6 The biggest river

NATURAL WONDERS

Before you read

1. Do you know where the Amazon River is?
2. Why is the Amazon River so famous?
3. What kinds of land and water animals would you expect to see if you visited the Amazon River?

Reading

1 The Amazon River begins in the Andes Mountains in South America. It passes through six countries before it reaches the Atlantic Ocean. It is almost 6,500 kilometres long. The Amazon is the second longest river in the world. The Nile River, in Africa, is longer. But the Amazon has more water in it than any other river. This is why it is called the world's biggest river.

2 There is so much water in the Amazon that when it reaches the sea this water travels far out to sea. The water has a lot of mud in it, so it is brown. Five hundred years ago, Spanish explorers on a ship 300 kilometres from land saw this brown water. They followed it and found the Amazon River!

3 The river is very deep and very wide. In some places the river is so wide that a person on one side cannot see the other side. When the river floods, it is even wider. The river floods every year. Some people who live beside the river build their houses on rafts. When the river rises, their houses rise too.

4 There are millions of fish in the Amazon River. One of these is the piranha with its very sharp teeth. Piranhas hunt in groups. They usually eat other fish, but sometimes they attack large animals or even people. They can eat a cow or a person in just a few minutes!

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Vocabulary

A. Complete each sentence with the correct word or phrase.

passes through mud follow sharp explorers

1. My son played football in the rain last Saturday. When he came home, his clothes were covered in _____.
2. When the first white _____ came to the United States, they thought they were in India. That's why they called the native people 'Indians'.
3. This train goes to London. It _____ Oxford on the way.
4. I couldn't cut my steak because my knife wasn't _____ enough.
5. If you _____ that path, it will take you to the top of the hill.

B. Choose the correct phrase with the same meaning as the blue words in each sentence.

flat wooden boats reached a higher level try to hurt
became so full that water spread over the land around it
try to catch and kill

1. That guard dog looks angry. Be careful! He might attack you.
2. Our cat likes to hunt rats and eat them.
3. Hundreds of people died when the Yangtze River flooded last year.
4. The lake has risen more than 2 metres since it started raining.
5. Some scientists say that the first people to reach Australia travelled there from Indonesia on rafts.

In other words

A. What is the main purpose of the passage? Circle 1, 2 or 3.

1. To compare the Amazon River to the Nile River.
2. To describe how the Amazon River was discovered.
3. To describe the Amazon River.

B. Match each heading to the correct paragraph in the passage.

1. Paragraph _____ Going fishing? Be careful!
2. Paragraph _____ Mud guides explorers to the Amazon.
3. Paragraph _____ The biggest, but not the longest.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

General understanding

Circle T for true or F for false for each of the following statements.

1. The Amazon is the world's longest river. T / F
2. The Amazon carries brown water out to sea. T / F
3. The Amazon never floods. T / F
4. In some places the Amazon is so wide you cannot see the other side. T / F

In detail

Write short answers to the following questions.

1. Why is the Amazon called the world's biggest river?
   _____
2. What is the name of the ocean that the Amazon flows into?
   _____
3. How long is the Amazon? _____
4. How did Spanish explorers find the Amazon 500 years ago?
   _____
5. How many fish are there in the Amazon? _____
6. What do piranhas eat? _____

In focus

Complete the sentences with the correct adjectives.

biggest large sharp deep brown wide longest

1. Piranhas sometimes eat large animals.
2. Piranhas have _____ teeth.
3. The Amazon is a very _____ and very _____ river.
4. Spanish explorers found the Amazon by following the _____ water.
5. The Amazon is not the _____ river in the world, but it is the _____ river in the world.

LIVEWORKSHEETS