## Contents

How to Use This Book  *  4  
Planet Earth in Space  *  6  
   Time Zones  *  8  
   Inside the Earth  *  10  
Climate and Weather  *  12  
The World’s Oceans and Seas  *  14  

16  *  The World’s Population  
18  *  Mapping the World  
20  *  A Map for Every Occasion  
22  *  A Physical Perspective  
24  *  A Political Perspective  

## Around the World

### North America
- Canada  *  30  
- Northern USA  *  34  
- Southern USA  *  38  
- Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean  *  42  

### South America
- Northern South America  *  50  
- Southern South America  *  54  

### Europe
- 58  *  Europe  
   Northern Europe  *  62  
   Northwest Europe  *  66  
   Southwest Europe  *  70  
   Southeast Europe  *  74  
   Central Europe  *  78  
   Eastern Europe  *  82  

AROUND THE WORLD (CONTINUED)

ASIA  *  86
- Russia and its neighbours  *  90
- Central Asia  *  94
- East Asia  *  98
- Southern Asia  *  102
- Southeast Asia  *  106
- Southwest Asia  *  110

AFRICA  *  114
- Northern Africa  *  118
- Eastern Africa  *  122
- Central and West Africa  *  126
- Southern Africa  *  130

OCEANIA  *  134
- Australia and Papua New Guinea  *  138
- New Zealand and the Pacific Islands  *  142

ANTARCTICA  *  146

QUIZ & INDEX

World quiz  *  150
Index map  *  156

Index  *  158
Acknowledgements  *  160
How to Use This Book

The Amazing World Atlas makes it easy to find the information you want.

These two pages will show you how it all works. Main entries begin with one of the seven continents: North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania and Antarctica, in that order. Following each continental entry are pages devoted to regions and countries within that continent.

If you want to know about a specific region or nation, you can look it up in the index.

CONTINENT HEADING
Each continent has four pages dedicated to it. The first two pages give you an overview of the continent, and general information, such as its location, climate and people.

MAPS
Illustrated maps show the main geographical features of the continent, such as mountains, rivers and valleys, and some of the most interesting animals, buildings and other things to be found there.

LOCATOR MAP
A small illustrated map shows you where in the world each continent is located.

COUNTRY LABELS
On each map are labels for the countries or nations included in the continent.

NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES
On some maps neighbouring countries are also labelled.

CIRCLED NUMBERS
The numbers refer to the ‘Map Key’ box. Look up the number attached to the image and the boxed text will tell you what it is.

AMAZING... HEADING
The third and fourth pages give you a deeper insight into what the continent is like.

PHOTOGRAPHS
There are lots of photographs in the Atlas, showing you what real life is like in the places you are reading about. On this page you can see some local wildlife, and physical features of the landscape.

SUPER STATS
This text gives you some key facts about the continent, such as the highest mountain, most populated place or highest temperatures.

FAMOUS... HEADING
This caption tells you about some of the famous sons and daughters of each continent.
Planet Earth in Space

Our planet, Earth, is one of eight that orbit the Sun. It is the only one we know of that can support life, though the quest continues to find others.

The Sun is one of many stars in our galaxy, but it’s the only one we can see during the day, due to its size and the heat it exudes. At its centre the Sun’s temperature is about 15,000,000°C (27,000,000°F). And it measures over 1,000,000 km (620,000 mi) across its diameter – it’s so big that a million Earths could fit inside it!

The surface of Earth is very young compared with that of some of the other planets. This is because it has changed a lot since it was first formed. Movement below the surface, such as earthquakes and erosion by water, reshapes it over time. More than two-thirds of Earth is covered in water. Ours is the only planet on which liquid water can exist, and water is essential for life.

The oceans also help keep the temperature stable, another factor that is important for life. They are aided in this by the carbon dioxide in our atmosphere, which traps warm air. This is known as the ‘greenhouse effect’.

The light of the Moon is really light from the Sun, which reflects off the Moon’s surface. As the Moon orbits Earth, we on Earth see this reflected light at varying angles. That’s why the shape of the Moon appears to us to change. It takes about 29 days for the Moon to orbit Earth, cycling through all the phases and arriving at the beginning again.

Our Unknown World

Up until the twentieth century we had no complete maps of the planet. Then we began to be able to take pictures of Earth from space. This allowed us to fill the gaps in our knowledge of the world. Pictures from space also help us predict the weather, and are especially useful in showing where hurricanes and other storms are going. Earth seen from space is a beautiful sight. It’s mostly blue because of all the water on its surface, and it’s often known as ‘the blue planet’.

Neptune

Neptune is the eighth planet from the Sun, and the fourth largest. It’s a gas planet, with a rocky core. Its rings are dark, but we don’t yet know what they’re made of. Neptune has the fastest winds in the solar system, sometimes reaching up to 2000 km (1242 mi) per hour.

Uranus

Uranus is the seventh planet from the Sun, and the third largest. It is a gas planet with a solid metal core. Its blue colour is caused by methane gas clouds, which block out red light. Uranus’ rings are dark and made of large objects, up to 10 metres (33 ft) across.