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Level 4

Written zero 500 years older than scientists thought

17th September, 2017

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1709/170917-zero-4.html>

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Please try Levels 5 and 6. They are (a little) harder.

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THE READING

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1709/170917-zero-4.html>

Oxford University has found that the written use of the zero is 500 years older than we thought. Scientists carbon dated the zero to the ancient Bakhshali Manuscript. Scientists found this dates back to the third century. Scientists used to believe the manuscript was from the eighth century. It was found in 1881. The zero we use today started from a round dot that was often used in India. There are several of these zeroes on the manuscript.

A professor explained the importance of the zero. He said we take it for granted. It is now "a key building block of the digital world". He said the zero evolved from a dot symbol found on the Bakhshali manuscript. He said it "was one of the greatest breakthroughs in the history of mathematics". Zero has many names in English, including nought and nil. It is often said as "oh" in telephone numbers. Slang terms for zero include nowt, nada, zilch and zip.

Sources: <http://metro.co.uk/2017/09/15/earliest-use-of-zero-ever-discovered-on-ancient-manuscript-6929859/>
<https://phys.org/news/2017-09-video-earliest-centuries-older-thought.html>
<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2017/sep/14/much-ado-about-nothing-ancient-indian-text-contains-earliest-zero-symbol>

PHRASE MATCHING

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1709/170917-zero-4.html>

PARAGRAPH ONE:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. the written use | a. Bakhshali Manuscript |
| 2. Scientists carbon | b. dot |
| 3. the ancient | c. on the manuscript |
| 4. this dates back | d. dated the zero |
| 5. the manuscript was from the | e. in 1881 |
| 6. It was found | f. to the third century |
| 7. a round | g. of the zero |
| 8. several of these zeroes | h. eighth century |

PARAGRAPH TWO:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| 1. A professor explained the importance | a. telephone numbers |
| 2. He said we take it for | b. breakthroughs |
| 3. a key building block | c. a dot |
| 4. the zero evolved from | d. nada, zilch and zip |
| 5. one of the greatest | e. granted |
| 6. Zero has many names in English, | f. of the zero |
| 7. It is often said as "oh" in | g. of the digital world |
| 8. Slang terms for zero include | h. including nought |

LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1709/170917-zero-4.html>

Oxford University has found (1) _____ use of the zero is 500 years older than we thought. Scientists carbon (2) _____ to the ancient Bakhshali Manuscript. Scientists found this (3) _____ the third century. Scientists used to believe the manuscript was from (4) _____. It was found in 1881. The zero we use today started (5) _____ dot that was often used in India. There are (6) _____ zeroes on the manuscript.

A professor explained (7) _____ the zero. He said we take it for granted. It is now "a key building (8) _____ digital world". He said the (9) _____ from a dot symbol found on the Bakhshali manuscript. He said it "was (10) _____ breakthroughs in the history of mathematics". Zero has many names in English, including (11) _____. It is often said as "oh" in telephone numbers. (12) _____ zero include nowt, nada, zilch and zip.

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1709/170917-zero-4.html>

OxfordUniversityhasfoundthatthewrittenuseofthezerois500yearsolderthanwethought.ScientistscarbondatedthezerototheancientBakhshaliManuscript.Scientistsfoundthisdatesbacktothethirdcentury.Scientistsusedtobelievethemanuscriptwasfromtheeighthcentury.Itwasfoundin1881.ThezeroweusetodaystartedfromarounddotthatwasoftenusedinIndia.Thereareseveralofthesezeroesonthemanuscript.Aprofessorexplainedtheimportanceofthezero.Hesaidwetakeitforgranted.Itisnow"akeybuildingblockofthedigitalworld".HesaidthezeroevolvedfromadotsymbolfoundontheBakhshalimanuscript.Hesaidit"wasoneofthegreatestbreakthroughsinthehistoryofmathematics".Zerohasmany namesinEnglish,includingnoughtandnil.Itisoftensaidas"oh"intelephonenumber.Slangtermsforzeroincludenowt,nada,zilchandzip.

THE NUMBER ZERO SURVEY

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1709/170917-zero-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about the number zero in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

Written zero 500 years older than scientists thought – 17th September, 2017
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WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

WRITING

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1709/170917-zero-4.html>

Write about **the number zero** for 10 minutes. Read and talk about your partner's paper.
