



# Brazil - Agriculture

# Task 9

A: Using the map and the information provided, answer the questions.

B: Research the key terms.

C: Read the information on plantations and answer the questions.

D: The Amazon region; read the information and answer the questions.

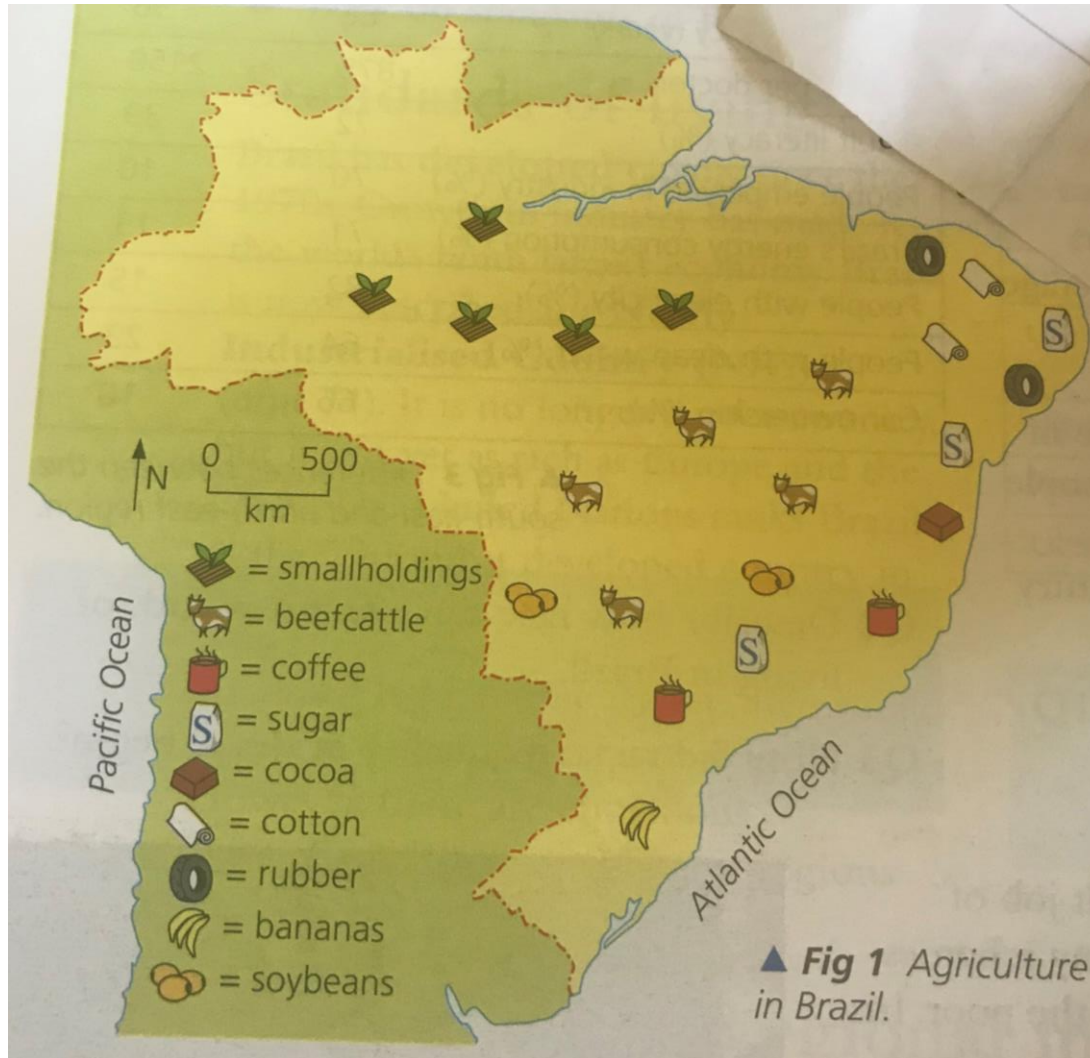
E: Complete a research project on the Kayapo tribe.

F: Read and make notes on shifting cultivation

G: Put the labels on the correct place on your diagram.

H: Shifting cultivation; answer the questions.

**A** Agriculture is an important part of Brazil's economy. The range of soils and climatic conditions mean that many different types of crops can be grown. Brazil grows crops ranging from wheat to bananas. Pastoral farming is also important. Around 160 million cattle are reared for beef. Much of Brazil's farm produce is exported to other countries. These exports earn a third of Brazil's income.



Using the map and the information;

1. What are Brazil's most important crops?
2. How much of Brazil's income is earned from exports?
3. Why do you think crops such as coffee tend to be located in the north-east and south of the country?

B

# Key terms



- **Hectare –**
- **Nutrient –**
- **Pastoral –**
- **Plantation -**

# C

## Plantations

The largest farms in Brazil's are called 'plantations'. Plantations often grow only one crop, usually for export. The most important crops are sugar cane, coffee and soybeans. Plantations can be extremely large. Farms of over 500,000 hectares are not unusual. This is 300 times larger than average UK farms.

Plantations are having to change in order to compete with farms in other countries. They are increasing the range of crops they grow. Plantations are also becoming more mechanised. More profit can be made by using machines rather than human labour.

1. In what ways are plantations different to farms in the UK?
2. What do you think the result has been to workers with plantations becoming more mechanised?

# D

## Amazon Region

The number of small farms is increasing in the Amazon region. Over 1200km of roads have been built into the Amazon rainforest. This has opened up the area to settlers. The government gives free land grants, of up to 100 hectares, to settlers wanting their own farms. Before they can begin growing crops, settlers first have to clear the area of trees and undergrowth.

The government has allowed farming in the Amazon region to reduce pressure on cities in the south-east. Every year thousands of landless farmers migrate to cities such as Rio, in search of work. The offer of free land has persuaded many people to migrate to the Amazon region instead.

Although some small farms are successful, a large number have failed. The forest appears to be fertile, but in fact the soil is quite poor. After the forest has been cleared, the soil is left exposed to the rain. The rain washes away nutrients in the soil, and even the soil itself. After a few years the farmer is no longer able to grow crops.

1. Why is the number of small farms increasing in the Amazon region?
2. What problems are faced by farmers in the Amazon?

# People in the Amazon Rainforest

In the northwest of Brazil is the Amazon rainforest. This is the least populated region of the country and is the home of many different Amerindian tribes. The Kayapo are one of these tribes.



E



## Research Project

Create a **fact file** on the Kayapo. You need to include;

- Where they live? Include a map of the region.
- A photo and description of a traditional Kayapo village.
- The traditions they have such as the clothes they wear, how they stretch their lower lip, the meaning of the face and body paint they wear.
- Their way of life. How do they collect food?



F

## What is slash and burn, or shifting cultivation?

- A small area of land is cleared with axes.
- Wood mainly for fuel and building purposes.
- The rest is burnt along with the roots of some of the trees.
- The ash from is then ploughed back into the soil to provide nutrients for crops to grow.
- After 3 or 4 years the soil loses its fertility.
- As a result the tribe 'shift' or move on and start the process again.

# F

## Shifting Cultivation

As well as hunting and gathering food, the Kayapo make their own gardens in small forest clearings. In these they grow fruit trees and crops including manioc, maize, sweet potatoes, pineapples, peppers and beans. After a while, however, the heavy rains wash away the nutrients in the soil and the crops no longer grow so well. The Kayapo then move away and make a new forest garden. This type of farming is called shifting cultivation.



G

Put the labels in the correct place on your diagram (next slide)

The clearing is abandoned and farmers move on.

A clearance is made by cutting down trees and burning the vegetation. This is called slash and burn.

Crops are planted and grow well in the warm humid conditions

Within 4 or 5 years the soil becomes exhausted and the harvest gets poorer and poorer

The clearing gradually grows over and the natural forest returns

# Shifting Cultivation



# H

# Questions



RESEARCH

1. Why is clearing the forest called slash and burn?
2. Why is this method of farming called shifting cultivation?
3. How do the Kayapo people reduce waste in the forest? Give two examples.
4. How do the Kayapo people care for the forest. Give two examples.