

Welcome to Panama as a Crossroads, the educational suite of activities that accompanies the exhibition Panamanian Passages! We developed these educational resources and opportunities at the exhibition site for you and your students to gain a greater understanding of Panama. Panama is a passage to the world and a reservoir of biodiversity. Rich in history and culture, it has important links to the history of the United States. Explore and discover Panama and make connections to your curriculum!

**Before
a school trip to
the exhibition:**

Visit the exhibition on your own before your planned school field trip, or visit the exhibition's website and read the exhibition brochure to view and review themes, objects, and important connections to your curriculum:
www.latino.si.edu.

Panama as a Crossroads Teacher's Guide

Checklist to consider:

- Bring one chaperone for every ten students.
- All visitors must screen their bags at the security desk at the entrance to the building: S. Dillon Ripley Center. 1100 Jefferson Drive SW, Washington D.C. 20560.
- Please note that there are no vending facilities in this building.
- Select the subject areas in the exhibition that relate to your curriculum needs.
- Have students bring a pen or pencil to the exhibition.
- The length of the educational visit is approximately 90 minutes from start to finish, and is divided into three 25-minute segments, with a 10-15 minute introduction.

of both sessions, the student worksheet should be completed. The final portion of the visit will be a knowledge game that will test the understanding of the exhibition using the content presented during the sessions.

Pre-visit activities:

- Have students write down five to ten things they know about Panama.
- Review the exhibition's website with the students, to further their understanding of the exhibition.
- Make connections with exhibition themes and your curriculum.
- Review the exhibition guide, the map of Panama, and the glossary.

While in the exhibition:

- Test your knowledge by listening for the *Did you know?* facts during the introduction to the exhibition.
- Read the information in the exhibition guide's overview; Explore Science and History section, Global Connections, and other sections in the guide.

After visiting the exhibition:

- Have the students visit the Smithsonian Latino Center's website, www.latino.si.edu, and other websites in the teacher's resources list for more information on Panama that connects to the curriculum or to the students' interests.
- Ask students to locate the Panamanian isthmus in the world map using longitude and latitude.
- Ask students to write a list of relevant and interesting issues they learned

What to expect during your visit:

At the start of your visit, your facilitator will introduce the exhibition, discuss the program flow and goals, and give a brief overview. Afterward, students will receive a worksheet to complete during the visit (**the worksheets and all activities during the visit are bilingual; however, the teacher or leader of the**

group must inform the facilitator of the language preference).

The group will be divided into two smaller sessions. Group 1 will participate in the scavenger hunt for the first part of the visit, while Group 2 participates in the hands-on education station. At the end of the first session, the groups will swap stations. At the end

about through the exhibition visit.

• Making connections: Ask students to visit one of the following Panamanian news outlet websites: <http://www.epasa.com>, <http://www.prensa.com>, <http://www.rpctv.com>, <http://www.servt.gob.pa>, <http://www.albatrosmedia.net/web/>. Instruct them to find a current article that relates to one of the follow-

ing topics from the exhibit: the Panama Canal, biodiversity, indigenous groups, international commerce and trade, the U.S.-Panama relationship. Ask them to write a brief summary and give a 3-minute presentation to the class on their current event and how it relates to the exhibit.

• Discuss with students the connections

between the information presented during the exhibition visit and their own experiences as a global citizen. Then instruct them to create a PowerPoint presentation, composition, research paper, or art installation/project explaining this connection.

Critical thinking and discussion questions:

Explore the following questions through the exhibition's content, themes, objects, images, natural specimens, maps, photographs, and primary sources. If you are not able to come in person, visit the online exhibition at www.latino.si.edu.

Global Connections and Contemporary Issues

- Why is Panama so important to the world?
- Discuss some of the ways in which Panama connects to your daily life. (Think of foods you consume, products you purchase, and communication systems you use that are transported through Panama.)

United States–Panama Link

- What are the connections between Panama's history and that of the United States. (Think of some of the events presented in the exhibition.)
- What had to be accomplished in order to transfer control of the Panama Canal into Panamanian hands?

Natural Sciences:

- What do you think are the most precious resources of Panama?
- What factors might affect the way people use land in Panama over the next 100 years?
- Which natural resources do you think will play a major role in shaping Panama over the next 100 years?

People and Culture:

- Find an example of an idea that was passed from one group of people to another in Panama, and how this affected the country's future.
- People debate whether indigenous people are better caretakers of natural resources than non-indigenous people. What's your opinion, based on what

you've seen and heard?

- How do you think the return of the Panama Canal to Panamanian hands affected Panamanian society?

Hands-On Activity:

Make connections among the images below and the critical-thinking topics and questions above. Which images illustrate some of the issues discussed and how? Using two squares, draw the images you would use to explain one of the contemporary issues of Panama. Then discuss with the rest of the class.

Photographs: Panamanian Passages



Image courtesy of the Library of Congress.



Images courtesy of the Museo del Canal Interoceánico de Panamá.

Glossary

Here are some words that you will find in the exhibition *Panamanian Passages*.

- **Biota:** The flora and fauna of a region.
- **Canal:** An artificial waterway constructed for shipping, for irrigation, or for recreational use. A canal may take in parts of natural rivers along its course.
- **Continental divide:** A massive area of high ground in the interior of a continent, from either side of which a continent's river systems flow in different directions.
- **Gold rush:** A sudden wave of migration to new territory because gold has been discovered. One of the most famous gold rushes was to California in 1848.
- **Isthmus:** A narrow strip of land that joins two larger areas of land. The Panama isthmus connects North and South America.
- **Lock:** A short section of a canal or river in which the water level can be altered to enable boats to pass to a higher or lower part of the waterway. The lock has gates at each end with a mechanism for letting water in or out.
- **Malaria:** An infectious disease caused by a parasite that is transmitted by the bite of infected mosquitoes. Common in tropical countries, the disease is characterized by recurring chills and fever.
- **Transcontinental railroad:** A railroad extending across a continent.
- **Watershed:** The land area that drains into a particular lake, river, or ocean.
- **Yellow fever:** An infectious, often fatal viral disease of warm climates transmitted by mosquitoes and marked by high fever, hemorrhaging, vomiting of blood, liver damage, and jaundice.

[Source Encarta Dictionary]

Facts about Panama:

- The World Fact Book Panama: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pm.html>

Panamanian Passages – Teacher's Resources List

Books about Panama

Mola: Cuna Life Stories and Art by Maricel E. Presilla

Plants and Animals in the Life of the Kuna by Jorge Ventocilla, Heraclio Herrera, and Valerio Núñez

The Art of Being Kuna: Layers of Meaning Among the Kuna of Panama by Mari Lyn Salvador

Panama Fever: The Epic Story of One of the Greatest Human Achievements of All Time– the Building of the Panama Canal by Matthew Parker

Portrait of the Panama Canal: From Construction to the Twenty-First Century by William Friar

From the STRI Bookstore

Naturalists of the Isthmus on Panama by Stanley Heckadon-Moreno

A Day on Barro Colorado Island by Marina Wong et al.

The Amphibians of Barro Colorado Nature Monument, Soberania National Park and Adjacent Areas by R. Ibañez D. et al.

A Guide to the Common Birds of Panama City by Jorge Ventocilla

Tropical Rainforests: Past, Present, and Future by Eldredge Bermingham, Christopher Dick, and Craig Moritz

WEBSITES OF INTEREST

History and Biodiversity of Panama:

• Museo del Canal Interoceánico de Panamá: <http://www.museodelcanal.com/>

• Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute: <http://www.stri.org/>

• Curator's Notes, Panamanian Passages, Aims McGuinness, Smithsonian Latino Center: <http://www.latino.si.edu>

News on the Panama Canal transfer to Panamanian control:

• BBC on the Panama Canal Handover: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/556959.stm>

• Editora

Panamá América: <http://www.epasa.com/reversion/>

• La Prensa: <http://www.prensa.com>

• Maritime Magazine: <http://www.revistamaritima.com.ar/Panama-reversion-del-Canal-Parte>

The Panama Canal:

• Discovery Channel: Widening the Panama Canal: <http://dsc.discovery.com/convergence/engineering/panamacanal/interactive/interactive.html>

• Panama Canal Authority: <http://www.panacanal.com/eng/index.html>

Facts about Panama:

• The World Factbook Panama: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pm.html>

• U.S. Department State: Background Note: Panama: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2030.htm>

Education Standards These selected standards have been adapted from: Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K–12 Education. Copyright 2009. McREL. Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning. 4601 DTC Blvd., Suite 500. Denver, CO 80237. Telephone: 303/337-0990. Online database: [http:// www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/](http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/).

WORLD HISTORY (GRADES 6–12)

Panamanian Passages Themes: Panama; Panama isthmus; Panamanian colonial routes.

Standard 1. Understands biological and cultural processes that shaped the earliest human communities.

Standard 26. Understands how the transoceanic interlinking of all major regions of the world between 1450 and 1600 led to global transformations.

Standard 37. Understands major global trends from 1750 to 1914.

Standard 46. Understands long-term changes and recurring patterns in world history.

WORLD GEOGRAPHY (GRADES 6–12)

Panamanian Passages Themes: Panama; Panama isthmus.

Standard 1. Understands the characteristics and uses of maps, globes, and other geographic tools and technologies.

Standard 6. Understands that culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.

Standard 7. Knows the physical processes that shape patterns on Earth's surface.

Standard 11. Understands the patterns and networks of economic interdependence on Earth's surface.

Standard 14. Understands how human actions modify the physical environment.

Standard 16. Understands the changes that occur in the meaning, use, distribution, and importance of resources.

NATURAL SCIENCE (GRADES 6–12)

Panamanian Passages Themes: Panama; Panama isthmus; Panama Canal; Panama in the 21st century.

Standard 2. Understands Earth's composition and structure.

Standard 7. Understands biological evolution and the diversity of life.

Standard 12. Understands the nature of scientific inquiry.

Standard 13. Understands the scientific enterprise.

U.S. HISTORY (GRADES 6–12)

Panamanian Passages Themes: Panamanian colonial routes; California gold rush; Panama Canal; Panama in the 21st century.

Standard 1. Understands the characteristics of societies in the Americas, western Europe, and western Africa that increasingly interacted after 1450.

Standard 9. Understands the United States territorial expansion between 1801 and 1861, and how it affected relations with external powers and Native Americans.

Standard 31. Understands economic, social, and cultural developments in the contemporary United States.

VISUAL ARTS (GRADES 6–12)

Panamanian Passages Themes: Panama, Indigenous groups, Panamanian colonial routes.

Standard 3. Knows a range of subject matter, symbols, and potential ideas in the visual arts.

Standard 4. Understands the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

Scavenger Hunt Responses (All answers)

1. **The Isthmus and Global Climate:** The Isthmus of Panama is the land bridge that divides the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and connects North and South America.
El Istmo de Panamá es el puente de tierra que divide los océanos Atlántico y Pacífico y conecta Norte y Sur América.
2. **The Isthmus and Global Climate:** The word *Panamá* may be a Spanish rendering of an indigenous word meaning a place abundant with fish.
La palabra Panamá puede ser una interpretación de una palabra con origen indígena significando un lugar con abundancia de peces.
3. **Mass Migrations:** The formation of the Isthmus of Panama connected North and South America, enabling the mass migration of plants and animals between continents, an event that scientists call the Great American Biotic Interchange. Central America, including Panama, became one of the great biological meeting grounds in the history of life on Earth.
La formación del Istmo de Panamá conectó Norte y Sur América y permitió la migración en masa de plantas y animales entre continentes, un evento que los científicos llaman el Gran Intercambio de Biota Americana. Centro América, incluyendo Panamá, se convirtió en una de las grandes áreas de encuentros biológicos en la historia de la vida en la Tierra.
4. **Mass Migrations:** The species that came from South America and still live in North America are the opossum, porcupine, and armadillo. Other animals that moved between continents have since become extinct. The giant ground sloth was likely hunted into extinction about 10,000 years ago as human settlements developed.
Las especies que vinieron de Sur América y aún viven en Norte América son la zarigüeya, el puercoespín y el armadillo. Otros animales que se movilaron entre continentes ahora están extintos. Es probable que el perezoso terrestre gigante haya sido cazado hasta su extinción hace cerca de 10,000 años a medida que los asentamientos humanos se desarrollaban.
5. **Indigenous Sovereignty:** The following indigenous groups live in Panama today: Bokota, Bribri, Buglé, Emberá, Kuna, Ngöbe (or Ngäbe), Teribe (or Naso), and Wounaan.
Los siguientes grupos indígenas viven actualmente en Panamá: Bokota, Bribri, Buglé, Emberá, Kuna, Ngöbe (or Ngäbe), Teribe (or Naso), y Wounaan.
6. **Indigenous Sovereignty:** A *comarca* is a semiautonomous territory granted to the most numerous groups of indigenous peoples of Panama.
Una comarca es un territorio semiautónomo otorgado a los grupos más numerosos de pueblos indígenas de Panamá.
7. **Conflict, Survival, and Resistance in the Darien:** Tobacco is a common crop for indigenous peoples of Panama and the United States.
El tabaco es un cultivo común par las comunidades indígenas en Panamá y en los Estados Unidos.
8. **Contact, Catastrophe, and the Reorganization of Space:** The Spaniards arrived in Panama while looking for a route to East Asia. They were seeking riches, new lands to conquer, and people to convert to Christianity.
Los españoles llegaron a Panamá mientras buscaban una ruta hacia el este de Asia. Buscaban riquezas, nuevas tierras que conquistar y pueblos para convertir al cristianismo.

9. **Contact, Catastrophe, and the Reorganization of Space:** The population of native peoples was reduced due to war and the lack of immunity to diseases brought by the Spaniards, such as smallpox and measles. Many were also captured and enslaved.
La población de pueblos nativos fue reducida debido a la guerra y la falta de inmunidad a las enfermedades introducidas por los españoles, tales como la viruela y el sarampión. También muchos fueron capturados y esclavizados.
10. **Contact, Catastrophe, and the Reorganization of Space:** Christopher Columbus first realized that Panama was an isthmus; however, Vasco Núñez de Balboa was the first to reach the Pacific Coast, in 1513.
Cristóbal Colón fue el primero en darse cuenta que Panamá era un istmo; sin embargo, Vasco Núñez de Balboa fue el primero en alcanzar la costa Pacífica, en 1513.
11. **Contact, Catastrophe, and the Reorganization of Space:** Spaniards replaced the labor of indigenous populations with African labor because indigenous peoples were decimated by disease, war, forced labor, and the ravages of the Spanish conquest.
Los españoles reemplazaron el trabajo de los pueblos indígenas con mano de obra africana porque los indígenas fueron diezmados por las enfermedades, guerra, trabajo forzado, y los estragos de la conquista española.
12. **Colonial Ecology and Society:** *Cimarrones* were Africans who escaped slavery and established independent settlements or *palenques* in Panama. Africans were also brought to the United States as slaves to perform forced labor. Many were killed by diseases in both countries.
Los *cimarrones* eran africanos que escaparon de la esclavitud y establecieron asentamientos independientes o *palenques* en Panamá. Los africanos también fueron traídos a Estados Unidos como esclavos para realizar trabajos forzados. Muchos murieron por enfermedades en ambos países.
13. **Panama, Silver, and the Making of the First Global Economy:** Silver was the precious metal that made it possible for Europeans to increase their trade with China.
La plata era el metal precioso que hizo posible que los europeos aumentaran su comercio con China.
14. **The California Gold Rush:** The first transcontinental railroad was built in Panama in 1855 by the Panama Railroad Company of New York City. The company controlled the transit system and the revenues generated by the railroad.
El primer ferrocarril transcontinental fue construido en Panamá en 1855 por la Panama Railroad Company de Nueva York. La compañía controlaba el sistema de tránsito y las ganancias generadas por el ferrocarril.
15. **The French Attempt to Build the Canal:** The French company led by Ferdinand de Lesseps pursued the building of the Panama Canal. The attempt failed due to technological problems, engineering miscalculations, and difficulties establishing the appropriate workforce. Malaria and yellow fever also decimated the workforce.
La compañía francesa dirigida por Ferdinand de Lesseps buscaba construir el Canal de Panamá. El intento fracasó debido a problemas tecnológicos, errores de cálculo de ingeniería, y dificultades en establecer la fuerza laboral apropiada. La malaria y la fiebre amarilla también diezmaron la fuerza laboral.

16. **The US Canal Effort:** The U.S. effort to build the canal started in 1904.
El esfuerzo estadounidense para construir el canal comenzó en el año 1904.
17. **The US Canal Effort:** Excavating mountains of dirt, damming the Chagres River, and the building of massive locks were three of the main technological problems encountered in the building of the canal.
La excavación de montañas de tierra, represar el Río Chagres, y la construcción de inmensas esclusas fueron tres de los principales problemas tecnológicos encontrados en la construcción del canal.
18. **The US Canal Effort:** The Hay–Bunau-Varilla Treaty of 1903 granted control of the Panama Canal and the land surrounding it to the United States in perpetuity. The U.S. effort to build the canal started in 1904.
El tratado Hay-Bunau-Varilla de 1903 concedía a Estados Unidos el control a perpetuidad del Canal de Panamá y la tierra que lo rodeaba. El esfuerzo de Estados Unidos para construir el canal inició en 1904.
19. **The US Canal Effort:** The men in charge of the construction of the Panama Canal were John Wallace, John Stevens, and George Washington Goethals. Goethals was a member of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; he managed the construction of the canal to its completion in 1914.
Los encargados de la construcción del Canal de Panamá fueron John Wallace, John Stevens, y George Washington Goethals. Goethals era miembro del Cuerpo de Ingenieros del Ejército de Estados Unidos; administró la construcción del canal hasta su conclusión en 1914.
20. **Workers on the Panama Canal, “Gold Roll vs. Silver Roll”:** Women worked as nurses, teachers, and food vendors, and provided and maintained housing for the workers of the Panama Canal.
Las mujeres trabajaban como enfermeras, maestras, vendedoras de comida, y proveían y mantenían viviendas para los trabajadores del Canal de Panamá.
21. **Public Health in the Tropics:** Dr. William Gorgas of the U.S. Army Medical Corps led the campaign to eradicate yellow fever and malaria.
El Dr. William Gorgas del Cuerpo Médico del Ejército de Estados Unidos dirigió la campaña para erradicar la fiebre amarilla y la malaria.
22. **Public Health in the Tropics:** Cuban doctor Carlos Finlay discovered that the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito transmitted yellow fever.
El doctor cubano Carlos Finlay descubrió que el mosquito *Aedes aegypti* transmitía la fiebre amarilla.
23. **Gold Roll vs Silver Roll:** Gold Roll workers, considered the most skilled, were mostly from the United States. Silver Roll workers were the least skilled and the majority of the workforce in the Panama Canal.
Los trabajadores del “Gold Roll”, considerados como los más calificados, eran en su mayoría de Estados Unidos. Los del “Silver Roll” eran los menos hábiles y la mayoría de la fuerza laboral en el Canal de Panamá.
24. **Panama and the Smithsonian:** The biological survey was an early form of environmental impact statement, showing which plants and animals would be affected by the construction of the canal. Scientists were impressed by the amazing biological richness of Panamanian flora and fauna.

El inventario biológico fue una de las primeras formas de estudio de impacto ambiental, mostrando qué plantas y animales serían afectados por la construcción del canal. Los científicos quedaron impresionados por la asombrosa riqueza biológica de la flora y fauna panameña.

25. **The Canal and its Watershed:** Fresh water is vital to the operation of the Panama Canal.

El agua dulce es vital para la operación del Canal de Panamá.

26. **Sovereignty within Reach:** The treaty established a plan for gradual transfer of the Panama Canal, the Canal Zone, and the other U.S.-controlled lands to Panamanian hands. The final transfer occurred on December 31, 1999.

El tratado establecía un plan para la transferencia gradual a manos panameñas del Canal de Panamá, la Zona del Canal y otras tierras controladas por los estadounidenses. La transferencia final fue el 31 de diciembre de 1999.

27. **Living Inside the Canal Zone:** The Zonians were the residents of the Panama Canal Zone, a band of land ten miles wide that stretched almost 50 miles across the isthmus along both sides of the canal. It was controlled by the United States.

Los “zoneítas” eran residentes de la Zona del Canal de Panamá, una franja de tierra de diez millas de ancho que se extendía casi 50 millas a través del istmo a lo largo de ambos lados del canal. Era controlada por Estados Unidos.

28. **Expanding the Canal, The Canal in Panamanian Hands:** The Panama Canal Authority—Autoridad del Canal de Panamá (ACP). The ACP has increased traffic, reduced accidents, and increased the amount of money the canal brings in, and is planning a major expansion of the canal.

La Autoridad del Canal de Panamá (ACP). La ACP ha incrementado el tráfico, reducido accidentes, y aumentado la cantidad de dinero que el canal proporciona y está planificando una importante ampliación del canal.