

Discover Your World 2020

WEEK 1

THE NATURAL WORLD



This week we focus on the world as it was before humans came along. We will look at the natural barriers of the world like deserts, mountains, and oceans. We will also study some of the wonders of nature and different natural features that have helped and hindered humans through the ages.

What's new this year?

- Labeled maps to help you find all of the features.
- 4 islands, 2 straits, 1 river, 2 deserts, 2 mountains, and 5 other features.

What should you study to do well?

- The names of the natural features.
- What makes them noteworthy.
- How to find them on a map.
- How to recognize them from a picture.
- For challenge questions, have an idea of how these features might relate to each other.

What will the categories be?

- Superlatives (Be able to name the biggest in each category)
- What is This? (Know different features by name)
- Claim to fame (Know different features by description)
- Picture This? (Recognize them from a picture)
- On the Map (Place the features on the map)
- Which One Doesn't Belong?

Example Challenge Questions

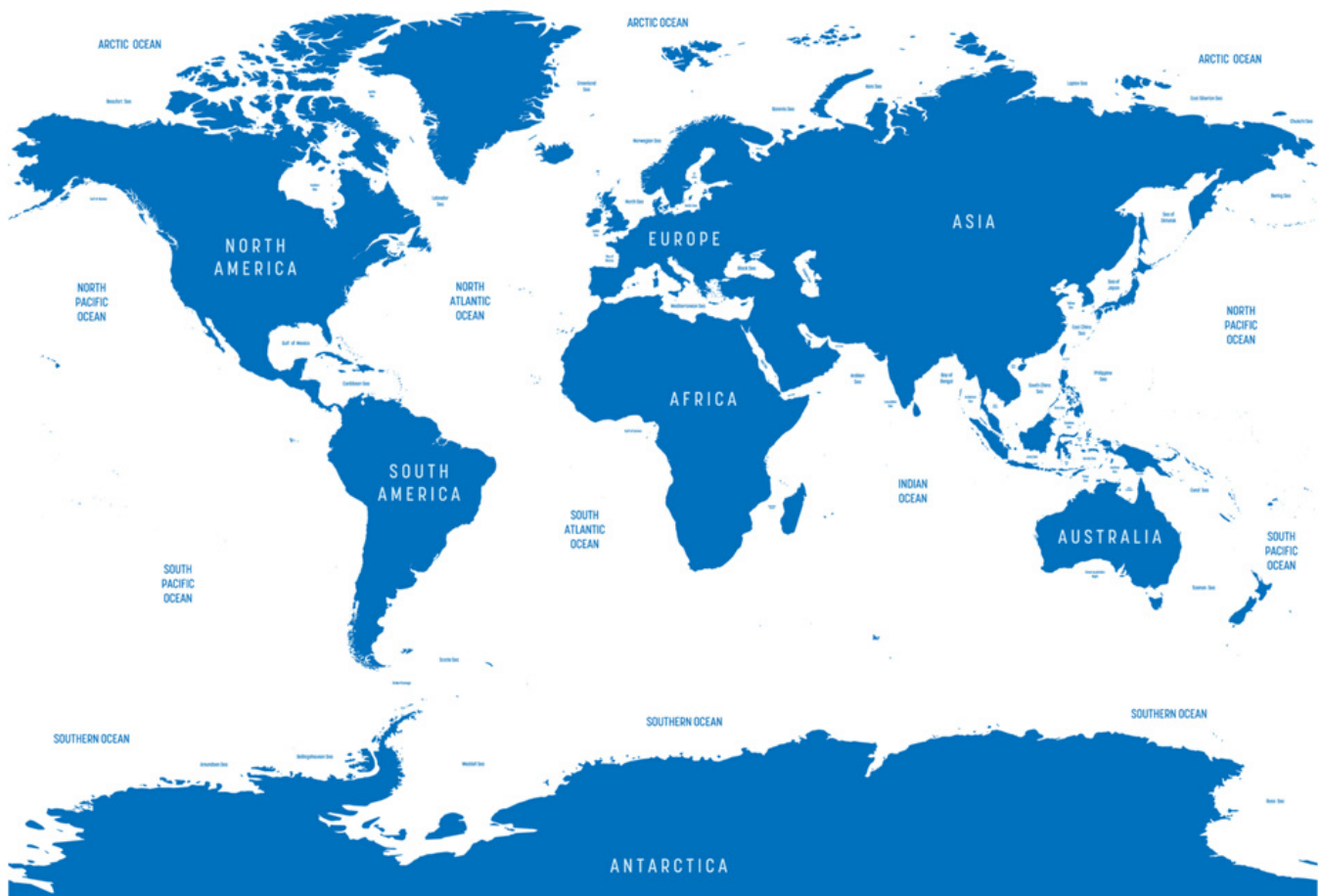
- What are three islands in Indonesia?
- What is the only one of the 10 tallest mountains in the world that is not in the Himalayas?
- Which sea separates Cuba from Colombia?

Oceans

Oceans are bodies of salt water that separate the continents. Oceans aren't just big, they are massive. Oceans cover 71% of the Earth's surface, contain 97% of the Earth's water, and are home to 99% of the Earth's living species. There are five oceans. They are all connected to each other and scientists have changed the placement of the boundaries between them over the years.

Continents

Continents are large land masses that are tied to continental plates. Unfortunately the word continent is used a number of different ways. Sometimes the word continent refers to a single land mass while other times it is a label for an area of the world near a major land mass. When we use the word continent in this program, we are going to use the second definition, meaning that we will organize islands as being part of a continent.



The Five Oceans

Pacific Ocean: The largest ocean, the Pacific separates the Americas from Asia and Australia. The Pacific Ocean contains the Mariana Trench, the deepest place on Earth's surface. It is almost 7 miles below sea level!

Atlantic Ocean: Separates the Americas from Europe and Africa. It is the second largest ocean.

Indian Ocean: It is between Africa, Asia, and Australia.

Arctic Ocean: It is north of the North America, Europe and Asia.

Southern Ocean: It is south of South America and Africa. The Southern Ocean was not considered an ocean between 1953-2002 and these waters were instead parts of the Atlantic, Indian, and Pacific Oceans.

The Seven Continents

Asia: The largest continent, Asia is bound by the Pacific, Arctic, and Indian Oceans. Asia is directly connected to Europe and while considered a separate continent it is a single landmass. The border between Asia and Europe is defined by the Ural Mountains, the Caucasus Mountains, and the Turkish Straits. Asia includes many islands making up a number of countries to its east and south.

Europe: Bound by the Atlantic and Arctic Oceans. It is directly connected to Asia. The Mediterranean Sea separates Europe from Africa. Some islands north of Europe and in the Mediterranean Sea are considered part of Europe as well.

Africa: Bound by the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. Africa is connected to Asia by the Sinai Peninsula with the Isthmus of Suez forming the border between the continents. Many islands off the coast of Africa are also considered part of the continent, the largest being Madagascar.

North America: Bound by the Atlantic, Pacific and Arctic Oceans, North America is connected to South America by the Isthmus of Panama. The area between Mexico and Colombia is often called Central America, but is part of North America. Most of the islands in the Caribbean Sea as well others off the coast are considered part of the continent.

South America: Bound by the Atlantic, Pacific, and Southern Oceans. South America is connected to North America and has numerous islands off the coast.

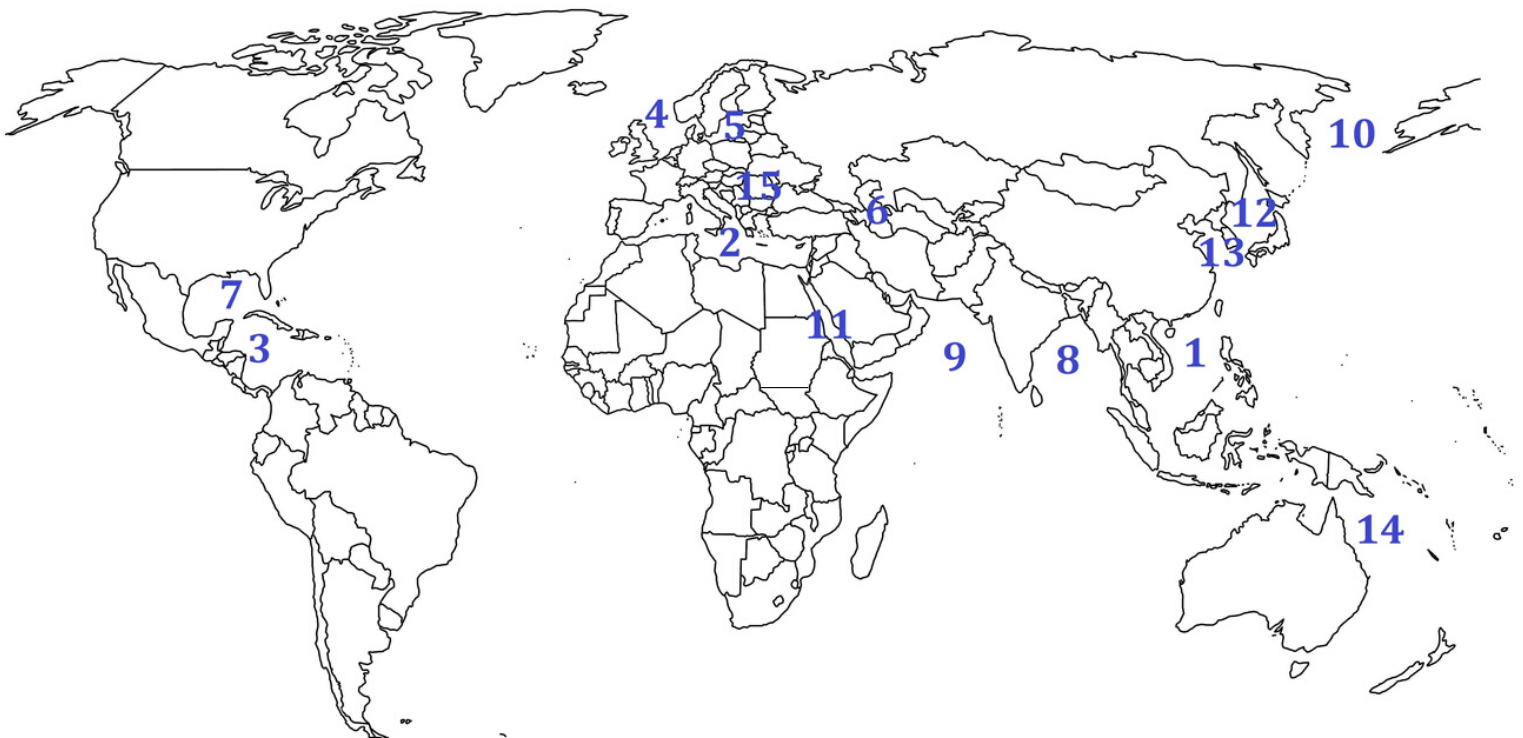
Oceania: Oceania includes the landmass of Australia as well as many islands nearby and throughout the Pacific Ocean.

Antarctica: Bound completely by the Southern Ocean, Antarctica is mostly uninhabited and not under sovereign control of any country.

Seas

Seas are large areas of salt water. They are smaller than oceans and are defined by nearby land masses. Most seas can be defined as part of an ocean, but some seas, known as inland seas, are considered to be part of a continent. There are many seas in the world, so this list will only include some of the major ones.

- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 1) South China Sea | 6) Caspian Sea | 11) Red Sea |
| 2) Mediterranean Sea | 7) Gulf of Mexico | 12) Sea of Japan |
| 3) Caribbean Sea | 8) Bay of Bengal | 13) Yellow Sea |
| 4) North Sea | 9) Arabian Sea | 14) Coral Sea |
| 5) Baltic Sea | 10) Bering Sea | 15) Black Sea |



South China Sea

A large sea south of Asia, the South China Sea contains many of the largest ports in the world. China has been attempting to build islands in this important waterway in order to claim it.



Mediterranean Sea

Separating Europe and Africa, this sea was important source of transportation to many early civilizations. It is still an important route for connecting Europe and Northern Africa to Asia through the Suez Canal.



Caribbean Sea

Tucked between North and South America, the Caribbean Sea has many island countries



North Sea

A sea between Scandinavia, England, and Northern Europe, it is a major source of oil.



Baltic Sea

A small sea between Scandinavia, the Baltic States, and Russia.



Caspian Sea

An inland sea in Asia that is surrounded by Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Iran, and Turkmenistan. It is sometimes classified as a lake, making it the world's largest one if you consider it one.

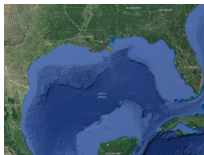
Arabian Sea

Located between India and the Middle East, much of the world's oil passes through the Arabian Sea.



Gulf of Mexico

Bound by Florida and Mexico, this sea has major ports and is a major source of oil.



Coral Sea

East of Australia, the Coral Sea is the home of the Great Barrier Reef.



Red Sea

Separates Africa from the Middle East



Black Sea

An inland sea surrounded by a number of countries between Europe and Asia.



Bering Sea

Separates the United States (Alaska) from Russia.

Bay of Bengal

Located between India and Southeast Asia.

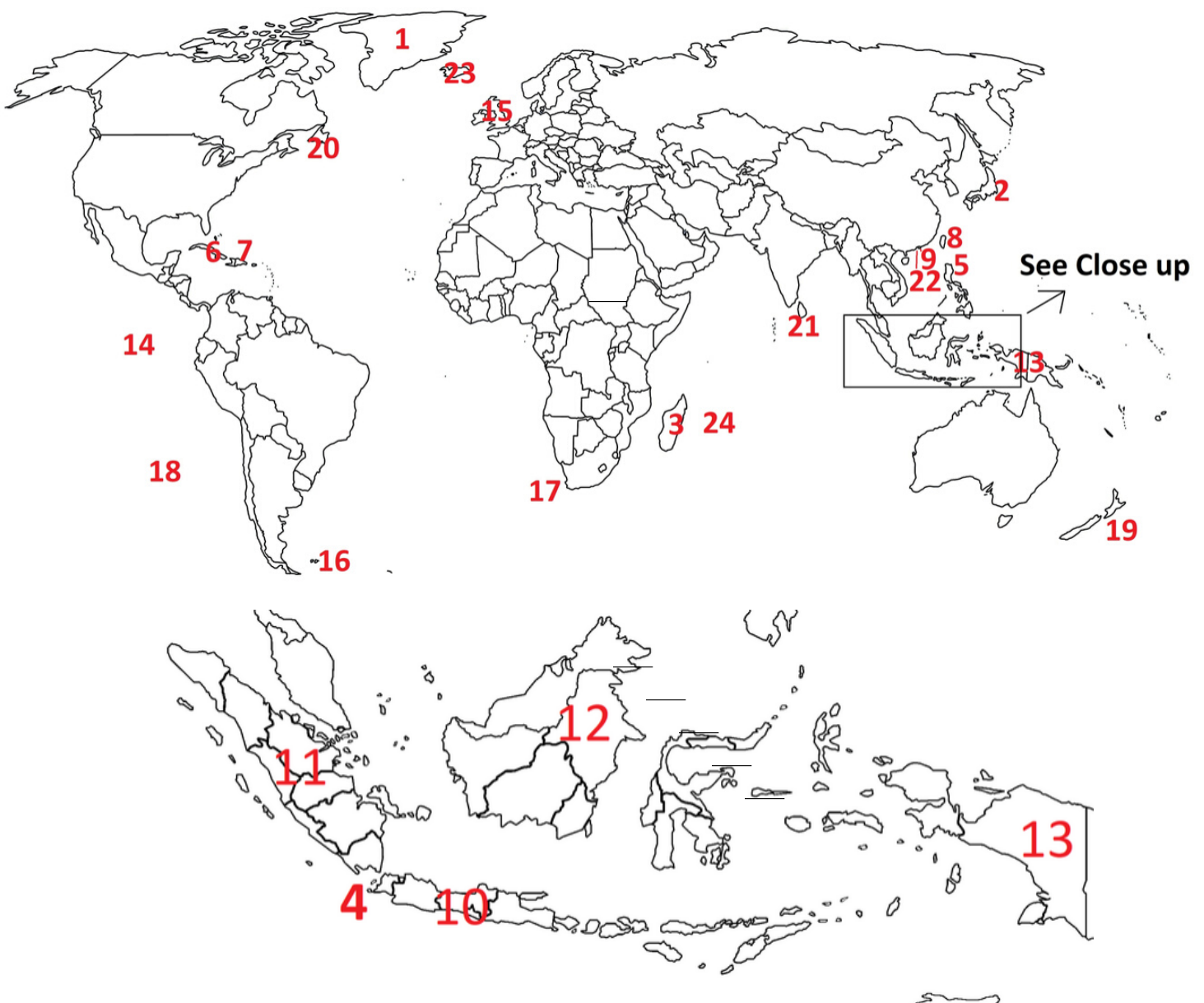
Sea of Japan

Separates Russia and the Korean Peninsula from Japan.

Islands

Islands are areas of land not connected to a continent. Some of these islands are impressive for their size, while others on this list are here for historical reasons or due to a unique feature that makes them stand out.

- | | | | |
|---------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| 1) Greenland | 7) Hispaniola | 13) New Guinea | 19) North/South |
| 2) Honshu | 8) Taiwan | 14) Galapagos | 20) Newfoundland |
| 3) Madagascar | 9) Hong Kong | 15) Britain | 21) Sri Lanka |
| 4) Singapore | 10) Java | 16) Falkland | 22) Macao |
| 5) Luzon | 11) Sumatra | 17) Robben | 23) Iceland |
| 6) Cuba | 12) Borneo | 18) Easter | 24) Mauritius |



Greenland

Located east of Canada between the Atlantic and Arctic Oceans, Greenland is the largest island in the world. Part of Denmark, Greenland is one of only two places on Earth largely covered by a permanent ice sheet.



Honshu

The largest of the islands of Japan, Honshu is the second most populated, seventh largest, and most economically powerful island in the world. Japan's largest cities like Tokyo are on Honshu.



Madagascar

Located off the East coast of Africa, Madagascar has unique ecosystems that contain many species found nowhere else on Earth, like the lemur. It is the 4th largest island in the world.



Singapore

Singapore is a small, but wealthy island country whose location on the Strait of Malacca has made it one of the most important ports in the world.



Luzon

The largest of the islands of the Philippines, Luzon is the fifteenth largest, but fourth most populated island in the world. Famous for its rice terraces, Luzon was occupied by the Spanish, the US, and the Japanese,



Cuba

Located south of Florida, Cuba is the largest island in the Caribbean. Cuba is one of four communist countries in the world and was the site of an international crisis in the 1960s that people feared might start a nuclear war.



Hispaniola

East of Cuba, Hispaniola is the most populated and second largest island in the Caribbean. Its land area is split between two countries, Haiti and the Dominican Republic



Taiwan

A densely populated island east of the Chinese mainland, the government of Taiwan claims to be the legitimate government of all of China. China disagrees and believes Taiwan is a part of their country. This has complicated diplomacy in the region to say the least.



Hong Kong

A small island south of China, Hong Kong is one of the wealthiest cities in the world with more skyscrapers than any other. Hong Kong was a British colony and is now part of China. Hong Kong has resisted attempts by China to take a more direct control over the island's government, marked by massive protests over the last two years.

Java

The 13th largest, but most populated island in the world, Java is home to over 141 million people and is the economic and political center of Indonesia.



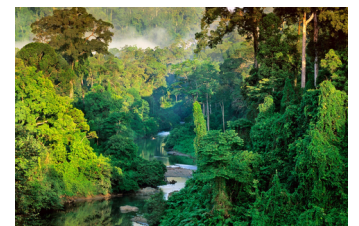
Sumatra

The 6th largest island in the world, Sumatra is the largest island entirely in Indonesia. A place of great natural diversity, Sumatra's wildlife is under threat as deforestation occurs.



Borneo

The 3rd largest island in the world, Borneo contains territory of three countries, Brunei, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Borneo lies on the equator and contains the oldest rainforests in the world.



New Guinea

New Guinea is the 2nd largest island in the world. It is also the most culturally diverse island with over 100 different languages spoken. The countries Papua New Guinea and Indonesia divide the island's territory.



Galapagos

A small group of islands in the Pacific Ocean, the Galapagos are a territory of Ecuador. They are famous for their unique species being studied by Charles Darwin, author of On the Origin of Species.



Britain

The largest European island and 9th largest island in the world, Britain is home to the countries of England, Wales, and Scotland, three parts of the nation of the United Kingdom. The island is off of the coast of France.



Falkland Islands

A small group of islands in the Southern Atlantic Ocean, the Falklands belong to the United Kingdom. In the 1980s, Argentina and the UK fought a short war over who controlled the islands even though it has a population of less than 3,000 people..



Robben Island

A small island 4 miles off the coast of Cape Town, Robben Island was used as a political prison. Three former inmates who were political prisoners for opposing Apartheid have gone on to become president of South Africa.



Easter Island

A small island in the South Pacific, Easter Island is a territory of Chile. Easter Island is famous for its massive Maui statues, created by a civilization that has since vanished.



North and South Island

Found east of Australia, North and South Island make up most of the country of New Zealand. They are the 12th and 14th largest islands in the world.



Newfoundland

A populated island in the eastern part of Canada, Leif Erikson reached Newfoundland in the 11th century long before Columbus took his voyage



Sri Lanka

A large island off of the coast of India, Sri Lanka is a culturally diverse country that was settled by humans over 100,000 years ago.



Macau

A small island off of the coast of China that was formerly a Portuguese Colony. Today Macau is best known for its casinos which bring in seven times the business of those in Las Vegas.



Iceland

A sparsely populated island in the northern Atlantic, Iceland is much greener than its name implies, unlike Greenland which is far icier.



Mauritius

One of the islands in the country of the same name, Mauritius is in the Indian Ocean . The now extinct Dodo Bird was once common here.



Straits

Straits are narrow areas of water between seas and oceans. Straits have been important historically as part of trade routes and for military control of waterways. Many important cities have formed around these locations. Human built straits are called canals. These will be covered in week 2.

Strait of Hormuz

Connecting the Persian Gulf to the Arabian Sea, much of the world's oil passes through here.

Strait of Malacca

Between Southern Asia and the island of Sumatra, this connects the South China Sea to the Indian Ocean and is the world's busiest waterway.

Strait of Gibraltar

This strait connects the Mediterranean Sea to the Atlantic Ocean between Spain and Morocco.

Strait of Magellan

On the Southern end of South America, this strait connects the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

Dardanelles and Bosphorus

These two straits connect the Mediterranean to the Black Sea between European and Asian Turkey. The Sea of Marmara is between them.

English Channel

Connects the North Sea to the Atlantic Ocean and separates Britain from mainland Europe.

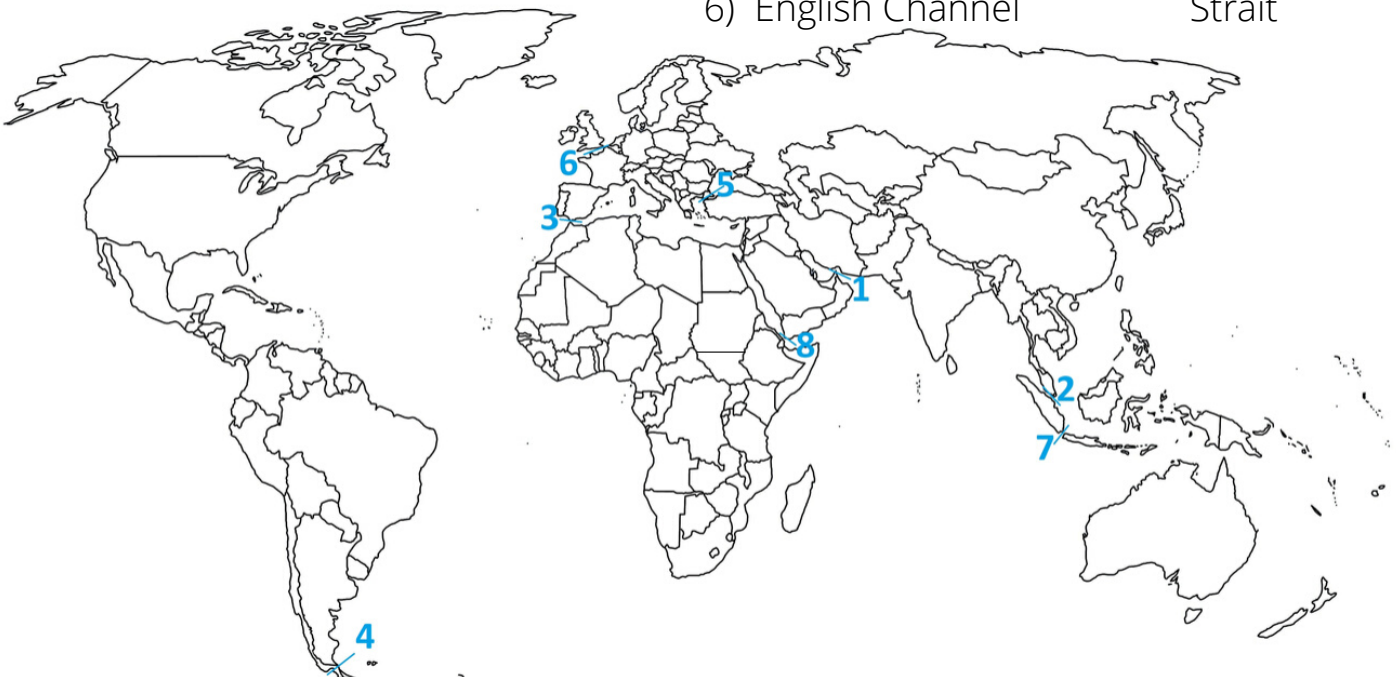
Strait of Sunda

Found between Indonesian islands of Sumatra and Java this straight offers an alternate longer route to the Indian Ocean for ships from the South China Sea.

Bab-el-Mandeb Strait

Located between the Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, this strait controls the entrance to the Red Sea.

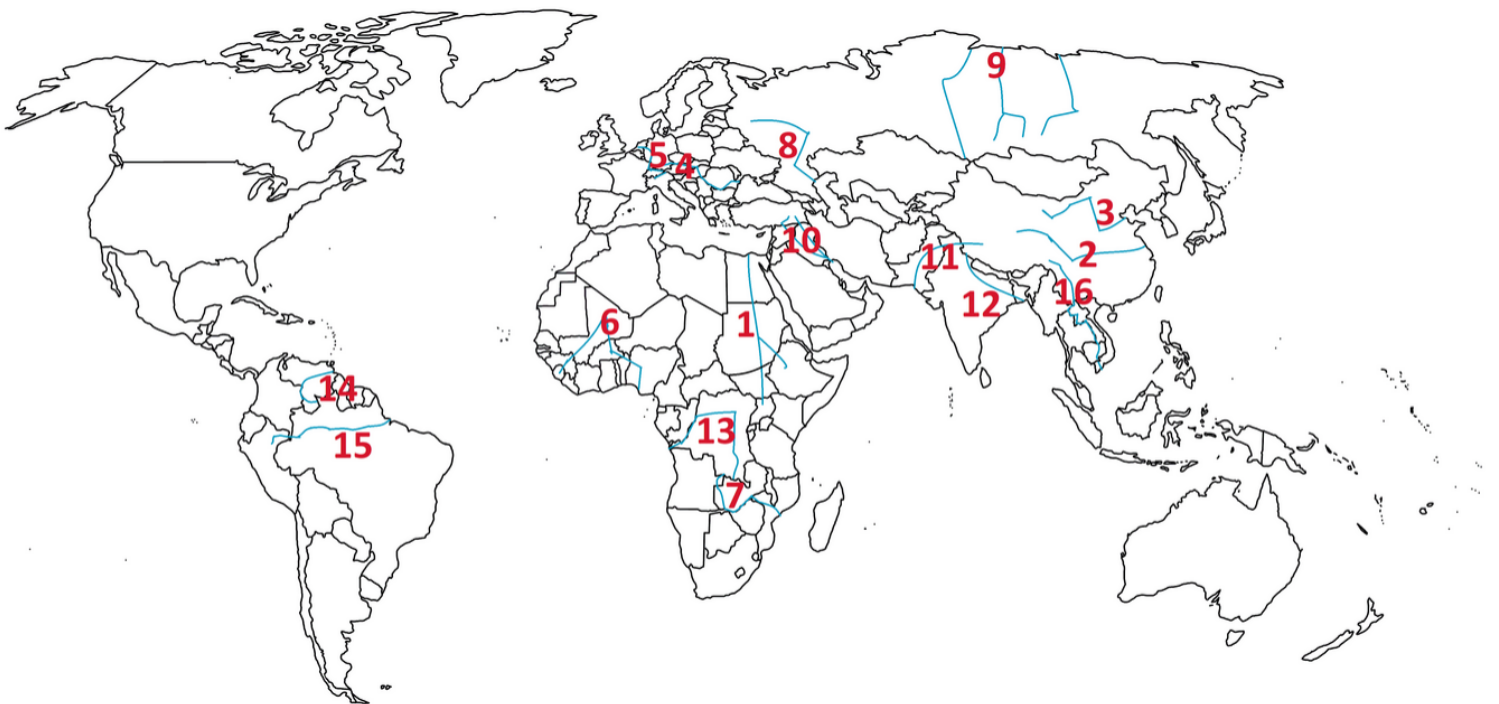
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|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1) Strait of Hormuz | 3) Strait of Gibraltar | 5) Dardanelles and Bosphorus | 7) Strait of Sunda |
| 2) Strait of Malacca | 4) Strait of Magellan | 6) English Channel | 8) Bab-el-Mandeb Strait |



Rivers

Rivers are moving bodies of fresh water. Used for farming, transportation, fishing, and drinking water, rivers provide many of the resources people need to survive. Most early cities were built along the banks of rivers.

- | | | | |
|------------|------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| 1) Nile | 5) Rhine | 9) Ob, Lena, and Yenisei | 13) Congo |
| 2) Yangtze | 6) Niger | 10) Tigris and Euphrates | 14) Orinoco |
| 3) Yellow | 7) Zambezi | 11) Indus | 15) Amazon |
| 4) Danube | 8) Volga | 12) Ganges | 16) Mekong |



Nile

The world's longest river flows into the Mediterranean Sea and was the life source of the Egyptian and Sudanese civilizations.



Yangtze

The longest and most important of China's rivers, the Yangtze provided water to China's early civilization and is now the site of the world's largest dam.



Yellow

China's second longest river is north of the Yangtze and empties into the Yellow Sea.



Danube

Europe's longest river outside of Russia, the Danube passes through ten countries and four capitals before entering into the Black Sea.



Rhine

A major river of Europe that ends in the North Sea, the Rhine contains the continent's largest port (Rotterdam).



Niger

The longest river of western Africa was a water source for cities in the Mali and Songhai. It empties into the Atlantic Ocean.



Zambezi

A major river of southern Africa, the Zambezi forms the border of Zimbabwe and Zambia empties into the Indian Ocean..



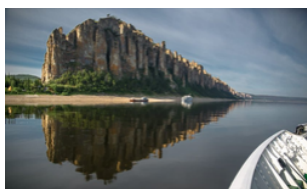
Volga

Europe's longest river runs through Russia and empties into the Caspian Sea



Lena, Ob, and Yenisei

These are the longest of Russia's many rivers that empty into the Arctic Ocean.



Tigris and Euphrates

These two rivers in the Middle East define the fertile area of Mesopotamia that was the site of many early civilizations important to world history.



Indus

Running from the Himalayas through Pakistan into the Arabian Sea the Indus provided water to one of the oldest major civilizations in the world.



Ganges

Flowing through India and Bangladesh into the Bay of Bengal, the Ganges is considered sacred to the Hindu religion.



Congo

The Congo flows into the Atlantic Ocean after passing through rainforests and two capital cities directly across from each other (Kinshasa and Brazzaville).



Orinoco

The second longest river in South America, the Orinoco empties into the Caribbean.



Amazon

The world's second longest river, the Amazon crosses South America from the Northern Andes to the Atlantic Ocean through the Amazon Rain Forest.



Mekong

The world's twelfth longest river runs through southeast Asia, forming the border between multiple countries and emptying into the South China Sea.



Mountains

While it doesn't look like it, the land below our feet is moving. Mountains form as giant plates of earth push against each other. Mountains make traveling strenuous, farming difficult, and serve as natural barriers that keep people apart. These tall landforms are often natural borders of civilization.

1) Everest

2) K2

3) Kilimanjaro

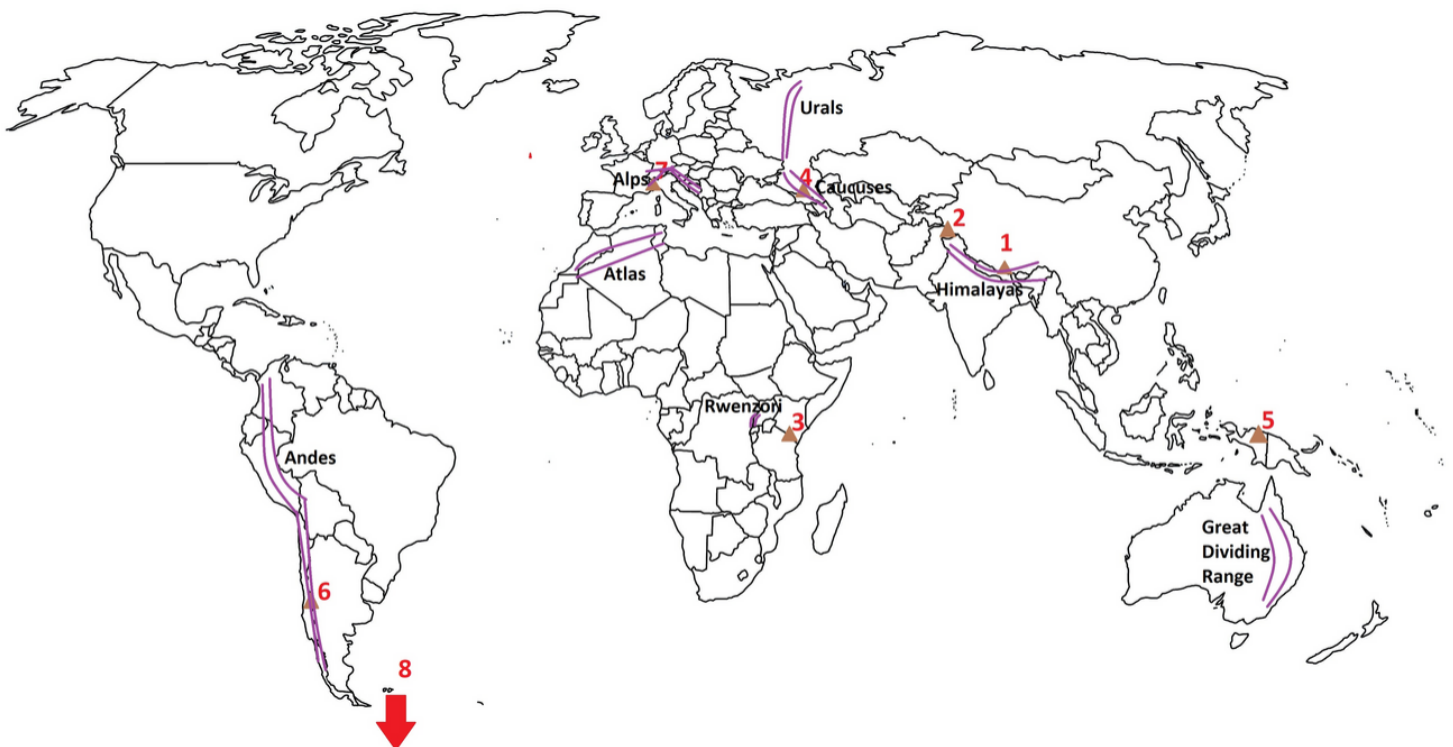
4) Elbrus

5) Puncak Jaya

6) Aconcagua

7) Mont Blanc

8) Vinson Massif



Everest

Located in the Himalayan range between Nepal and China, Everest is the world's tallest mountain rising over 29,000 feet above sea level.



K2

The second tallest mountain in the world, K2 is the only one of the world's 10 tallest peaks that is not in the Himalayas. It is in the Karakoram Range of Pakistan.



Kilimanjaro

The tallest mountain in Africa, Kilimanjaro is a dormant volcano in Northern Tanzania. It rises to almost 20,000 feet above sea level.



Elbrus

Europe's tallest mountain is found in the Caucasus Mountains in southern Russia.



Puncak Jaya

The tallest mountain in the Pacific Islands, Puncak Jaya is on the Indonesian side of the island of New Guinea.



Aconcagua

The tallest mountain in the Americas is found on the Chile/Argentina border. It rises almost 23,000 feet.



Mont Blanc

The tallest mountain in Europe outside of Russia,, Mont Blanc is in the Alps between Italy and France



Vinson Massif

The tallest peak in Antarctica, only the most serious mountaineers attempt this desolate climb.



Himalayas

Covering parts of China, India, Nepal and Pakistan, the Himalayas contain most of the highest peaks on the planet including the tallest and 3rd to 10th highest.

Andes

Spanning much of the length of South America, the Andes are the longest mountain range in the world. Many of the early civilizations living in these mountains were united into the Inca Empire.

Atlas

Found in northern Africa, the Atlas Mountains divides the fertile Mediterranean coast from the unforgiving Sahara Desert.

Great Dividing Range

Found near the Eastern coast of Australia, the Great Dividing Range lives up to its name by separating the eastern coastal cities from the deserts in the west.

Caucuses

Located between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, the Caucasuses form a natural barrier between Europe and Asia.

Urals

Like the Caucasuses in the south, the Ural Mountains in Russia form a natural border between Europe to their west and Asia to their east.

Alps

The Alps contain the largest mountains in Europe outside of Russia carves through eight countries including Italy, France, Germany, and Switzerland.

Rwenzori

Home to six of Africa's tallest mountains, this short range between the DR Congo and Uganda is filled with unique and unspoiled terrain.

Deserts

Areas with very little rainfall make it difficult for life to flourish. While they are very different from them in most ways, deserts are like mountains in that they are a barrier to people. Deserts are often very hot, but they don't have to be: any area that lacks rainfall is a desert. This means that Antarctica, not the Sahara, is the largest desert in the world!

Sahara

The largest hot and sandy desert in the world, the Sahara Desert used to be a grassland about 10,000 years ago. The inhospitable terrain makes it an imposing natural barrier.

Patagonian

The largest desert in South America, the Patagonian desert covers a large part of Argentina.

Kalahari

Located in southern Africa, the Kalahari covers most of Botswana. The Kalahari is less dry than some other deserts and has distinctive orange sands.

Gobi

A large Asian desert the Gobi covers parts of China and much of Mongolia, explaining why the latter is the least densely populated country in the world.

Arabian

Of the many deserts in the Middle East, the Arabian Desert is the largest, covering most of the Arabian Peninsula. It is also the largest desert in Asia.

Great Victorian

One of the largest deserts in the world, the Great Victoria Desert is found in Southern Australia and is biggest of five huge deserts that can be found in the country.

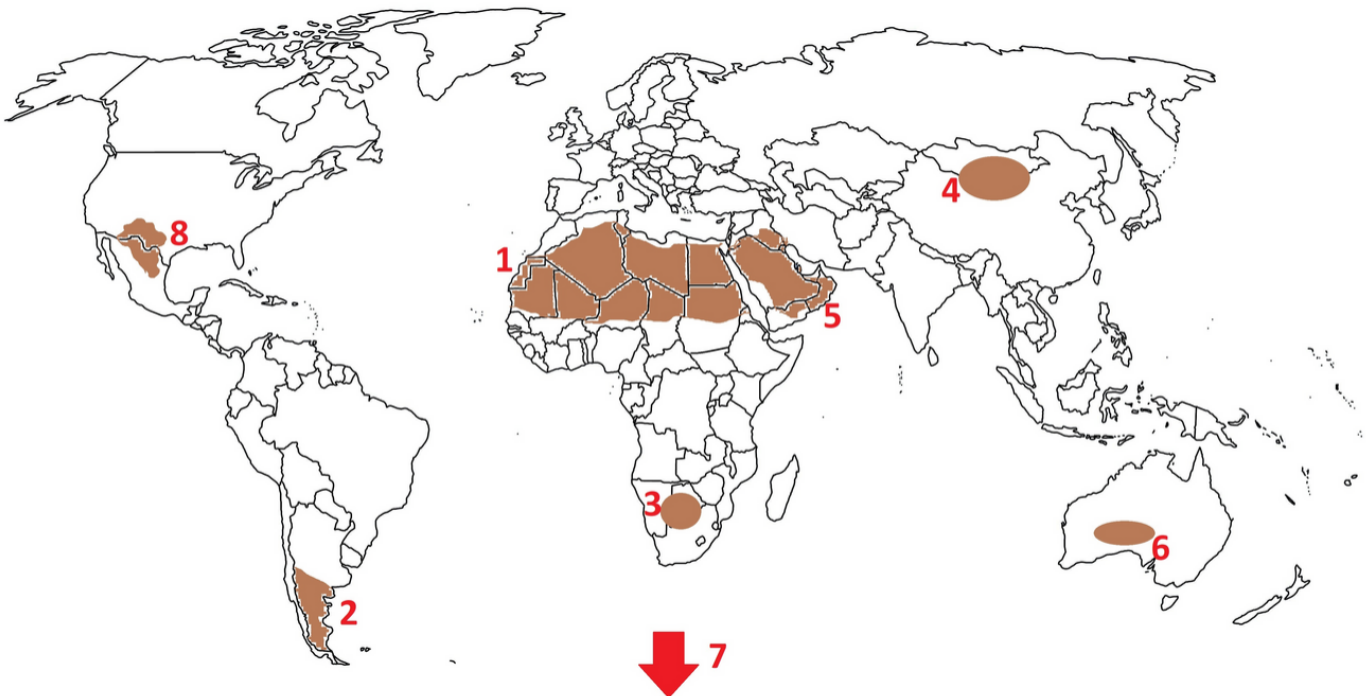
Antarctic

Covering the entirety of the continent, the Antarctic Desert is cold and frozen.

Chihuahuan

Covering parts of Northern Mexico and the Southern US, the Chihuahuan Desert is formed from Sierra Madre Mountain's rain shadow.

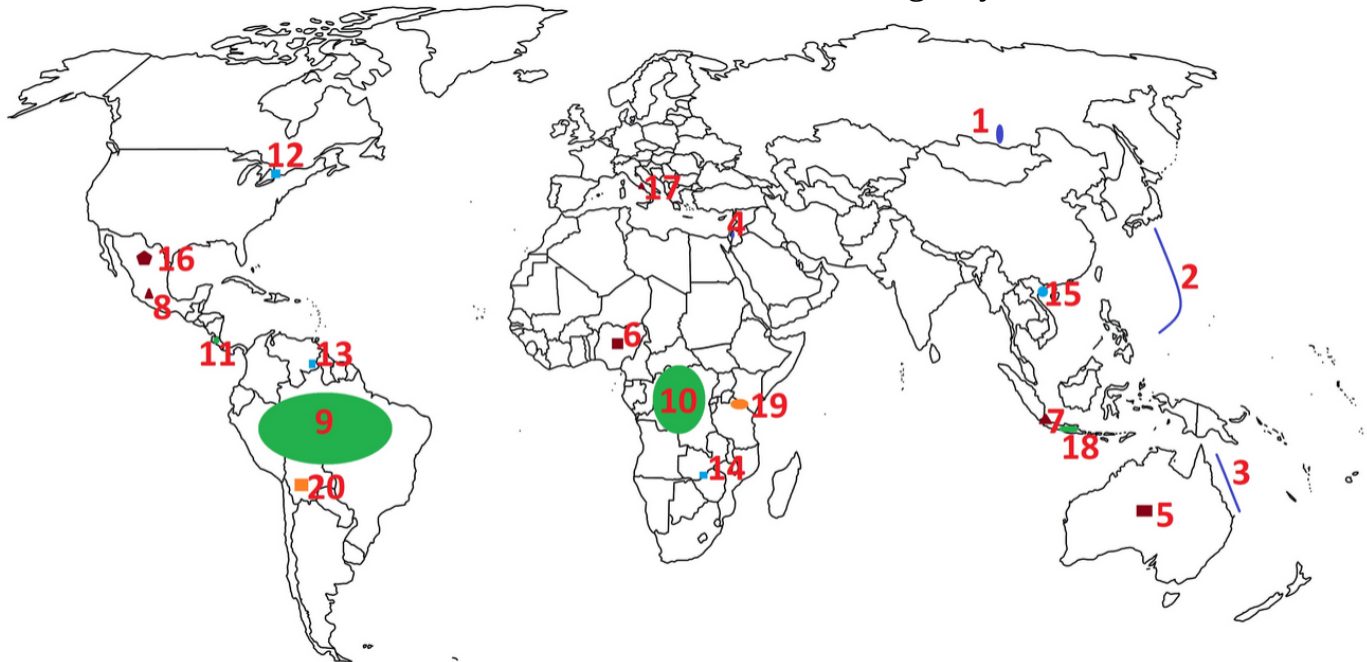
1) Sahara 2) Patagonian 3) Kalahari 4) Gobi 5) Arabian 6) Great Victorian 7) Antarctica 8) Chihuahuan



Other Features

Here are some other important natural geographic features that don't fall into any of the other categories.

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1) Lake Baikal | 6) Zuma Rock | 11) Monteverde Cloud Forest | 16) Crystal Caves |
| 2) Mariana Trench | 7) Krakatoa | 12) Niagara Falls | 17) Vesuvius |
| 3) Great Barrier Reef | 8) Parícutin | 13) Angel Falls | 18) Javan Rainforests |
| 4) Dead Sea | 9) Amazon Rainforest | 14) Victoria Falls | 19) Serengeti |
| 5) Uluru | 10) Congolese Rainforests | 15) Ha Long Bay | 20) Salar de Uyuni |



Lake Baikal

The deepest lake in the world, Lake Baikal by itself holds over 20% of the world's surface fresh water even though it is only the 7th largest lake by surface area. Lake Baikal is in Siberia, Russia.



Mariana Trench

The deepest place on the Earth's surface, the Mariana Trench is under the Pacific Ocean and was just recently explored. It is seven miles below sea level.



Great Barrier Reef

Off the eastern coast of Australia, the Great Barrier Reef is the largest living thing in the world. A massive coral system, rising temperatures have already killed portions of the reef.



Dead Sea

Actually a lake, the Dead Sea is the world's saltiest body of water. It is located between Israel and Jordan.



Uluru

Named Ayers Rock by Europeans, Uluru is a massive sandstone monolith in the Northern Territory of Australia. It is hundreds of miles from any city and is sacred to the aboriginal Yankunytjatjara and Pitjantjatjara people.



Zuma Rock

Zuma Rock is a massive granodiorite monolith found just to the West of Nigeria's capital Abuja. The Rock was both a defensive fortification and spiritual landmark to the people of the area.



Krakatoa

An active volcano in Indonesia, its 1883 eruption was extremely deadly, causing the deaths of 36,000. It was also the loudest sound of historic times, estimated to have been 310 decibels. Krakatoa last erupted in 2018.



Parícutin

A volcano in Southern Mexico, Parícutin is unique in that the entirety of its active cycle was studied by scientists. Its eruption in 1943 destroyed two towns, but it has since gone dormant.



Amazon Rainforest

The world's largest rainforest, the Amazon spans parts of Brazil, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia, Suriname, Guyana, and Venezuela. It is the most diverse ecosystem in the world, with over 16,000 species of trees. Half of the world's remaining rainforest is in the Amazon.



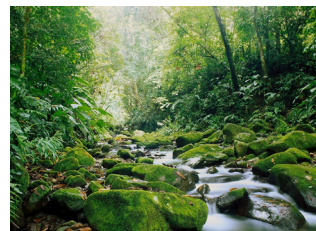
Congolese Rainforests

The world's second largest rainforest, the Congolese Rainforests follow the basin of the Congo River. Deforestation is happening much slower here than in other major rainforests. About 25% of the world's rainforest can be found here.



Monteverde Cloud Forest

A small Costa Rican rainforest, the Monteverde Cloud Forest is a nature reserve that protects the diverse ecosystem from deforestation.



Niagara Falls

On the border of the United States and Canada, Niagara Falls are three large waterfalls near each other. Every second more than a million gallons of water passes through the largest of these three, Horseshoe Falls, the most of any waterfall in the world.



Angel Falls

Located in a remote part of Venezuela, Angel Falls is the tallest waterfall in the world. The total drop is more than half of a mile.



Victoria Falls

The biggest waterfall in terms of combined width and height, Victoria Falls is found on the Zambezi River on the border of Zambia and Zimbabwe.



Ha Long Bay

An inlet in Vietnam, Ha Long Bay is has unique limestone pillars rising from the water, a diverse collection of tropical plants and animals, and a numerous caves and grottoes, making it a natural wonder of the world.



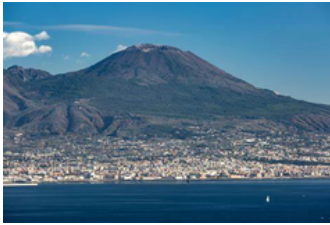
Cave of Crystals

Found in Mexico, this interconnected cave contains huge selenite crystals, among the largest crystals ever found in on earth. The extreme temperatures have made it difficult to study.



Vesuvius

A volcano in the Gulf of Naples, Italy, Vesuvius is one of the most dangerous volcanoes in the world due to the millions of people nearby. It is famous for its eruption in the year 79 AD that destroyed Pompeii in the Roman Empire.



Javan Rainforests

Indonesia is home to some of the most diverse rainforests in the world with many unique species. These forests are under great pressure as Indonesia grows and develops, especially Java's due to its huge population..



Serengeti

The Serengeti is a grassland area that is the world's most popular safari destination. This national park is part of the largest mammal migration route in the world, nicknamed the "Megaherd". The Serengeti is in Northern Tanzania.



Salar de Uyuni

At 12,000 feet above sea level in Bolivia, Salar de Uyuni is the world's largest salt flat. This desolate place is home to over 50% of the world's lithium as well as many other rare metals.



Next Week:

The Constructed World!
Join us as we study feats
of engineering and culture
landmarks. Come learn
about human ingenuity,
both functional or artistic.