

Finn's Mountain Explorations

Learning objective: To understand the physical features of mountains and the zones found within them.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below. Think about how the mountain environment changes as you climb higher.

Finn the dolphin has traded his ocean maps for climbing gear to explore the world's tallest mountain ranges. Mountains are massive landforms that rise high above the surrounding land, often ending in a sharp peak called a summit. As Finn travels up the steep slopes, he notices that the environment changes significantly. Near the base, the air is warmer and the ground is covered in thick forests and colourful wildflowers. This is because the altitude is lower and the climate is milder. However, as he climbs higher, the air becomes thinner and much colder. The trees begin to disappear, replaced by hardy grasses and jagged rocks. At the very top, even in the middle of summer, Finn discovers that the peak is hidden under a permanent blanket of snow and ice. The terrain becomes treacherous, making it difficult for plants or animals to survive. Finn notes that mountains are not just piles of rock; they are complex ecosystems where the temperature drops the higher you climb. He records these changes in his notebook, fascinated by how quickly the world transforms as he ascends towards the clouds.

Word bank: summit · altitude · vegetation · slope · climate · terrain

1. What is the name for the very top of a mountain? (1 mark)

2. According to the text, what happens to the air as you climb higher up a mountain? (1 mark)

3. Why do you think there are fewer trees near the summit compared to the base of the mountain? (2 marks)

4. What does the word 'treacherous' suggest about the terrain near the top of the mountain? (2 marks)

5. If you were planning an expedition to a mountain, would you rather explore the base or the summit? Explain your choice using evidence from the text. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a cross-section of a mountain, labelling the base with lush green trees and the summit with snow and ice.



Extension challenge: Research one famous mountain range, such as the Himalayas or the Alps, and write three interesting facts about its climate or wildlife.