Large-scale projects

1A Work in pairs or small groups. Look at the map and photos and answer the questions.

1 Why do governments decide to build shipping canals? What are the benefits?

2 What kinds of jobs does this sort of building project create? Who works on a big canal-building project?

3 Can you name any other shipping canals?

The Panama Canal

The Suez Canal

The Grand Canal

B Match each description with a canal on the map.

a goes through the desert in Egypt, connecting the Mediterranean Sea with the Red Sea

b connects the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans by crossing Central America

c connects the Chinese capital city of Beijing with several rivers and other cities

2 3.01 **Listen. Match each canal with two facts.**

1 The Grand Canal	**a** took the longest to build.
2 The Suez Canal	**b** was more expensive than expected.
3 The Panama Canal	**c** was cheaper than expected.
	d is the oldest.
	e took ten years to build.
	f opened in 1914.

3 Listen again. Complete the information about each project.

Grand Canal, China

Length: [1]_____ km

The budget: none

The schedule: none – took about [2]_____ years to complete

The team: [3]_____ million men and women – mostly labourers and engineers

Minimum width: 100 m

Minimum depth: less than 1 m

Suez Canal, Egypt

The schedule: late by [4]_____ years

The team: [5]_____ million people in total, [6]_____ at any given time – labourers, engineers, accountants, project managers

The cost: $100 million, over budget by [7]_____ percent

Length: [8]_____ km

Minimum depth: 12 m

Minimum width: [9]_____ m

Panama Canal, Panama

Length: [10]_____ km

The schedule: the American project was late by [11]_____ years

The team: 75,000 engineers, specialised machine operators, labourers

The cost: $[12]_____ million – $23 million under budget

Minimum width: [13]_____ m

Minimum depth: [14]_____ m

4A 3.02 **Listen and complete the extracts.**

1 It's the _____ artificial waterway in the world.
2 But what's _____ than the length of the canal is its age.
3 When they were working the _____ on the project, five million men and women were involved in the construction.
4 They finished _____ than planned.
5 It is still one of the _____ shipping routes in the world.
6 The canal makes the journey between the North Atlantic and the Indian Ocean much _____ than going around Africa.
7 It reduces the trip by 7,000 km, making the journey _____ and time-consuming.
8 The Panama team had to work a lot _____ than the Suez team.
9 Construction in the jungles of Panama wasn't _____ digging in Egypt's dry, sandy desert.
10 In fact the digging itself was the _____ part of the job.

5 **Look at the information in Exercises 2 and 3. Complete the sentences with the correct form of the words in brackets. Add *than* or *as ... as* where necessary.**

1 The Suez Canal is _____ the Grand Canal. (long)
2 The Suez Canal was _____ project of the three. (profitable)
3 The Grand Canal is _____ of the three canals. (modern)
4 The Suez Canal was _____ the Panama Canal. (expensive)
5 The workforce on the Panama Canal was _____ the workforce on the Grand Canal. (large)
6 Work on the Panama Canal finished _____ work on the Suez Canal. (late)

6A 3.03 **Listen to three bids to provide a new computer network for a shipping company. Answer the questions.**

1 Which supplier can start the soonest? 2 Which supplier is the cheapest?

B **Listen again and complete the notes.**

	Bid A	Bid B	Bid C
When they can start			
How long it will take			
Can we continue using the office?			
Product support			
Guarantee			
Price			

7A **You are going to choose a company to install the new computer network. Look at the notes in Exercise 6B. Compare the bids using the comparative and superlative forms of the words in the box.**

bad	cheap	convenient	expensive	fast	good	inconvenient	slow

B **Hold a meeting to discuss the choices. As a group, decide which bid to choose.**

Crossrail crosses London

The £14.8 billion Crossrail project remains Europe's largest infrastructure project to date. Construction started in 2009 with a plan to build a modern railway line going across London from east to west that also connected with London's underground network. The Tube, as this network is known, was started in 1863 and is the world's oldest underground train system; it carries huge numbers every day in quite crowded conditions.

The Crossrail project added 42 km of tunnels, built ten new stations, modernised another thirty stations and created links to the existing transport system. The new state-of-the-art trains are much longer than the normal underground trains and are able to carry 1,500 passengers at a time. In total, London's rail capacity increased by 10 percent. This has encouraged more people to take public transport instead of driving and has helped to reduce pollution in the capital. Because the new trains are much faster than the old ones, an extra 1.5 million people are within 45 minutes of central London. The new line can carry 200 million passengers a year not only more quickly, but also in more comfortable surroundings.

The idea for a railway crossing London was first discussed over a hundred years ago and then again in the 1970s, but it was only in the new century that London decided to go ahead with this massive engineering project.

According to the company that ran the project, everything was completed on time and within budget. The project provided work for 55,000 people and offered 75,000 business opportunities to suppliers. The new line opened in 2018 and is called the Elizabeth line. It links Heathrow and Reading to the capital. Although those living in and close to London see the benefits of this project, people in other parts of the UK are not so happy. They feel that London continues to grow and offer the best jobs and highest salaries, while the rest of the country falls behind and feels poorer.

It spans more than 100 km, connecting Reading and Heathrow in the west to Shenfield and Abbey Wood in the east, with 42 km of new tunnels beneath central London.

The line serves 40 stations, including 10 new ones, providing step-free access and modern facilities.

By early 2025, the Elizabeth Line has facilitated over 350 million journeys, averaging approximately 700,000 passengers daily.

The line has contributed an estimated £42 billion to the UK economy, supporting the development of around 55,000 new homes and enhancing employment opportunities near stations.

1 Read the article and complete the table with the correct numbers.

1	Cost of project		6	Length of new tunnels	
2	Start of work		7	Capacity of new trains	
3	Opening		8	Increase in rail capacity	
4	Maximum journey time to central London		9	Jobs created	
5	Annual passenger capacity		10	Business opportunities	

2 Read the article again and choose the correct option.

1 Crossrail was a project which built

- **a** a new railway system to replace the Tube.
- **b** a new tube line to replace the railway.
- **c** a train line crossing London which links to the Tube.

2 The London Tube is

- **a** very comfortable and up to date.
- **b** usually quite empty.
- **c** the oldest underground railway in the world.

3 The Crossrail project involved

- **a** building 40 new stations.
- **b** modernising old tunnels.
- **c** building new tunnels and stations.

4 The green benefit of the project is that

- **a** the lines are underground, not overground.
- **b** more people might take public transport instead of using their cars.
- **c** the new trains are state-of-the-art.

5 The original idea for a railway crossing London

- **a** was discussed over a century ago.
- **b** was Queen Elizabeth's.
- **c** was thought about in the 1970s.

6 Although there are lots of benefits for London,

- **a** people from outside London have quite negative feelings.
- **b** people in other regions have better salaries.
- **c** the city is getting smaller.

Find and prepare some information/news about a large-scale project in the world using comparatives and superlatives.

1 Read the text and complete the sentences using the comparative, superlative or base form of the adjectives in the box.

Three amazing bridges

Three ambitious tourist attractions

In 2015, work started on Germany's longest suspension bridge in Geierlay and it opened five months later, one of the fastest bridge constructions ever. It is 400 m long and the drop down to the canyon below is nearly 100 m. Around 170,000 tourists per year are expected to use it and see the most spectacular views. The bridge is made of steel and cost around $1 million but extra tourism revenue in the area should be worth around $2 million.

In China, the Zhangjiajie Glass Bridge opened a year later in 2016. This is the highest and longest glass-bottomed bridge in the world. Its length is 430 m and from the bridge you can look down 300 m to the canyon below. At a cost of $2.6 million, it is made from the toughest glass available and attracts a lot of thrill-seeking tourists. It really is one of the scariest destinations in the region. The bridge can hold 800 people at the same time in complete safety!

Meanwhile, one of the oldest pedestrian bridges in the world can be found in British Columbia, Canada, over the Capilano River. Built in 1889 by a Scottish engineer using rope and wood, the bridge is 150 m long and is suspended 80 m above the river. Tourists can cross the river and then walk on other bridges between the giant firs of the Capilano Forest, some of the biggest trees in Canada.

most amazing	expensive	higher	longer	scariest
most spectacular	tallest	most amazing		

1 The Capilano Bridge is by far the _____ of the three dating back to the 19th century.

2 The Geierlay Bridge cost around $1 million, so it wasn't as _____ as the Glass Bridge.

3 At 300 m, the Glass Bridge is much _____ than the other two.

4 The Geierlay Bridge is _____ than the Capilano Bridge but shorter than the Glass Bridge.

5 From all three bridges you get some of the _____ views in the world.

6 The author thinks the Glass Bridge is one of the _____ places to visit.

7 The trees in the Capilano Forest are among the _____ trees in North America.

8 All three bridges are some of the _____ tourist attractions in the world.

2 Correct the underlined words using the comparative, superlative or base form of the adjectives.

1 People say that the Armani Hotel, built in Dubai in 2010, is the ~~more beautiful~~ *most beautiful* hotel in the world, with gold tablets in the bedrooms!

2 Seven of the world's ten busy ports are in China – and Shanghai holds the number 1 position.

3 The single span suspension bridge in Japan, which measures nearly 4,000 m, is long than any other in the world.

4 At 632 m, the Shanghai Tower isn't as higher as the 828 m Burj Khalifa in Dubai.

5 The Abraj Al-Bait in Mecca is the world's more expensive building, costing $15 billion.

6 The Abraj Al-Bait hotel has the world's big clock which can be seen from 30 km away.

7 The heavy cruise ship ever built is the *Symphony of the Seas*, weighing 230,000 tonnes.

8 The Channel Tunnel was one of the complex engineering projects ever attempted but it was a complete success.

1. Who was the leader in the video?
2. What was the problem, and how did they solve it?
3. Was the communication good? Why/why not?
4. You are a team with a new product idea. You have 2 days to prepare a presentation for a conference. Have a discussion and create a simple plan:

- ★ What is your product?
- ★ What are the 3 steps to finish it?
- ★ What tools would help you?