



SOUTH AMERICA KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER



Map and Overview



-South America is the fourth-largest continent in the world. It covers about 17.8 million km². It lies completely in the western hemisphere.

-South America is the fifth-most populous continent in the world – it has a population of around 420 million people (although over half of these people live in Brazil).

-The Equator cuts through the continent. Most of South America is in the southern hemisphere.

-Most of the people live on the east and west coasts; the southern coast and centre of the continent are sparsely populated.

Human Geography Features

Deforestation		The Amazon Rainforest has been rapidly destroyed over the past 50 years – since 1970, nearly 800,000 km ² of rainforest has been lost. The main causes are agriculture, illegal logging, and human encroachment into the forest.	What? About 20% of the total rainforest has now been cleared.	Key Fact: 150 acres of rainforest are destroyed every minute of the day.
Machu Picchu		The Inca Empire was the largest empire in pre-colonial South America. Machu Picchu was a large Incan citadel (fortified central area of town). Incans abandoned it after the Spanish invaded. It remained unknown until 1911.	Where? On a 2,430 metre mountain ridge in southern Peru.	Key Fact: It was built in 1450 in classic Inca style with dry stone walls
Colonisation/Languages		Throughout the 16 th -17 th centuries, European settlers (mainly from Portugal and Spain, but also the French, Dutch and British) invaded and colonised South America. South Americans still speak European languages today.	When? Most countries gained independence in the 19 th C.	Key Fact: Portuguese and Spanish are the main languages on the continent.
Coffee Trade		The coffee plant is grown in abundance in South America, and many countries from the continent are the biggest producers of coffee in the world. Coffee is a huge regional export.	Where? Mainly Brazil, Colombia and Peru.	Key Fact: Brazil produces 2.5 million tonnes per year.

Countries of South America

Largest S. American countries

1. Brazil – 8.5 million km²
2. Argentina – 2.8 million km²
3. Peru – 1.3 million km²
4. Colombia – 1.15 million km²
5. Bolivia – 1.1 million km²

There are 12 countries in South America, and a further 4 states that are listed as dependencies of other nations.

Most populous S. American countries

1. Brazil – 210 million people
2. Colombia – 49 million people
3. Argentina – 44 million people
4. Peru – 32 million people
5. Venezuela – 32 million people

Physical Geography Features

	The Amazon River is the longest river in South America, and by some definitions, the world.	Where? Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador, Venezuela	Key Fact: The Amazon is fed by hundreds of tributaries.
	The Atacama Desert is one of the driest places in the world. There are some places where there has been no recorded rainfall!	Where? The Atacama Desert is in Chile.	Key Fact: The desert is so dry due to its position in a 'two-way' rain shadow.
	The Andes are the tallest mountains in South America (and in the world after the mountain ranges in Asia). The range is about 7,000km long, extending north to south. The world's highest volcanos are in the Andes.	Where? Through 7 different South American countries.	Key Fact: The peak of Mount Chimborazo is the furthest point from the centre of the earth.
	The Amazon Rainforest is the largest rainforest in the world. The rainforest is about 5.5 million km ² across nine different nations.	What? There are 16,000 tree species.	Key Fact: The Amazon contains around 390 billion trees!

Fairtrade



The Fair Trade movement is a global organisation committed to helping producers/farmers in developing communities. Money raised from Fair Trade products, such as tea, bananas, coffee and chocolate, goes towards improving the working conditions, local sustainability and trade terms for farmers and workers, and their communities.

Key Vocabulary	Definition
Climate	The weather conditions in an area over a long period of time.
Vegetation	Plant life or total plant cover.
Agriculture	The practise of preparing soil, producing crops and raising livestock (animals) and selling the product.
Import	A product brought into a country to be sold there.
Export	A product sold to a foreign (different) country.
Origin	Where something begins.
Food miles	The distance a product has travelled from producer to the person who buys the product.
Fair Trade	A system that makes sure a product, usually from a poorer country gets a fair price for the product they are selling.
Produce	Making or growing something that will be sold.

