

Mapping Our World: Physical and Human Features

Learning objective: To identify, describe, and understand the differences between human and physical geographical features.

Read the passage carefully, then answer the questions below in full sentences. Pay close attention to the vocabulary used to describe the landscape.

Finn the dolphin loves to travel along the coastlines, observing how the world changes. When he looks at the landscape, he sees two distinct types of features. Physical features are natural parts of the Earth, formed over millions of years by processes like erosion or volcanic activity. Finn admires the towering mountain ranges, the winding rivers, and the jagged cliffs that define the coastline. These features exist without any help from humans.

In contrast, human geography focuses on how people change the land. As Finn swims closer to a bustling harbour, he sees man-made structures: bridges, roads, houses, and industrial factories. These are known as human features. A settlement, such as a village or a city, is a cluster of these buildings where people live and work. Sometimes, humans alter the landscape to build infrastructure, such as tunnels through mountains or dams across rivers. By studying both physical and human geography, we can understand how the natural environment provides the foundation for our homes, and how our society shapes the world around us.

Word bank: landscape · geographical · settlement · infrastructure · topography · natural · man-made

1. Identify two examples of physical geographical features mentioned by Finn in the passage. (2 marks) (2 marks)

2. According to the text, what is a settlement? (2 marks) (2 marks)

3. Why might humans choose to build infrastructure like tunnels or dams? (2 marks) (2 marks)

4. How does the author suggest that physical geography and human geography are connected? (3 marks) (3 marks)

5. Do you think it is possible for a place to have only physical features and no human features? Justify your answer. (3 marks) (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a map of an imaginary coastal town. Label at least three physical features (e.g., cliff, river) and three human features (e.g., bridge, harbour, school).



Extension challenge: Compare and contrast your local area with a remote wilderness. Explain why some human features are essential for a community to survive, and what might happen if those features were removed. Justify your reasoning using geographical vocabulary.