create written questions in preparation for a talk

Lead-in

1. *Here are some facts and figures. Can you match them? Can you say the figures?*

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| 1. The length of the Amazon River | a. 5,700 kilos |
| 2. The population of India | b. 49 hectares |
| 3. The area of the Vatican City | c. 6,400 km |
| 4. The altitude of Aconcagua | d. 6,961 meters |
| 5. The weight of an adult bull elephant | e. 1,417,000,000 |

2. *Can you complete the space with the superlative form of the adjective?*

SMALL	LONG	HEAVY	POPULOUS	HIGH
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- a) India's the country in the world.
- b) The Vatican City's the country in the world.
- c) Aconcagua's the mountain in South America.
- d) The adult bull elephant's the land animal on earth.
- e) The Amazon's the river in the world.

LANGUAGE NOTE:

Billions & Figures

We say **billion** for a 10-digit number, which corresponds to "mil millones" in Spanish.

We say **figures** when we talk about numbers or amounts. This corresponds to "cifras" in Spanish.

Speaking

1. You are going to listen to a talk about the Panama Canal. What do you know about it? Brainstorm a few ideas.

IDEAS ABOUT THE PANAMA CANAL
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2. Discuss with your partner what you know about this canal. Did you learn anything new?
3. Then consider the statements below. Which ones do **you know are true**?
 - a) The Panama Canal is a shortcut between the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean.
 - b) The Panama Canal is less important for the economy now than 40 years ago.
 - c) This canal has its own unique underwater fauna.
 - d) This canal is more a place of tourism than a place of trade.
 - e) Billions of dollars are collected annually for using this canal.

Listening

*Listening track from: <https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/>

1. Before you listen, put the words into their categories (some words can go in more than one category).

GOODS	CANAL	OCEAN	KILOMETERS
TRADE	SHIP	COMMERCIAL	TO CROSS
			WATERWAY

WATER	ECONOMY & INDUSTRY	TRANSPORT & NAVIGATION

2. Write two questions you would like the listening text to answer:

.....

.....

3. Listen and put the topics of the talk in order. Number them 1-4.

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

4. Listen again and complete the notes with the missing figures.

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

NOTES

1. The Panama Canal connects oceans.
2. It is kilometers long.
3. It is kilometers 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. 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.

Writing

1. After this professor's presentation on the Panama Canal ends, he will take questions from the audience. You are part of that audience. **Write two questions you would like to ask.** You can look at the transcript of the presentation and the speaking activity statements (which do you know are true) to help you generate ideas.

Q1

Q2

2. Share and compare your questions with a classmate. Are your questions similar or different? Did you think of very different aspects of the topic?

Final Lesson Task

1. The university is going to have a guest speaker: **Dr. Alicia Sánchez**. Dr. Sánchez will give this talk: **A Look at the Urban Development of Mexico City**. She is an expert in sustainable urban development. Read her bio here:

UNIVERSITY GUEST SPEAKER	
Name	Dr. Alicia Sánchez
Occupation	Professor of Mexican History
Place of work	National University of Mexico
Research focus	Urban development, law and society, crime and justice, city organization, development of Mexico City in particular
Achievements	Advisor to the “Consejo Urbano de México” (Urban Advisory Board of Mexico)
Top publications	Living in the Mexican City (Florida University Press, 2011) The City Reader –coeditor (Green Press, 2016)
Awards	Polisser Prize for Writing (2019)
Personal statement	<i>I want to explore the social, cultural, and legal history of the urban nighttime of Mexico City during the nineteenth century.</i>

2. A group of students will have the job of organizing this talk for Dr. Sánchez. Before you organize a guest speaker presentation, you probably need to ask the speaker some questions about organizing the event. You probably will have questions about these topics. Unscramble these **organizational questions** you (may) have for a guest speaker:

- 1) Do you prefer / multiple screens / to have / just one / or ?
- 2) How should / the space / we / set up ?
- 3) Can you / before the event / send us / the presentation / 48 hours ?
- 4) Will you / us / extra / send / information / for ?

Write these four questions in the spaces below:

1	
2	
3	
4	

3. In pairs, create three more **questions about the topic** of Dr. Sánchez's talk. One question is an example:

5	How is the urban development of Mexico City relevant for Chile?
6	
7	
8	

4. Share your questions with other pair of students. Are they similar or different?

Save your questions because you will need them in your next class.

Exit Ticket

Can you do these things?

**My Top 5 Words
from this lesson:**

	I can express facts and figures.	1	
	I can make superlative statements about world facts.	2	
	I can understand part of an academic lecture after some preparation for it.	3	
	I can understand clearly stated facts and figures in a presentation.	4	
	I can formulate questions about academic presentations.	5	

Homework: Self-study

[90 minutes per week]

1. **Extra practice** (online): Superlative adjectives



<https://english-practice.net/english-grammar-exercises-for-a2-comparatives-and-superlatives/>

Transcripts

LISTENING

...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...