

Finn's South American Expedition

Learning objective: To identify and understand the key geographical features of South America.

Read the passage carefully, then use your knowledge of geography to answer the questions below in full sentences.

Finn the dolphin has travelled far from his home to explore the vast continent of South America. This incredible landmass is home to the world's largest tropical rainforest, the Amazon. The forest acts as the lungs of our planet, containing extraordinary biodiversity. Winding through this lush landscape is the mighty Amazon River, which is fed by hundreds of smaller tributaries. To the west, Finn discovered the Andes, the longest mountain range on Earth, which stretches along the continent's edge like a rocky spine. Because the equator passes through the northern part of South America, many regions enjoy a warm, tropical climate all year round. However, the high-altitude peaks of the Andes remain cold and snow-capped. South America is a land of fascinating contrasts, from the dry, windswept plains of Patagonia in the south to the dense, humid jungle canopy in the center. Finn loves mapping these diverse habitats, noting how the physical geography shapes the lives of the plants and animals that thrive in each unique zone.

Word bank: continent · Amazon · Andes · equator · biodiversity · tributary

1. Identify the name of the mountain range that stretches along the western edge of South America. (1 mark)

2. According to the text, which line of latitude passes through the northern part of South America? (1 mark)

3. Explain why the climate in the Andes mountains might be different from the climate in the Amazon rainforest. (2 marks)

4. What might happen to the biodiversity of the Amazon if the rainforest were to be significantly reduced in size? Justify your reasoning. (2 marks)

5. Compare and contrast the climate of the northern regions of South America with the climate found in the southern region of Patagonia. Do you think this makes South America a challenging place for animals to live? Justify your answer. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a map of South America showing the Amazon River winding through the continent and the Andes Mountains lining the western coast. Include labels for both.



Extension challenge: Research a specific animal that lives in the Amazon rainforest. Write a short paragraph explaining how its physical features are adapted to survive in its habitat. How might its life change if it were moved to the cold, high-altitude environment of the Andes?