

Mapping Our Settlements with Finn the Dolphin

Learning objective: To understand the characteristics of different human settlements and the reasons why they develop in specific locations.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below to explore how and why settlements grow.

Finn the dolphin loves to travel along the coastline, observing how humans build their homes. A settlement is a place where people live and form a community. These range from tiny hamlets with only a few houses to sprawling urban cities with millions of residents. Historically, early settlers chose locations based on survival. They needed access to fresh water, fertile land for farming, and natural protection from the elements. Over time, these small clusters grew into towns as better infrastructure, such as roads and bridges, connected them to other areas. Today, modern settlements are often shaped by transport links and employment opportunities. A rural village might be quiet with limited shops, whereas a bustling city centre features high-rise buildings, complex transport networks, and busy marketplaces. Whether a settlement is a small coastal fishing village or a massive city, each one relies on its unique geography to thrive. By studying these patterns, we can understand why some areas become densely populated hubs while others remain peaceful, quiet spaces for nature to flourish.

Word bank: settlement · infrastructure · urban · rural · hamlet · resources · terrain

1. According to the text, what are two important things early settlers needed to consider when choosing a location? (2 marks)

2. What is the main difference between a rural village and an urban city as described in the passage? (2 marks)

3. Why do you think the author mentions that early settlements were often located near water? (2 marks)

4. How might the development of a new railway line change a small village over time? (2 marks)

5. If you were to establish a brand-new settlement, would you prefer to build it in a rural or urban environment? Justify your choice by explaining the benefits of your preferred location. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a map of an imaginary settlement. Include a river, a cluster of houses, a bridge, and a main road. Label the different land-use areas, such as 'housing', 'farming', and 'transport'.



Extension challenge: Greater Depth Challenge: 1. Explain why some settlements grow into major cities while others stay as small hamlets. 2. Compare and contrast the needs of a person living in a rural area versus an urban area. 3. Justify why geography is the most important factor in the success of a settlement. 4. What might happen if a large city ran out of natural resources like water? 5. Research a local town or village and identify three pieces of infrastructure that help it function. 6. Propose a plan for a sustainable settlement; what features would you include to protect the environment?