

Mountains, Valleys, and Work

Read how Peru's physical environment shapes settlement, land use, and jobs.

5.4c "The physical environment influences human population distribution, land use, and other forms of economic activity."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each physical condition and circle each way people settle, use land, or earn money because of that condition.

Life Along Peru's Andes and Coast

- ① Across the western coast of South America, the Andes Mountains rise high above nearby valleys. Steep slopes, thin soil, and cold temperatures make large farms and wide roads difficult on many mountain slopes. Fewer people live in the highest areas than in lower valleys. People often build towns where flatter land, water, and travel routes are easier to find.
- ② In Peru, some farmers use terraces, which are level steps cut into hillsides. Terraces help hold soil and water so crops such as potatoes can grow. This land use changes the slope to make farming possible. In valleys, rivers supply water for fields and homes. Farmers can grow crops there more easily, so valley land is valuable and often has more settlements.
- ③ The Pacific Ocean also affects life near Peru's coast. Cold water rising from the ocean brings nutrients that support many fish. Fishing ports form where boats can reach the sea and workers can process or sell fish. However, much of the coastal land is dry desert. Limited rainfall means people depend on rivers or irrigation for farming, and many areas remain sparsely settled.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 Why do fewer people live in the highest parts of the Andes than in lower valleys?

2 How do terraces change the land for farmers?

3 Use two details from the passage to explain why valleys often have more settlements.

4 What economic activity grows near Peru's coast, and what physical condition supports it?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Choose one physical feature not named in the passage, such as a forest, grassland, lake, or plain. Write exactly three sentences explaining how it could affect where people live, how they use land, and one job or business they might have.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each physical condition and circle each way people settle, use land, or earn money because of that condition. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why do fewer people live in the highest parts of the Andes than in lower valleys?	Steep slopes, thin soil, and cold temperatures make farming and road building difficult in high mountain areas.
2	How do terraces change the land for farmers?	Terraces create level steps that hold soil and water, making it possible to grow crops on hillsides.
3	Use two details from the passage to explain why valleys often have more settlements.	Valleys have flatter land and rivers that supply water for fields and homes. These conditions make farming and building towns easier.
4	What economic activity grows near Peru's coast, and what physical condition supports it?	Fishing grows near the coast because cold, nutrient-rich ocean water supports many fish.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A town beside a large forest may attract people who can find wood and shelter. Workers may harvest trees carefully and make furniture at a local workshop. The town should protect some forest land so the resource lasts.

Accept answers that correctly connect a physical feature to population distribution, land use, and an economic activity. Students may use a reasonable feature and a logical cause-and-effect explanation.