Exploring the World's Peaks with Finn

Learning objective: To understand the formation and features of mountains and their impact on the environment.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below. Use full sentences where appropriate.

Finn the dolphin loves to explore the world’s geography, but he is just as fascinated by the land as he is by the sea. Mountains are magnificent landforms that rise high above the surrounding ground. They are usually formed by the movement of tectonic plates, which push the Earth’s crust upwards over millions of years. A single mountain is impressive, but when many are grouped together, they form a mountain range. The very top of a mountain is called the summit. Because the air becomes thinner at higher altitudes, temperatures at the summit are much colder than at the base. This often leads to permanent snow or ice, known as glaciers, even in warmer climates. Mountains change constantly due to weathering and erosion, as wind and water slowly wear away the jagged rock. Finn reminds us that mountains are home to unique plants and animals that have adapted to live in these harsh, steep environments. Whether they are young, jagged peaks or old, rounded hills, mountains are essential parts of our planet's landscape.

Word bank: altitude · summit · range · glacier · tectonic plates · erosion

1. According to the text, what is the process that usually leads to the formation of mountains? (2 marks)

2. What is the specific name given to the very top of a mountain? (1 mark)

3. Why do you think it is necessary for plants and animals to 'adapt' to live on a mountain? (2 marks)

4. Based on the text, why might you find a glacier on a mountain even if the country is quite warm? (2 marks)

5. Finn says mountains are essential to our planet. Do you agree? Explain your reasoning using evidence from the text or your own knowledge. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a cross-section of a mountain, labelling the summit, a glacier, and the base of the mountain.

Extension challenge: Research one famous mountain range, such as the Himalayas or the Andes. Find out which continent it is located on and one interesting fact about its climate.