Exploring North America with Finn the Dolphin

Learning objective: To identify and describe key geographical features and biomes of North America.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below using full sentences where required.

North America is a vast continent stretching from the icy Arctic Circle in the north to the tropical lands near the equator in the south. Finn the dolphin often enjoys swimming along the varied coastlines, observing how the geography changes from place to place. The continent features a diverse range of biomes, including the frozen, treeless tundra of the north, the sprawling Great Plains in the centre, and the dense, humid rainforests in the south.

To the west, the formidable Rocky Mountains create a dramatic landscape that influences the weather patterns across the land. Further inland, the Great Basin provides a unique, arid environment, while the Great Lakes region in the north-east holds some of the largest freshwater reserves on Earth. The climate varies significantly; northern regions experience harsh, long winters, whereas the southern peninsula of Florida remains warm and sunny for most of the year. Because of this massive size, North America is home to an incredible variety of ecosystems, each shaped by its own unique topography, water sources, and levels of annual precipitation.

Word bank: continent · biomes · tundra · basin · precipitation · topography

1. Name two different types of biomes found in North America as mentioned in the text. (2 marks)

2. Where are the Great Lakes located within the continent? (1 mark)

3. Why might the Rocky Mountains be considered an important geographical feature for the rest of the continent? (2 marks)

4. Based on the text, what is the main reason for the vast difference in climate between the northern and southern parts of North America? (2 marks)

5. Which part of North America would you most like to visit and why? Use evidence from the text to justify your choice. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a map of North America and label the Rocky Mountains, the Great Lakes, and the Arctic region, adding a small drawing of Finn the dolphin near the coast.

Extension challenge: Research one major river in North America and write a short paragraph explaining its importance to the people and wildlife living nearby.