



Lesson 1: Geography of South America

Directions: Read the summary to reveal how South America is a large contingent of many landscapes. As you read, underline important details in each section that relate to that section's title. Think about what you already know, what you want to know, and what you have learned after reading the summary.

Vocabulary

wetland an area of very moist soil, such as a swamp

biome a place that has a particular climate and types of plants and animals

scrub land an area where plants grow low

archipelago a group of islands

A Land of World Records (p. 187)

South America is a land of world records. It has the world's highest waterfall, Angel Falls. It has the world's second longest river, the Amazon River. It has the world's largest rain forest, the Amazon rain forest which the Amazon River flows through. It has the world's largest **wetland**, the Pantanal. And it has the world's longest mountain chain, the 4,500-mile-long Andes Mountains which extends the length of South America. High in the mountains there are glaciers. People have lived in the harsh Andes for thousands of years, including on the Altiplano. The Altiplano is a region of high plains and plateaus. People could farm potatoes, grain, and maize (corn) in this cold, dry place. Two animals, the llama and the alpaca, were first domesticated on the Altiplano.

Lake Titicaca (p. 188)

Lake Titicaca lies on the Altiplano in the present-day countries of Bolivia and Peru. Some ruins at Lake Titicaca are more than 2,000 years old making them the oldest ruins in South America. Lake Titicaca has a mild climate. One advantage of living near the lake is that many rivers flow into the lake. These rivers provide fresh water and fish. The land near the lake, such as the Altiplano, can grow crops such as maize, potatoes, and barley. Reeds grow at the edge of the lake. People have been using the reeds to make boats to sail on the lake since ancient times.

Many Landscapes (p. 188)

South America is home to many different kinds of **biomes**. Biomes are places with their own type of climate and own types of plants and animals. Grasslands, deserts, and rain forests are types of biomes. The Andes Mountains run along the western edge of South America. They run through both the northern and southern parts of the continent. The Amazon River is in the north and cuts through the Eastern Highlands and it drains the Amazon rain forest. The Eastern Highlands are mountains in the northeast. Also in this region are the Guiana Highlands, a land of tropical forests. Central and southern South America are different. This area is a land of plains. The Atacama Desert is in the northern part of the present-day country of Chile. Much of southern and central South America is **scrub land**, or an area where plants grow low to the ground. The Pampas, a huge grassland, sits at the southern end of the plains. The southern tip of South America is made up of an **archipelago**, or group of islands. It is called Tierra del Fuego.

The Peoples of South America (p. 189)

People have lived in all of the different regions of South America. Only a few of the early peoples created large civilizations. This may be because mountains and forests separated people from one another. Yet a civilization did grow in a surprising place, the rugged Andes Mountains.

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Directions: Write the details below in the correct boxes. You will use your textbook and provide the page number where you found your answer.

- 4,500 miles long p. 187
- Many rivers flow into it. p. 188
- region of plateaus and plains p. 187
- cuts through the Eastern Highlands p. 188
- extends the length of South America p. 187
- suitable for farming grains, potatoes, and maize p. 187
- flows through the world’s largest rain forest p. 187
- location of some of the oldest ruins in South America p. 188

Amazon River (p. 187-188)	Andes Mountains (p. 187-188)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • world’s second longest river ● ● 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there are glaciers among its peaks ● ●
Altiplano (p. 187)	Lake Titicaca (p. 188)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the llama and alpaca were domesticated there. ● ● 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a source of transportation ● ●