

The 7 Steps -
December



Mattel

1. CONTEXT

Mindmap anything you know about the topic, including vocabulary. Do some research online to help.

2. QUESTIONS

Read the listening questions to check your understanding. Look up any new vocabulary.

3. LISTEN

Listen and answer the questions using full sentences. Circle the number of times and % you understood.

Listening Questions 1

1. Where did the name "Mattel" come from?
_____.
2. What was Ruth Handler doing when she thought of creating dolls that looked like women?
_____.
3. Where did she find a product similar to what she wanted to make?
_____.
4. Who was the Barbie doll named after?
_____.
5. How much revenue did Mattel earn in 1965?
_____.

Listening Questions 2

1. What are 2 toy manufacturers that Mattel acquired?
_____.
2. What are 2 companies Mattel has licensing agreements with?
_____.
3. How much does an American Girl doll cost?
_____.
4. Which Mattel subsidiary focuses on toys for babies and infants?
_____.
5. In 2017, what were their net sales? How was this compared to 2016?
_____.

Discussion Questions

1. What were some of your favorite toys when you were a child? Are they popular today?
2. Why do you think there is a downward trend in sales recently for Mattel? Is it an issue with the toy industry or business practices?

Listening 1				
1	2	3	4	5
%	%	%	%	%

Listening 2				
1	2	3	4	5
%	%	%	%	%

4. CHECK ANSWERS

Read through the transcript and underline the answers. Check them against your own answers.

5. CHECK VOCABULARY

Read the transcript and circle any new vocabulary you find. Look them up and add them to your list.

6. READ ALOUD

Read the transcript aloud at least 5 times, focusing on intonation and pronunciation.

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

7. SHADOWING

Say the transcript aloud at the same time as the audio without reading it. Circle how many times below.

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

TRANSCRIPT 1

Mattel, the toy manufacturer, was **founded** in 1945 in El Segundo, USA. The name Mattel is a combination of the first names of two of its founders Matt Matson and Elliot Handler. The third founder was Elliot's wife Ruth. Initially, the company sold wooden picture frames. The company had its first hit toy in 1947 with a ukulele for kids called a "Uke-A-Doodle."

Ruth helped create one of the company's most successful toys ever. In the 50s, while watching her daughter Barbara play with dolls, Ruth thought that girls might enjoy playing with dolls that looked like women instead of like babies. Later, while travelling with her children in Germany, she saw a doll that was similar to what she had **envisioned**. That doll was called Bild Lilli and she bought 3 of the toys, 1 for her daughter and 2 to take back to Mattel. She and an engineer at Mattel designed a similar doll and named it Barbie, after Barbara's nickname. The company's sales **skyrocketed** from \$26 million in 1963 to over \$100 million in 1965, partly due to the strength of Barbie sales.

Barbie went on to be a hugely popular toy line with dolls that look like numerous **ethnicities**, a variety of accessories, and playsets.

MATCH THE SYNONYMS BY DRAWING LINES BELOW:

Found	Embody
Envision	Buy
Skyrocket	Nationality/Race
Ethnicity	Escalate
Acquire	Visualize
Represent	Begin

TRANSCRIPT 2

Over the years, Mattel **acquired** several other toy manufacturers that gave them control of popular toy brands, including the toy car brand Hot Wheels and doll brand American Girl. The company also has licensing agreements with companies such as Disney and DC Comics, so it can make toys of characters like Disney Princesses, Batman, and Superman.

The American Girl doll brand is quite different from the Barbie doll brand. An American Girl doll sells for \$115 whereas a Barbie doll sells for \$10-35. Also, American Girl dolls **represent** eight to eleven-year-old girls, not adult women like Barbie.

Fisher-Price, a toy company that Mattel acquired in 1993, focuses on toys for babies and infants.

In 2017, the company's worldwide net sales were approximately \$5.5 billion, which was an 11% decline from the year before, with a 17% decline in the North American market. Mattel reported an operating loss of around \$343 million dollars.