

MOUNTAINS AROUND THE WORLD

Non-chronological report

The earth is covered with a thick layer of rock called the crust. Mountains, or mountain ranges (a group or line of mountains), are formed when sections of crust have squeezed together and been forced upwards. According to geologists, mountains are visibly much higher than their surrounding area, usually by at least 1,000 feet (300 metres). They often have steep sides, are significantly larger than hills and have a summit or peak (which is the highest point of the mountain).

Europe

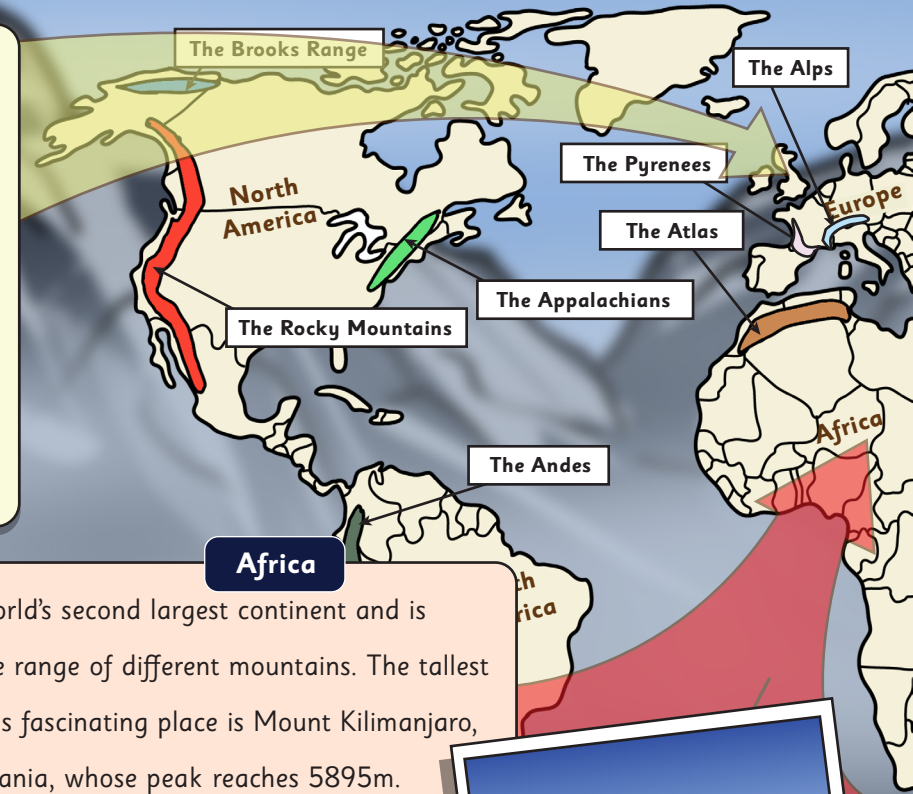
In the United Kingdom alone, there are over 100 mountains which stand above 600m. The tallest of these is Ben Nevis (1,345m above sea level), which can be found near Fort William (Scotland). Ben Nevis was once a volcano which collapsed millions of years ago.

Ben Nevis is part of the Three Peaks Challenge, which involves climbing three mountains in just 24 hours. Many people attempt this each year, either for personal challenge, curiosity or to raise money for charity. The second mountain in the Three Peaks challenge is Scafell Pike: the tallest mountain in England with a summit of 978m. Despite being smaller than Ben Nevis, it is considered to be a harder climb due to its steep incline and sections which require scrambling (using your hands as well as your feet).

The final mountain of the Three Peak Challenge is Snowdon: the highest mountain in Wales, with an elevation of 1,085m. Snowdon is the busiest of the three mountains and has thousands of people reaching the summit each year. Some mountaineers walk; some use the train which carries passengers to the summit. As well as being part of the Three Peak Challenge, Snowdon also hosts an annual competition: a ten-mile endurance run up to the peak of the mountain. The race began in 1976 with only 86 runners, but it now attracts hundreds of runners each year.



The Hafod Eryri



Africa

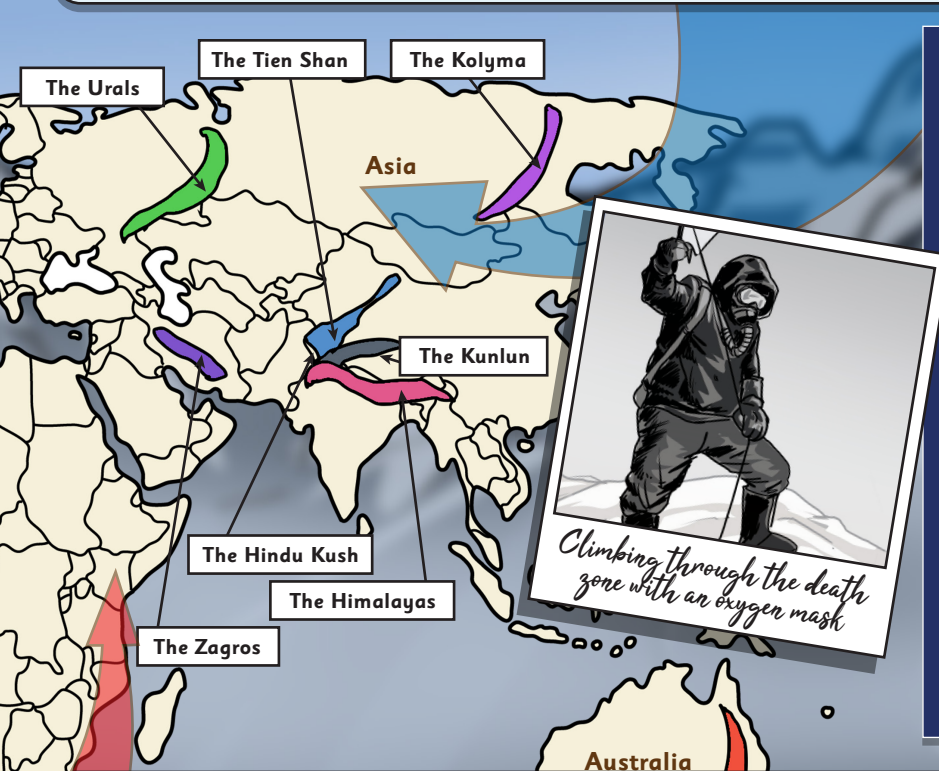
Africa is the world's second largest continent and is home to a wide range of different mountains. The tallest mountain in this fascinating place is Mount Kilimanjaro, located in Tanzania, whose peak reaches 5895m. Kilimanjaro is a dormant volcano, which last erupted over 150,000 years ago, and is formed of three volcanic cones: Shira, Mawenzi and Kibo. Kibo is the largest volcanic cone, measuring over 15 miles wide and is the only one still dormant (meaning it could erupt in the future). Shira and Mawenzi are now extinct.



Mount Kilimanjaro

Asia

Located in Asia, the most famous mountain range in the world is the Himalayas. Remarkably, it stretches across 6 different countries: Nepal, Bhutan, China, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. The range spans 1,500 miles (2,400km) and is the highest mountain range in the world. Within the Himalayan mountain range, there are hundreds of named peaks, including ten of the world's highest. Known as Earth's tallest mountain above sea level, Mount Everest (which sits on the border of Tibet and Nepal) hosts the highest peak in the Himalayas, reaching an astonishing 8850 metres. In Tibet, the mountain is named 'Chomolungma' meaning 'Mother Goddess of the World'.



Mount Everest attracts thousands of visitors each year who are determined to reach its summit. This is a dangerous expedition to undertake due to the many risks involved: altitude sickness, which can cause swelling of the organs; poor and unpredictable weather conditions; invisible crevasses; and accidents with equipment. Part of the climb to Mount Everest's peak is through the death zone: sections of the climb above 7,600m where air is too thin for humans to survive. Tanks of gas are used to overcome these parts of the ascent. Due to these risks and the extreme environments of this mountain, if something were to go wrong, the consequences could be disastrous. Mountaineers attempting this expedition are recommended to have expert training and be at peak physical fitness. Despite the inhospitable environment, the Himalayas are home to indigenous groups, including the Sherpa people, who are less likely to suffer with altitude-related illnesses as they are acclimatised to living with lower oxygen levels. Some Sherpa people have a profession in supporting climbers on their quest to reach Mount Everest's peak.

Each year, many people attempt to climb Kilimanjaro as it is considered to be suitable for even amateur mountaineers. There are seven different routes which climbers can choose from, most of which are not very steep and require little specialist equipment.

Another well-known mountain within Africa is Table Mountain, South Africa. This striking mountain stands at 1086m and is believed to be over 260 million years old. It is famous for its flat top and the 'tablecloth' clouds which often cover the peak.

Table Mountain was voted as one of the seven natural wonders of the world in 2011. Because of this, it welcomes over 4 million visitors per year. It is possible to reach the top of the mountain by foot in under two hours. For a more leisurely trip, visitors can travel in the cable cars which take five minutes to reach the summit. Once at the top, tourists can appreciate the stunning views of Cape Town, as well as explore the abundant wildlife which occupies this mountain.