

Spanish-Speaking South America

In this section, you will learn about the history and development of Spanish-Speaking South America.

All questions require at least
THREE sentences on own paper.

PLACES & TERMS

Inca descendants of people who came from Asia and crossed into South America, where they created a great civilization in the Andes Mountains of Peru

Quechua language of the Inca

Mercosur economic common market that began operating in southern South America in 1995

Conquest and the End of Spanish Rule

The Inca built a great civilization in the Andes Mountains of Peru. The **Inca** were descendants of people who came across a land bridge from Siberia. They crossed the *Isthmus* of Panama into South America.

From their capital at Cuzco in Peru, the Inca conquered other tribes. By 1500, the Inca Empire extended 2,500 miles along the west coast of South America. A system of roads linked the empire.

Then, in 1532–1533, Francisco Pizarro and his soldiers invaded and conquered the Inca Empire. Spanish settlers forced the natives to work in mines and on farms and ranches. Many settlers abused the natives or worked them to death. The Inca were forced to move from their villages to large plantations. This broke down families and communities.

Spanish rule in the region lasted for almost 300 years. The **Quechua** language of the Inca was largely replaced by Spanish. The Inca religion was replaced by Catholicism. However, millions of native peoples still speak Quechua.

The people of South America sought independence from Spain in the early 1800s. Two great leaders of the region's independence movement were Simón Bolívar and José de San Martín.

Oligarchy (government by the few) and military rule have been common in many South American countries.

1. Which two leaders helped win the region's independence?

Answer in at least **THREE SENTENCES** on own paper.

A Cultural Mosaic

South America is one of the most culturally complex regions in the world. Societies with different cultures live near each other but do not mix.

Spanish-Speaking South America has a strong literary heritage. Among the most famous of this region's writers is Gabriel García Márquez of Colombia. He won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1982.

Popular music and folk music are important traditions. Street musicians can be heard everywhere. Classical music is also important. Many cities have symphony orchestras.

Beautiful craftwork and handmade items can be found throughout Latin America. Pottery, textiles, glasswork, and metalwork combine beauty and usefulness.

2. Who is Gabriel García Márquez? _

Answer in at least THREE SENTENCES on own paper.

Economics: Resources and Trade

Many people in Latin America are poor. However, economic development hopes to improve people's lives.

Different resources, landforms, climate, and vegetation enable the region to create a variety of products. Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana grow crops for export. Colombia and Venezuela have huge oil reserves. Peru has an important fishing industry.

Ecuador exports shrimp. Bolivia mines tin, zinc, and copper. Argentina produces grain and livestock. Uruguay has major farming and grazing areas. Paraguay exports soybeans, cotton, and animal hides.

Chile is South America's greatest success story. It trades products worldwide. The export of fruit and vegetables to North America is an important part of the economy. But copper remains Chile's largest export.

3. Which countries have huge oil reserves?

Answer in at least THREE SENTENCES on own paper.

Education and the Future

Literacy rates in Spanish-speaking South America are higher than they are elsewhere in Latin America. In Chile, the adult literacy rate is about 95 percent. For Chileans between the ages of 15 and 19, it is close to 98 percent. In Argentina and Uruguay, literacy rates are higher than 90 percent. Literacy rates for women are about the same as for men. Most countries support colleges, universities, and technical schools.

In Chile, public education is free. All children between the ages of 6 and 13 must attend school. Higher education has suffered because of political unrest. Salvador Allende's government was overthrown by General Augusto Pinochet in 1973. The military introduced reforms that *undermined* higher education. Since Pinochet's departure from power in 1990, universities have regained some independence and standards.

4. What are the literacy rates in Chile?

Answer in at least THREE SENTENCES on own paper.