

Settlements: Why Do We Choose Where We Live?

Learning objective: To analyse the geographical reasons behind human settlement patterns and the factors that influence where towns and cities develop.

Use your geographical knowledge to answer the questions below. Think carefully about why people choose to build settlements in specific locations.

Word bank: topography · infrastructure · confluence · resources · urbanisation · agriculture · trade · shelter

1. Finn the dolphin has noticed that many major cities are built near rivers. Explain why a river confluence was historically important for the growth of a trade settlement. (2 marks)

2. Compare and contrast how the physical topography of a mountain range might discourage settlement compared to a flat, fertile river valley. (3 marks)

3. Max the monkey is looking at a village that costs £450,000 to build a new road network for. If the population is 2,000, calculate the cost of the infrastructure per person. Show your working. (3 marks)

4. Justify why modern settlements often require better infrastructure than settlements built 200 years ago. (2 marks)

5. What might happen to a settlement if its primary natural resource, such as a coal mine or a fertile forest, were suddenly exhausted? (2 marks)

6. If you were founding a new settlement, identify three specific human or physical features you would look for in the landscape and explain why each is essential. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a bird's-eye view map of an imaginary settlement. Include at least one physical feature (like a river or hill) and three human features (like a bridge, a market square, or residential zones) that explain why people would want to live there.



Extension challenge: Research a 'ghost town' or a settlement that has been abandoned. Write a short report explaining the geographical or economic reasons why the population chose to leave.