



What Is the Panama Canal?

Janet B. Pascal, Tim Foley (Illustrations), Fred Harper (Illustrations)

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Before 1914, traveling from the East Coast to the West Coast meant going by land across the entire United States. To go by sea involved a long journey around South America and north along the Pacific Coast.

But then, in a dangerous and amazing feat of engineering, a 48-mile-long channel was dug through Panama, creating the world's most famous shortcut: the Panama Canal!

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From Reader Review What Is the Panama Canal? for online ebook

Agnes Budianto says

I never knew building the Panama Canal took a long time and many things are sacrificed before reading this book.

Stacy M. Patton says

My children and I love the “What Is” series. This book is no exception! This book is a very comprehensive look at the history of building the Panama Canal. My 4th and 6th grade boys enjoyed reading this with me. I had no idea it was so difficult building this canal. I was also surprised how much of a problem diseases were in this area but it does make sense! This book was a very educational overview for all of us!

Caleb says

I liked it. France started buy only got 11 miles in and it couldn't farther. It got bankrupt. And once they made a railroad across Panama so that would help them get supplies for the canal. but it was American, so France had to buy it. There were lots of diseases but France didn't know what caused them. It turned out they were caused by mosquitos. The diseases were malaria and yellow fever. Their machinery would fall into the holes they had been digging and it was a failure. But then France gave up so America started. But Columbia wouldn't give them the right to use Panama so Panama said ok, we're going to become an independent country and so they did. And then they basically let the united states own where the Panama canal was being built. The first person to see the Atlantic Ocean from Panama had made all his men stay behind so he would be able to see it first. In America worked in the canal is 42 miles long. They finally finished.

Cheryl says

Wow. This book was very nicely done! It's well researched and well written. I learned a lot about the Panama Canal and all the blood, sweat, and tears that was involved in crafting this waterway. An engineering triumph of brawn and brains, indeed.

Brady H says

this was a pretty good book. It was pretty interesting. I recomened this book to anyone who like who was books.

Rada says

I read this book because I have recently seen the Panama Canal. Knowing what I know now about the canal, I am not surprised it's one of the seven modern wonders.

Angela says

I thought that only some parts made me want to read on.

Nathaniel says

I liked it. France got 9 miles in before they got bankrupt trying to do it so they stopped. The United States was going to build it in Nicaragua, but the French wanted them to dig where they had been digging, so they gave them a bargain to do it. Most people wanted it to be at sea level, but the United States wanted it to be 85 feet above sea level because all those mountains. They used locks to do it. So you went 11 miles in, then you went in locks 85 feet up and then you go 21 miles and then you went down 85 miles and then you went around 7 to 6 miles more and then you were in the ocean. They started making it bigger so bigger ships can go. It's really small so only small ships can go through. But in 2015 bigger ships will be able to go through cause they're remodeling. One person swam through the whole Panama Canal and it only cost him 32 cents for him to swim across the whole Panama Canal. For ships to go across they charge by how much they weigh and how big they are and one other way. When they were making the Panama Canal, a lot of US people came and watched from mountains and it became one of the biggest tourist spots. The very first ship went through on January 7, 1914. It took until 1950 for the United States to earn all the money back. Before they built the Panama Canal, they built a railroad because before the canal, people would take a ship to Panama. Then they would walk across the miles. But most people would start out healthy and never come back cause it was so hard. So the United States built a railroad and it was 25 dollars for just one person plus baggage cause there was no other railroad so they could charge a lot. It was around \$32 after baggage. One person after going on it said that was one of the best railroad rides I ever went on.

Kaleb Harding says

What Is The Panama Canal by Janet Pascal. The Panama Canal was one of the best ideas for travel. Originally people would have to go all the way around South America.

I did know a little about this Canal I have heard of it and I knew it was next to an isthmus. It is really a great idea to cut time in half. The fact that it is like a water elevator and it works is amazing to me.

I recommend this book to people who like boats and want to be sea men.

Tina says

I was actually fairly impressed by the account presented. Given that it is written as a children's book, I was happy to see that the U.S. wasn't given a free pass and highlighted as the glorious country that gave Panama a canal. I thought Pascal did a better job of explaining the tension and racism that went on during the building than she did on the state of affairs after the canal was open and full on rioting occurred. Overall, I found the book to be insightful for the target audience.

Manybooks2read says

I learned so much from this book on the Panama Canal.

Sondra says

I really liked this book and I learned so much. I liked how this book didn't completely whitewash the history. I also think there are opportunities to dive deeper into this text and explore different topics such as race and culture, environmental concerns, disease, historical context, so much.

Maureen says

My third grade daughter and I learned a lot in this great book!

Sue says

Nice book about a miraculous feat. Truly a modern seventh wonder for humanity.
