

## World's 'most useless' airport opens

17th October, 2017



Photo: <https://www.royalnavy.mod.uk>

The first scheduled commercial airplane has landed on the remote British island of St Helena in the middle of the South Atlantic. The SA AirLink service from South Africa touched down at Saint Helena Airport on Saturday with 68

passengers on board. One passenger, Libby Weir-Breen, a British travel operator, had flown from Scotland especially to be on the flight. She said: "I've never felt so emotional in all my life. I never thought I'd see this day." The inaugural flight marks a new era of accessibility for the island, which is 1,900 km west of the African nation of Angola. Previously, the only way of getting to Saint Helena was by a ship that sailed once every three weeks from Cape Town, South Africa.

Despite the positive social and economic effects the airport will have for the island and its tourism, the British media have dubbed it as "the most useless airport in the world". The airport was built with \$380m of British taxpayers' money. That's \$80,000 for each of the island's inhabitants. It was beset with delays and was due to open in 2016, but dangerous wind conditions delayed the launch. The Governor of Saint Helena, Lisa Phillips, dismissed the criticism. She said: "I've seen the headlines about the world's most useless airport, but for St Helena, this has already been the most useful airport. It's priceless." She added: "I for one am getting really excited about the new chapter in St Helena's history."

Sources: [bbc.com](http://bbc.com) / [independent.co.uk](http://independent.co.uk) / [standard.co.uk](http://standard.co.uk)

## Writing

Airports are the most important part of a country's infrastructure. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

commercial / airplane / remote / passengers / travel operator / emotional / ship / social / economic / island / media / useless / inhabitants / wind / headlines / priceless

## True / False

- Ten flights landed on the island of St Helena on Saturday. T / F
- The flight that landed on St Helena had 168 passengers. T / F
- A woman flew from Scotland to get on the flight to St Helena. T / F
- The only way to St Helena before the plane was by ship. T / F
- British airlines called Saint Helena Airport "useless". T / F
- The cost of the airport is equal to \$80,000 per St Helena inhabitant. T / F
- The airport was originally due to open in 2006. T / F
- St Helena's Governor said she was writing a chapter about the airport. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                        |                |
|------------------------|----------------|
| 1. <b>scheduled</b>    | a. initial     |
| 2. <b>remote</b>       | b. nicknamed   |
| 3. <b>touched down</b> | c. bad press   |
| 4. <b>inaugural</b>    | d. landed      |
| 5. <b>era</b>          | e. troubled    |
| 6. <b>dubbed</b>       | f. timetabled  |
| 7. <b>built</b>        | g. age         |
| 8. <b>beset</b>        | h. invaluable  |
| 9. <b>criticism</b>    | i. faraway     |
| 10. <b>priceless</b>   | j. constructed |

## Discussion – Student A

- What do you think about what you read?
- How important are airports?
- What do you dislike about airports?
- What do you think of flying?
- Why do the British media think it's the most useless airport?
- Why did the Governor say the airport was priceless?
- What will the new chapter look like for St Helena?
- What questions would you like to ask people on St Helena?

## Phrase Match

- |                                   |                                 |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. The first scheduled commercial | a. down at Saint Helena Airport |
| 2. the remote                     | b. delayed the launch           |
| 3. touched                        | c. flight                       |
| 4. The inaugural                  | d. money                        |
| 5. a ship that sailed once        | e. British island               |
| 6. taxpayers'                     | f. headlines                    |
| 7. It was beset                   | g. in St Helena's history       |
| 8. dangerous wind conditions      | h. airplane                     |
| 9. I've seen the                  | i. with delays                  |
| 10. the new chapter               | j. every three weeks            |

## Discussion – Student B

- What is your favourite airport?
- How could airports be improved?
- What would it be like to live on a remote island?
- How important is the new airport to the people of St Helena?
- What do you know about St Helena?
- Would you like to visit St Helena?
- What islands would you like to visit?
- Which is better – flying or sailing?

## Spelling

- The first elhc s d d e u commercial airplane
- the me ro e t British island of St Helena
- with 68 ees r n p s s a g on board
- a British travel pt ro o r e a
- I've never felt so o a n m l e t o i
- The l r a i u n u a g flight
- economic ec t s f f e
- each of the island's s i n i h t t a b n a
- wind conditions y a e l e d d the launch
- dismissed the c m r c t s i i i
- It's s l s c i e r p e
- the new e p t r c a h in St Helena's history

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. i	3. d	4. a	5. g
6. b	7. j	8. e	9. c	10. h

## Role Play

### Role A – Airports

You think airports are the most important things to help tourism. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): safety, value for money or accommodation.

### Role B – Safety

You think safety is the most important thing to help tourism. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): airports, value for money or accommodation.

### Role C – Value for Money

You think value for money is the most important thing to help tourism. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): safety, airports or accommodation.

### Role D – Accommodation

You think accommodation is the most important thing to help tourism. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): safety, value for money or airports.

## Speaking – Tourism

Rank these with your partner. Put the things that can best help tourism at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |                   |             |
|-------------------|-------------|
| • safety          | • airports  |
| • language        | • good food |
| • value for money | • sights    |
| • accommodation   | • weather   |

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	T	g	F	h	F
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.