



read

THE LIVING WORLD

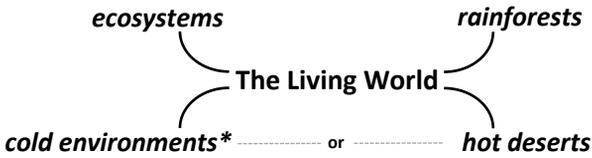
Alaska, USA



quiz



The Big Picture



Location



About

Alaska is the most northern state in the USA, covering 2million km². The southern half experiences relatively mild conditions, whereas a tundra environment overlaying permafrost is found to the north. Alaska is one of the most sparsely populated places on Earth. Nearly half its 750,000 residents live in the city of Anchorage.



Opportunities

 **Mineral resources** – Alaska has abundant mineral resources, including coal, copper, silver, gold and zinc. Twenty per cent of Alaska’s mineral wealth lies in gold.

 **Energy** – There are vast reserves of oil and gas in the north of Alaska. One-third of the state’s income comes from the industry, which employs over 100,000 people.



Tourism – Alaska’s amazing environments, with mountains and glaciers, attract over 2 million tourists every year. Cruises are popular, with 60% of summer tourists arriving this way.



Fishing – The fishing industry employs eighty thousand people in Alaska. Alaska’s 3,000 rivers, three million lakes and 10,686 kilometres of coastline are rich in fish.



Challenges

 **Buildings and infrastructure** – Permafrost in Alaska creates challenges for building and constructing infrastructure. Roads are built on gravel beds so permafrost not affected.

 **Inaccessibility** – Alaska is very remote, relying on planes and ships for access. In addition, some roads depend on crossing frozen rivers in the winter.



Temperature – Winter temperatures can drop below -30°C in the north of Alaska. This, along with limited sunlight in the winter, makes working outside very challenging. In addition, in the winter the sea freezes and roads become very dangerous.



Key Terms



Ecotourism – Travel that conserves the environment and benefits locals.



Inaccessibility – Very difficult to travel or impossible to travel to or reach.



Infrastructure – Basic equipment and structures for a location to function.



Non-renewable energy – Energy from sources that will run out e.g. oil.



Permafrost – Land that is permanently frozen.



Sparsely populated – Few people live in an area.