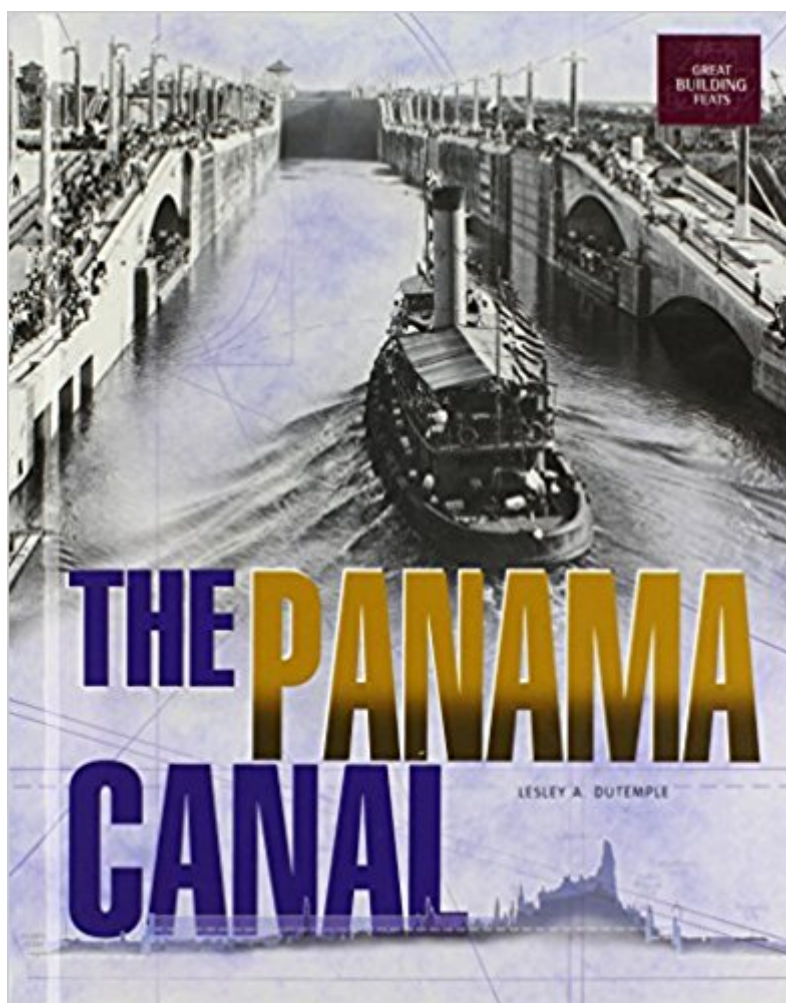


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The Panama Canal (Great Building Feats)



Book Information

Lexile Measure: 1000L (What's this?)

Series: Great Building Feats

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Age Range: 9 and up

Grade Level: 4 and up

Customer Reviews

Grade 6-9-Dreamed about for centuries, the canal took 40 years to complete and cost millions of dollars and thousands of lives before opening for business in August 1914. Started by the French, and taken over by the U.S., its construction taxed engineering/construction know-how and political diplomacy. DuTemple approaches the canal's story as a great building feat, but also considers the human and international angle. The text is peppered with quotes from letters, speeches, and diaries of those involved in the project. Maps, photographs, and charts help bring to life the enormity of the project and the living conditions of those working on it. Sidebars present interesting asides, often dealing with political or medical issues. The book is attractively designed, with ample margins, well-placed graphics, and judicious use of color accents around captions, quotes, and opening chapter spreads. The author clearly explains situations and does not shy away from discussing the U.S.'s "Big Stick" approach to the area or the obvious disparity in conditions for white and black laborers. Ray Spangenburg and Diane Moser's *The Story of America's Canals* (Facts On File, 1992) includes a chapter on the Panama Canal, but is text heavy and has fewer graphics. Carl Oliver's *Panama's Canal* (Watts, 1990; o.p.) includes similar information and primary documents, but is not

as well designed. DuTemple captures the imagination and determination needed to build the canal and has produced a fascinating and well-documented blend of history and engineering. Peg Glisson, Mendon Center Elementary School, Pittsford, NY Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

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