



Year 5 New Zealand Reading Booklet

Lesson Series:

1. New Zealand and the South Pacific- location and physical geography
2. The history of New Zealand- The Maori
3. Earthquakes
4. Climate, Biomes and Animals
5. South Pacific
6. Assessment

Name: _____

Class: _____

Lesson 1

New Zealand and the South Pacific

New Zealand is located in the Southern Hemisphere and is surrounded by the Tasman Sea and the Pacific Ocean. New Zealand is made up of two main islands; North Island and South Island, as well as around 700 small islands. The capital city of New Zealand is Wellington. Christchurch, Auckland and Dunedin are other major cities. It is located on the edge of two tectonic plates and is the site of several volcanoes, some of which are still active. New Zealand experiences earthquakes, some of which can be very dangerous, especially for people living in cities. Near some of New Zealand's volcanoes, there are hot springs and geysers.

The South Island is the largest landmass of New Zealand. It is divided along its length by the Southern Alps. There are 18 peaks over 3,000 metres (9,800 ft), the highest of which is Aoraki / Mount Cook at 3,724 metres. The North Island is less mountainous but is marked by volcanism. The highly active Taupō Volcanic Zone has formed a large volcanic plateau, punctuated by the North Island's highest mountain, Mount Ruapehu (2,797 metres). The plateau also hosts the country's largest lake, Lake Taupō.



Lesson 2

The history of New Zealand

Māori are the indigenous Polynesian people of mainland New Zealand. Māori originated with settlers from East Polynesia, who arrived in New Zealand in several waves of canoe voyages between roughly 1320 and 1350. Over several centuries in isolation, these settlers developed their own distinctive culture, whose language, mythology, crafts, and performing arts evolved independently from those of other eastern Polynesian cultures. Some early Māori moved to the Chatham Islands, where their descendants became New Zealand's other indigenous Polynesian ethnic group, the Moriori. They lived in peace until their first contact with Europeans in the mid 1600's, when Dutch seamen tried to come onto land to collect fresh water. Later, Captain James Cook mapped the coastline of New Zealand, but brought new diseases and conflict to the Indigenous people, massively reducing their population



Lesson 3

Earthquakes

New Zealand lies at the edge of both the Australian and Pacific tectonic plates. To the northeast of New Zealand, and underneath North Island, the Pacific Plate is moving towards, and being subducted (pushed underneath) below the Australian Plate. It is this motion of one plate being pushed under another over time that created the islands and formed mountain ranges and volcanic areas across New Zealand. Land is always moving, and the fact that New Zealand lies across two tectonic plates, means that there have been several deadly earthquakes and some volcanoes are still active.

Lesson 4

Climate, biomes and animals.

New Zealand's main biomes are grassland and mixed forest, including temperate broadleaf and deciduous. The temperate climate, with lots of precipitation and sunshine, means New Zealand is home to a wide range of exotic plants and animals. New Zealand is home to whales, seals, penguins, mountain goats and buffalo. Dolphins and whales can be seen off the coast of New Zealand, particularly during migration. The kiwi bird is a nocturnal, flightless bird, native to New Zealand. It is an icon of New Zealand, and people often refer to New Zealanders as 'kiwis.' Kiwi birds eat worms or bugs and lay their eggs on the ground. They have hair-like feathers, short legs and have nostrils at the end of their long beaks allowing them to smell prey before they see it.

Read this



Lesson 5

The Pacific Islands

The Pacific Ocean is huge and contains many small islands. Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia are all names given to groups of small islands in the Pacific Ocean. Melanesia includes the islands from Papua New Guinea to Fiji. Micronesia includes small islands located north of Melanesia. Polynesia includes island groups from the Hawaiian Islands to the Pitcairn Islands.

