

Geography

Imaginary features

Look up any of these words you do not know.

mountain, hill, river, waterfall, valley, cliff, shore, sea, waves, forest, plain, lake, track, quarry, dessert, glacier, volcano, island, beach, road

Sit facing each other in pairs. Student A, describe a scene to student B. This can either be a place you have been to, or an imaginary place. Student B, close your eyes and imagine the scene. You need to remember as much detail as possible, so ask questions, e.g. *Is there any snow on the mountains? When you have finished, swap roles.*

(Ask some students to describe their partner's scenes.)

Outstanding features

Work in small groups. Discuss the answers to these questions and write them down.

What's the world's...	
highest mountain? (Everest, 8,850m)	highest waterfall? (Angel Falls, Venezuela, 979 m)
longest river? (Nile 6,741km)	driest place? (Calama, Chile. No rain for 400 years)
biggest city? (Mexico City, 25 million)	deepest place? (Mariana Trench, 11,022m)
coldest place? (Antarctica -87.8 °C)	biggest island? (Greenland, 2,175,600 km ²)
hottest place? (Al Aziziyah, Lybia, 58°C)	biggest lake? (Caspian Sea, 371,000 km ²)

(Go through the answers, giving just the names. Then write up the statistics in a different order and ask the students to match them.)

Tell me the highest mountain, etc. in your country.

Knowledge race

Work in groups of four and appoint one person to be secretary. I'm going to name a country. You have one minute to write as many notes as you can about the people and the geography before I name the next country, e.g. China – big, over a billion people, Great Wall, capital city Beijing.

America, Sweden, India, Iceland, Spain, Russia, Brazil, Australia

You have five minutes to turn your notes into complete sentences, e.g. *China – It's a big country. There are over a billion people. The Great Wall is visible from space. The capital city is Beijing.* (Go round and help during this stage.)

Read out your sentences. You score one point for every sentence. You can challenge the other group's sentences on factual accuracy and claim their point.

Languages

Listen to the countries and write the nationality and the language of each one. In small groups, compare your lists and write down any words that are new to you.

Germany (German – German)	Senegal (Senegalese – French, Pulaar, Wolof)
Peru (Peruvian – Spanish, Quechua)	Wales (Welsh – English, Welsh)
France (French – French)	Canada (Canadian – English , French, Indian)
Iran (Iranian –Farsi, Azerbaijani)	Kenya (Kenyan – English, Gikuyu, Swahili...)
Holland (Dutch – Dutch)	Israel (Israeli – Hebrew, Arabic)
Japan (Japanese – Japanese)	Sweden (Swedish – Swedish)
Brazil (Brazilian – Portuguese)	Ethiopia (Ethiopian – Amharic, Tigrigna)
Turkey (Turkish – Kurdish)	Ireland (Irish – English, Gaelic)
Switzerland (Swiss – German, French, Italian, Romance)	

Olympic torch

You are going to describe the journey of the Olympic torch through as many countries as possible. It travels from the city where the Games last took place to the new venue. Take turns to describe the next stage, e.g.

A – Greek athlete carried the torch to Istanbul

B – A Turkish athlete carried it to Tehran.

C – An Iranian athlete carried it to ...

Loan words

Work in small groups. Match the words with the languages they come from. (Re-order the languages when you write them up; they appear here in the correct order.)

Anorak, bamboo, boss, canoe, coach, lilac, mattress, mosquito, sauna, yacht, yoghurt, robot, tomato, pyjamas, kangaroo, whisky, bizarre, piano, zebra, silk, vodka, tycoon	Eskimo, Malay, Dutch, Carib, Hungarian, Farsi, Arabic, Spanish, Finnish, Dutch, Turkish, Czech, Nahuatl, Hindi, Aborigine, Gaelic, Basque, Italian, Swahili, Chinese, Russian, Japanese
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Discuss how the words came into the English language. Think about technology, trade, climate and imperialism.

(If the class is mixed nationality, ask them to write a list of English loan words in their languages, and to compare them in groups.)