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Rail link to rival Panama Canal

MANY FLASH AND ONLINE ACTIVITIES FOR THIS LESSON, PLUS A LISTENING, AT:

http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1102/110216-panama_canal.html

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16th February, 2011

THE READING / TAPESCRIPT

From: http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1102/110216-panama_canal.html

China and Colombia are planning to build a rail link across Colombia to transport goods between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The project will be a rival to the Panama Canal. China says it needs the railway to further its economic plans in Latin America and beyond. Colombia needs the investment and the jobs the link would create. Colombian president Juan Manuel Santos said: "It's a real proposal...and it is quite advanced." The 450-km line would be shorter than the 550km railway China built to Tibet.

The new railway will be another way of making the world smaller, and more connected. It will hopefully make some things cheaper. The fastest overland route between the two oceans is by rail from California to America's East Coast, but that's very expensive. The Panama Canal offers a slower but cheaper alternative. The Trans-Colombian railway will be a welcome addition to South America's transport links. Exporters from Brazil, Argentina and other countries will benefit from cheaper transportation costs because the railway is nearer than Panama.

PHRASE MATCH

From: http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1102/110216-panama_canal.html

Match the following phrases from the article.

Paragraph 1

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. planning to build a rail link | a. Panama Canal |
| 2. a rival to the | b. proposal |
| 3. further its economic | c. to Tibet |
| 4. the jobs the link | d. across Colombia |
| 5. It's a real | e. plans |
| 6. the 550km railway China built | f. would create |

Paragraph 2

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. another way of making the | a. cheaper alternative |
| 2. It will hopefully make some | b. route |
| 3. The fastest overland | c. addition |
| 4. a slower but | d. world smaller |
| 5. a welcome | e. transportation costs |
| 6. benefit from cheaper | f. things cheaper |

LISTENING GAP FILL

From: http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1102/110216-panama_canal.html

China and Colombia are planning _____ across Colombia _____ between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The project _____ the Panama Canal. China says it needs the railway _____ economic plans in Latin America and beyond. Colombia needs the investment and the jobs the _____. Colombian president Juan Manuel Santos said: "It's _____...and it is quite advanced." The 450-km line would be shorter than the 550km railway China built to Tibet.

The new railway will _____ making the world smaller, _____. It will hopefully make some things cheaper. The _____ between the two oceans is by rail from California to America's East Coast, but that's very expensive. The Panama Canal _____ cheaper alternative. The Trans-Colombian railway _____ addition to South America's transport links. Exporters from Brazil, Argentina and other countries will _____ transportation costs because the railway is nearer than Panama.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

From: http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1102/110216-panama_canal.html

China and Colombia are planning to build a rail (1) _____ across Colombia to transport goods between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The project will be a (2) _____ to the Panama Canal. China says it needs the railway to (3) _____ its economic plans in Latin America and (4) _____. Colombia needs the investment and the jobs the link would create. Colombian president Juan Manuel Santos said: "It's a (5) _____ proposal...and it is quite advanced." The 450-km line would be shorter than the 550km railway China (6) _____ to Tibet.

The new railway will be another way of making the world smaller, and more (7) _____. It will hopefully make some things cheaper. The fastest overland route between the two oceans (8) _____ by rail from California to America's East Coast, but that's very expensive. The Panama Canal offers a slower (9) _____ cheaper alternative. The Trans-Colombian railway will be a (10) _____ addition to South America's transport links. Exporters (11) _____ Brazil, Argentina and other countries will benefit from cheaper transportation costs because the railway is (12) _____ than Panama.

Put the correct words from this table into the article.

- | | | | |
|-----|---------------|--------------|----------------|
| 1. | (a) rink | (b) sink | (c) link |
| 2. | (a) rival | (b) rivalry | (c) rivals |
| 3. | (a) far | (b) further | (c) farther |
| 4. | (a) far | (b) beyond | (c) most |
| 5. | (a) reality | (b) really | (c) real |
| 6. | (a) build | (b) built | (c) builds |
| 7. | (a) connected | (b) connects | (c) connection |
| 8. | (a) are | (b) be | (c) is |
| 9. | (a) so | (b) however | (c) but |
| 10. | (a) greetings | (b) welcome | (c) polite |
| 11. | (a) from | (b) by | (c) at |
| 12. | (a) farther | (b) in | (c) nearer |

SPELLING

From: http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1102/110216-panama_canal.html

Spell the jumbled words (from the text) correctly.

Paragraph 1

1. annipnlg to build a rail
2. tnroatpsr goods
3. a laivr to the Panama Canal
4. economic lapsn
5. a real pprolosa
6. uqeit advanced

Paragraph 2

7. mkinag the world smaller
8. more nocdecetn
9. overland oteru
10. a slower but chaepre alternative
11. a lwomcee addition
12. other countries will iebfnte

PUT THE TEXT BACK TOGETHER

From: http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1102/110216-panama_canal.html

Number these lines in the correct order.

- () but cheaper alternative. The Trans-Colombian railway will be a welcome addition to South America's transport
- () the railway to further its economic plans in Latin America and beyond. Colombia needs the investment
- () "It's a real proposal...and it is quite advanced." The 450-km line would
- () be shorter than the 550km railway China built to Tibet.
- () Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The project will be a rival to the Panama Canal. China says it needs
- () The new railway will be another way of making the world smaller, and more
- () between the two oceans is by rail from California to America's East Coast, but that's very expensive. The Panama Canal offers a slower
- () connected. It will hopefully make some things cheaper. The fastest overland route
- (**1**) China and Colombia are planning to build a rail link across Colombia to transport goods between the
- () links. Exporters from Brazil, Argentina and other countries will benefit from cheaper transportation costs because the railway is nearer than Panama.
- () and the jobs the link would create. Colombian president Juan Manuel Santos said:

WORD JUMBLE

From: http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1102/110216-panama_canal.html

With a partner, put the words back into the correct order.

1. a rail Planning link to across build Colombia.

2. the Panama Canal The project will be a rival to.

3. Latin in plans economic its Further America.

4. Colombia jobs the and investment the needs.

5. Tibet to built China railway 550km The.

6. smaller world the making of way Another.

7. things some make hopefully will It cheaper.

8. between The the fastest two overland oceans route.

9. but slower A alternative cheaper.

10. costs transportation cheaper from Benefit.

DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

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DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

WRITING

From: http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1102/110216-panama_canal.html

Write about railways for 10 minutes. Show your partner your paper. Correct each other's work.

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. RAILWAYS: Search the Internet and find more information about railways. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. MAGAZINE ARTICLE: Write a magazine article about the Trans-Colombian railway. Include imaginary interviews with people who are for and against it. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Give each other feedback on your articles.

4. WHAT HAPPENED NEXT? Write a newspaper article about the next stage in this news story. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Give each other feedback on your articles.

5. LETTER: Write a letter to Colombian president Juan Manuel Santos. Ask him three questions about the railway link. Give him three of your opinions on it. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Your partner will answer the questions you asked.