

MACMILLAN CULTURAL READERS

ELEMENTARY LEVEL

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Brazil

 MACMILLAN

ELEMENTARY LEVEL

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The Macmillan Readers provide a choice of enjoyable reading materials for learners of English. The series is published at six levels—Starter, Beginner, Elementary, Pre-intermediate, Intermediate, and Upper. The Macmillan Cultural Readers are a factual strand of the series.

Level Control

Information, structure, and vocabulary are controlled to suit the students' ability at each level.

The number of words at each level:

Starter	about 300 basic words
Beginner	about 600 basic words
Elementary	about 1100 basic words
Pre-intermediate	about 1400 basic words
Intermediate	about 1600 basic words
Upper	about 2200 basic words

Vocabulary

Some difficult words and phrases in this book are important for understanding the text. Some of these words are explained in the text, some are shown in the pictures, and others are marked with a number like this: ³. Phrases are marked with ^P. Words with a number are explained in the *Glossary* at the end of the book and phrases are explained on the *Useful Phrases* page.

Answer Keys

Answer Keys for the *Points For Understanding* and *Exercises* sections can be found at www.macmillanenglish.com/readers.

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The Places In The Book



A photograph of Brazil and its neighbors taken from above. The Amazon River can easily be seen.



Welcome To Brazil

Brazil – the country of soccer, samba, Carnival, and ... what? What do people think of when they hear the word “Brazil”? Of course, they know about the 2014 World Cup™, and the 2016 Olympic Games® in Rio de Janeiro. So, for many people, Brazil is the place for soccer and sport.

Many other people only think of the Amazon Rainforest¹ and Amazon River when they think about this South American country.

However, Brazil is much more interesting than this. It is a country that is changing: it is a country with a future. Its economy² is growing. It has modern industries³, and natural resources⁴ like water and oil⁵. Tourism is important in every region⁶.

There are very big cities, like São Paulo, and historic ones, like Recife and Salvador. The country has exciting artists and a rich tradition of music: different styles in different regions, but always Brazilian!

To visit *all* of Brazil would be very difficult. It is a very big country—over 8.5 million square kilometers. It is so big that many Brazilians do not know all of the different parts of their own⁷ country. Brazil is a country that *everyone* can learn something new about.

Size of Brazil: 8,515,000 square kilometers 
Population⁹: 196,665,014 (World Bank 2011)
Capital¹⁰: Brasília
Number of regions: 5
Number of states: 26
Longest river: The Amazon River (between 6,250 and 6,800 kilometers from the Andes to the Atlantic)
Highest mountain: 2,994 meters (Pico da Neblina, in Amazonas)

The Brazilian flag is green, yellow, blue, and white. Green means the forests, yellow means gold, and the blue circle and white stars show the sky at night. There are 27 stars: one for every state⁸, and one for Brasília.



Warm-up Quiz

How much do you know about Brazil? Try these quiz questions, and then read on to check your answers.

- 1** What was the first capital of Brazil?
 - a** Olinda
 - b** Rio de Janeiro
 - c** Salvador
- 2** What is the capital of Brazil today?
 - a** Brasília
 - b** Rio de Janeiro
 - c** São Paulo
- 3** What industry is important now in all parts of Brazil?
 - a** electronics¹¹
 - b** oil
 - c** tourism
- 4** Where is the second biggest ecosystem¹² in Brazil?
 - a** Amazonia
 - b** the Cerrado
 - c** the Pantanal
- 5** What language did the first colonists¹³ speak?
 - a** French
 - b** Portuguese
 - c** Spanish
- 6** Which of these is one of the most popular subjects at university today?
 - a** business management
 - b** English
 - c** technology
- 7** Which Brazilian animal is also a sports star now?
 - a** armadillo
 - b** crocodile
 - c** parrot
- 8** What vegetable is one of the main ingredients in feijoada?
 - a** beans
 - b** onions
 - c** potatoes
- 9** What type of arts festival¹⁴ takes place^p in Paraty every year?
 - a** books
 - b** movies
 - c** music
- 10** Which Formula One driver gave his name to a motorway and a bridge?
 - a** Ayrton Senna
 - b** Emerson Fittipaldi
 - c** Felipe Massa



1 Geography



The Amazon River

Brazil is in South America. It is next to Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, French Guiana, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Over 196 million people live there. They speak Portuguese. Many people can also speak other languages, like Spanish, German, English, Japanese, and indigenous¹⁵ languages.

It is a very big country. It is 8,514,215 square kilometers and covers¹⁶ about half of South America.

Some parts of the country are high. There are many mountains in the east, south, and north. These are called the Brazilian Highlands. They cover 4,500,000 square kilometers of Brazil. The highest mountain is Pico da Neblina. It is 3,014 meters high.

Other parts of Brazil are low. The country has about 8,000 kilometers of Atlantic Ocean coast. It also has many rivers. The most famous are the Amazon, the Tocantins, the Rio Paraná, and the São Francisco.

Facts about the Amazon River



- It is between 6,250 and 6,800 kilometers long, and it is the second-longest river in the world.
- The river goes through Peru and Brazil. Its basin¹⁷ reaches Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Guyana.
- 3,615 kilometers of the Amazon River are in Brazil.
- 3,000 species¹⁸ of fish live in the river. These include¹⁹ piranhas. Piranhas eat meat, and they are dangerous.
- Big boats can go on the river.
- The Amazon Basin is the largest basin in the world.
- 20% of the world's fresh water is in this basin.

This big country has a lot of different ecosystems, too. These include Amazonia, the Cerrado, the Pampas, the Atlantic Forest, the Caatinga, the Pantanal, and the coast. Each ecosystem is different, and it has its own plants, animals, and climate²⁰. North Brazil is very hot all year; the south is hot in the summer and cold in the winter.

Regions

There are five regions in Brazil: North, Northeast, Southeast, South, and Central-West. In these regions there are 26 states.

North

Size: 3,853,327 square kilometers

Population in 2010: 15.8 million

States: Rondônia, Acre, Amazonas, Roraima, Pará, Amapá, Tocantins

Largest city: Manaus

Main industries: metal, energy²¹, electronics, tourism, extractivism²²

Ecosystems: Amazonia, the Cerrado

Northeast

Size: 1,558,196 square kilometers

Population in 2010: 53.5 million

States: Alagoas, Bahia, Ceará, Maranhão, Paraíba, Pernambuco, Piauí, Rio Grande do Norte, Sergipe

Largest city: Salvador

Main industries: tourism, farming (cocoa²³), machinery²⁴, textiles²⁵

Ecosystems: the Atlantic Forest, the Caatinga, the Cerrado



Central-West

Size: 1,612,077 square kilometers

Population in 2010: 13.6 million

States: Goiás, Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul

Largest city: Brasília

Main industries: farming (animals and soybeans²⁶), tourism

Ecosystems: the Pantanal, the Cerrado

Southeast

Size: 924,511 square kilometers

Population in 2010: 80.7 million

States: Espírito Santo, Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo

Largest city: São Paulo

Main industries: machinery, electronics, cars and airplanes, farming (coffee and sugar), tourism, gasoline²⁷, textiles, energy

Ecosystems: the Atlantic Forest, the Cerrado

South

Size: 576,409 square kilometers

Population in 2010: 27.3 million

States: Paraná, Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina

Largest city: Curitiba

Main industries: machinery, cars, textiles, tourism, energy, information technology, farming (fruit)

Ecosystems: the Atlantic Forest, the Pampas



Iguazu Falls

Iguazu Falls



There are 275 waterfalls²⁸ at Iguazu. They are in the South region of Brazil and in Argentina. Thousands of people visit them every year.

- The highest waterfall is 82 meters high.
- 4.5 million liters of water go over the waterfalls every second.
- The waterfalls make electricity.
- They are known as one of the seven modern Wonders²⁹ of Nature.

Ecosystems

Amazonia



Amazonia (the Amazon Rainforest)

Amazonia is also called the Amazon Rainforest. It is the biggest ecosystem in Brazil, and it is the biggest rainforest in the world. Amazonia is five million square kilometers. Sixty percent of the forest is in Brazil. The other 40% is in Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana.

Amazonia has more species of plant and animal than any other rainforest. Ten percent of all animal species live in it. The Amazon River goes through the rainforest, which has thousands of trees, flowers, mammals³⁰, birds, amphibians³¹, reptiles³², insects, and fish. Some of the trees are very tall—over 50 meters—and this makes the rainforest dark. The Amazon region is also very hot and wet all year. The temperature is about 27°C, and it gets about 2.7 meters of rain.

Amazonia is beautiful and colorful. It is also very important. It gives its people food and medicine. It also makes about 20% of the world's oxygen³³. But many trees have been cut down³⁴. More than 20% of the rainforest has gone. This is a problem.





A wolf in the Cerrado

The Cerrado and the Pampas

The Cerrado is the second biggest ecosystem in Brazil. It is about two million square kilometers, and it covers over 20% of Brazil. It has thick woodland, with fewer, lower trees towards the grassland. The Cerrado looks very dry, but it is a rich ecosystem. It has more than 10,000 plant species, 300 animal species, and 935 bird species.

The Pampas, also called the “fields,” are in Southern Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay, and covers about 750,000 square kilometers. The Pampas have grasses that can be from ten

centimeters to 50 centimeters high. The Pampas is home to about 3,000 plant species, 100 mammal species, and 400 bird species. Some animals, like the Great Rhea and Geoffrey's Cat, only live in the Pampas. The Great Rhea is a big bird, and Geoffrey's Cat is a type of wild cat.

But there is too much farming in the Cerrado and the Pampas. In the Cerrado, trees are cut down to make space, and almost 50% of the Cerrado is gone. The Pampas had very good soil for growing things, but the result of too much farming here is “desertification” of the soil; it is becoming like a desert. The Pampas are thought to be one of the most endangered³⁵ places.

The Atlantic Forest

The Atlantic Forest (*Mata Atlântica*) is a very rich ecosystem along the Brazilian coast. It is hot and wet, and reaches into Paraguay and Argentina. It is long and thin. The north is hotter than the south.

It also has a lot of different plants, animals, and insects. There are about 10,000 plant species, and there are more birds in the Atlantic Forest than in Europe.

Like Amazonia, the Atlantic Forest used to be bigger. Ninety-three percent of it is gone. It is only 100,000 square kilometers now.





The Atlantic Forest (*Mata Atlântica*)

The Caatinga



The Caatinga

The Caatinga covers most of the Northeast region. It is also in the north of Minas Gerais, in the Southeast region. The Caatinga can be very dry. Often, there is no water. The plants in this region can live without water. They



lose their leaves. Sometimes, the plants turn white. Indigenous people call it “The White Forest.” After the rain, the Caatinga is green again.

There are lots of reptiles here, like snakes and lizards. It is too dry for most mammals.

The Pantanal



Land and water in the Pantanal

The Pantanal is the biggest swamp³⁶ in the world. It is 230,000 square kilometers, and it is in the Central-West region between the Cerrado and Amazonia. When it rains, water from rivers covers the land. Eighty percent of the Pantanal is covered in water every year between October and April. Few people live there.

Some people think the Pantanal has the best natural environment³⁷ in Brazil. It is beautiful, and tourists go there from all over the world. Because of the water, there are many fish and plants. There are also many species of bird. They are big and small, bright and dark. The birds live in large groups, and they eat the fish.



You can also see mammals in the Pantanal. It is famous for many species, like jaguars, which are big cats. The Pantanal has more jaguars than any other area.

The coast

Brazil has over 2,000 beaches. The sand³⁸ is white, and the ocean is blue. The beaches are very beautiful, and people like to go to them. But there are other types of ecosystems on Brazil's 8,000 kilometer coast. One is mangrove swamps. They grow between rivers and the ocean.

Coral reefs³⁹ are another type of ecosystem. They are in the ocean. They have colorful coral and fish. They can also have mammals, like dolphins and whales. Most coral reefs are in the Northeast region.



A mangrove swamp

