Exploring Global Climates with Finn the Dolphin

Learning objective: To understand the difference between weather and climate, and to identify the main climate zones of the world.

Read each question carefully and use your knowledge of world geography to provide detailed answers. Finn the Dolphin has been mapping the world's oceans and needs your help to identify the patterns he sees!

Finn the Dolphin travels across the globe, observing how temperatures and rainfall change as he moves further away from the Equator. He knows that while the weather changes from day to day, the long-term pattern of weather in a place is called its climate.

Word bank: Equator · Tropical · Temperate · Polar · Precipitation · Atmosphere · Latitude · Arid

1. Explain the difference between 'weather' and 'climate' in your own words. Why is it important for a scientist like Finn to know the difference? (2 marks)

2. Describe the characteristics of a 'Tropical' climate zone. Where is this zone typically located in relation to the Equator? (2 marks)

3. If Finn swims from the Tropical zone towards the Polar zone, how does the climate change? Mention temperature and the sun's position. (2 marks)

4. An 'Arid' climate is very dry. Using your knowledge of geography, identify one continent that contains large areas of arid climate and explain why it receives so little precipitation. (3 marks)

5. Max the monkey wants to buy a travel kit for his world tour. If he is visiting a Temperate climate, suggest two items he should pack and explain why they are necessary based on the typical weather patterns of that zone. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a simple map of the Earth. Clearly label the Equator, the Tropical zone, the Temperate zones, and the Polar regions. Add a small drawing of Finn the Dolphin in the ocean near the Equator.

Extension challenge: Research a specific city in a Polar climate and a city in a Tropical climate. Create a table comparing their average temperatures and total yearly rainfall. Which factors, other than distance from the Equator, might affect the climate of these two cities?