

Nombre: _____ Apellido: _____
Culture: Perú

Perú

Instructions: Read the following article about Perú. Then, answer the questions that follow!



Geography

Perú is the third largest country in South America, after Brazil and Argentina. It is made up of a variety of landscapes, from mountains and beaches to deserts and rain forests. Most of the people live along the coast of the Pacific Ocean, where the capital Lima, is located.

Along Peru's west coast is a narrow strip of desert, 1, 555 miles long. Ancient people, called the Chimú and the Nasca, first inhabited this region thousands of years ago. The coastal desert makes up only about 10 percent of Peru, but it is home to more than half of all Peruvians.

The world's largest rainforest, the Amazon, covers nearly half of Peru. Called the *selva* in Spanish, this huge jungle, which also covers half of Brasil, is home to plants and animals that do not live anywhere else on Earth. Some scientists think that there may even be Indian tribes there that have never seen the outside world.

The second highest mountain range in the world runs through Peru. These peaks, called the Andes, are so tall and forbidding that the ancient Incan people thought they were gods. They run from north to south and can be seen from Peru's beaches 50 miles to the west. The highest peak, Mt. Huascarán is 22, 205 feet high.



Nature

Because it has so many different ecosystems, Peru is home to a wider variety of plants and animals than most other countries on Earth. For many reasons, Peruvians have not had as much of an impact on their natural world as many other countries, and much of these ecosystems have been undisturbed.

A 250 acre plot of Peruvian rainforest is home to more than 6,000 kinds of plants! There are hundreds of species that are only found in the Amazon. To preserve these plants and animals, Peru has created special forest areas called reserves.

On the Pacific coast, many interesting plant and animal species have adapted to the dry desert climate. And off the coast, the Peru Current nourishes huge numbers of small fish, which in turn support large populations of bigger fish and seabirds, including Humboldt penguins.

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Peru's mountains support special types of grasses and plants, which provide food for mammals like, llamas, alpacas, and vicuñas. One plant that grows in the Andes, the puya raimondi, grows for 100 years before blooming!



History

Peru is a very old country. The earliest inhabitants arrived there about 15,000 years ago. Societies emerged on the west coast more than 5,000 years ago and began to spread inland. These included the Chavín, the Moche, and the Nasca.

One the most important Peruvian cultures was the Inca, who lived in Peru about 600 years ago.

Their capital, Cusco, is still an important city today. The Inca also built, Machu Picchu, a famous and mysterious city in the Andes Mountains. They thrived for centuries before being conquered by the Spanish conquistadors in 1532.



People and Culture

The people of Peru are a mix of many different cultures including, Indians, Spaniards and other Europeans, descendents of African slaves, and Asians. Until recently, most people lived in the countryside. But now, more than 70 percent live in cities. Most Peruvians follow the Catholic religion introduced by the Spaniards.



Government and Economy

Peru is a constitutional republic, with a president, a congress, and a supreme court. Peruvians are required to vote by law. Presidents serve 5 year terms and can only be elected twice in a row.

Peru is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of natural resources. Gold, silver, copper, zinc, lead, and iron are found across the country, and

there are reserves of oil and natural gas. Even so, jobs there can be hard to find, and Peru remains one of the poorest countries in the world.

Fast Facts

Population: 22 million

Capital: Lima

Languages: Spanish and Quechua

Currency (money): Nuevo Sol

Peru

SOUTH
AMERICA



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Try to complete the following sentences in Spanish using the word bank and the information from the article.

animales	Andés	ciudades	desierto		
español	los Incas	Lima	Machu Picchu		
montañas	naturales	Nuevo sol	similar	tercer	veintidós

1. Perú es el _____ país más grande de Sudamérica.
2. En el oeste (west) hay un _____. En el este (east) hay la selva.
3. Las montañas en Perú son los _____.
4. Perú tiene muchas plantas y _____.
5. Una cultura muy importante en Perú fue _____.
6. Los Incas construyeron _____.
7. Machu Picchu está en las _____.
8. Muchos peruanos viven en el desierto y las _____.
9. El gobierno de Perú es _____ al gobierno de los Estados Unidos.
10. Perú tiene muchos recursos _____.
11. La población es _____ millón.
12. La capital es _____.
13. Los idiomas (languages) son _____ y quechua.
14. La moneda (currency) es el _____.