

Year 6 Geography Unit - South America

Context South America is a continent like no other! 7000km from the UK, it has bigger mountains, lakes, deserts and volcanoes than anywhere in Europe.

South America has a unique human history, influenced by centuries of European conquest. Although independent now, Europe relies on South America to provide it with some sought-after commodities through international trade.

Key vocabulary and places

South America - a large continent starting with Colombia in the north and ending in Chile in the far south. The equator runs through the northern part of the continent but the south of the continent is close to polar in conditions.

Tourism - this forms a large and growing income for many locations in South America e.g. the rainforest in Brazil or archaeological sites in Peru. 'Gap Years' are popular for people who take a year away from work to travel on holiday.

Brazil - the largest country by area and population. It contains the bulk of the Amazon Rainforest, and in that, many indigenous tribes.

Colombia - the most northerly country with many mountains and tropical forests. Perfect growing conditions for coffee plants. Home of the Nevado del Ruiz volcano.

Chile - a long thin country that is at risk of earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and tsunamis.

Indigenous tribes - the people that lived in South America before European explorers arrived and conquered. Many still exist and a few are isolated and uncontacted.

Slavery - European empires brought thousands of slaves from Africa to work on farms in South America.

Nevado del Ruiz - a volcano in Colombia that erupted in 1985, making the world's most deadly eruption, killing 23,000+ people.

Earthquakes - these happen when tectonic plates move suddenly causing destructive vibrations. If this happens under an ocean, it causes a destructive wave of water called a **tsunami**.

Coffee - South America grows 60% of the world's coffee. This is brought to the UK by international trade.

Fair trade - a minimum price is set for a commodity so that when market conditions cause the price to fall e.g. excess coffee for sale, farmers don't fall into poverty with the low price.



Geography Skills

- Investigate places on a larger scale including contrasting and distant places.
- Locate places on a world map.
- Use atlases to find out about other features of place e.g. mountain ranges, climate...
- Identify significant places and environments.



Something to reflect on...

Do you think it would be worth going into a debt of several thousand pounds to tour South America? Why or why not?

Millions of people in South America live in areas at risk of geohazards. What do you advise that they do? Why?

Would you be prepared to pay £8.30 for a 200g Fairtrade jar of coffee or £6.50 for a standard 300g jar of coffee? Explain.