

# South America: Milestones Through Time

World Geography · Practice Test · 18 Questions

---

**1. Which ancient civilization, known for its vast empire and road system, flourished in the Andes Mountains before European arrival?**

- A) Maya
- B) Aztec
- C) Inca
- D) Olmec

**2. In what year did Christopher Columbus make his first voyage, marking the beginning of significant European exploration in the Americas, including regions that would become South America?**

- A) 1492
- B) 1500
- C) 1488
- D) 1519

**3. Which explorer is credited with the first circumnavigation of the Earth, a voyage that passed through South American waters and the Strait of Magellan?**

- A) Christopher Columbus
- B) Ferdinand Magellan
- C) Vasco da Gama
- D) Amerigo Vespucci

**4. The Treaty of Tordesillas, signed in 1494, divided newly discovered lands outside Europe between which two European powers?**

- A) France and England
- B) Portugal and Spain
- C) Italy and Greece
- D) Netherlands and Portugal

**5. Which South American country was the first to declare its independence from Spain, in 1810?**

- A) Brazil
- B) Argentina
- C) Colombia
- D) Peru

**6. Who was a key military and political leader who played a crucial role in the independence of several South American countries, including Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia?**

- A) José de San Martín
- B) Bernardo O'Higgins
- C) Simón Bolívar
- D) Miguel Hidalgo

**7. In the mid-19th century, the California Gold Rush spurred interest in precious metals. When did the initial major gold rushes occur in South America, such as in the Andes?**

- A) Early 1800s
- B) Late 1700s
- C) Mid-1800s
- D) Early 1900s

**8. What significant engineering feat, connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, was completed in 1914 and greatly impacted global trade routes, though primarily associated with Central America?**

- A) Panama Canal
- B) Suez Canal
- C) Corinth Canal
- D) Kiel Canal

**9. Which event in the early 20th century led to significant geopolitical shifts and the establishment of new borders in South America?**

- A) The discovery of oil
- B) World War I
- C) The Great Depression
- D) The construction of the Amazon Highway

**10. The exploitation of guano for fertilizer was a major economic activity for some South American nations in the 19th century. Which coastal country was particularly famous for its guano deposits?**

- A) Chile
- B) Peru
- C) Ecuador
- D) Uruguay

**11. When did Brazil officially become a republic, ending its monarchy?**

- A) 1822
- B) 1889
- C) 1930
- D) 1964

**12. The Atacama Desert, known for being one of the driest places on Earth, has been a site of scientific observation for centuries. What key resource was heavily mined there, leading to conflicts in the late 19th century?**

- A) Diamonds
- B) Copper
- C) Saltpeter (Nitrate)
- D) Iron

**13. What major international sporting event took place in South America for the first time in 1950, bringing global attention to the continent's sporting prowess?**

- A) Summer Olympics
- B) FIFA World Cup
- C) Rugby World Cup
- D) Tour de France

**14. The mid-20th century saw significant industrialization across South America. Which country experienced a period of rapid industrial growth and urbanization, often referred to as its 'economic miracle'?**

- A) Argentina
- B) Colombia
- C) Brazil
- D) Chile

**15. The construction of the Trans-Amazonian Highway began in the early 1970s. What was a primary goal of this massive infrastructure project?**

- A) To connect major coastal cities
- B) To facilitate tourism to remote areas
- C) To open up the Amazon basin for settlement and development
- D) To create a new trade route to Asia

**16. Which South American nation achieved independence in the 20th century, breaking away from colonial rule?**

- A) There were no new independent nations in South America in the 20th century.
- B) Guyana
- C) Suriname
- D) Both B and C

**17. The late 20th and early 21st centuries have seen a rise in regional integration blocs in South America. Which of these is a prominent example?**

- A) NAFTA
- B) ASEAN
- C) Mercosur
- D) European Union

**18. In the 21st century, South America has been a significant producer of natural resources. Which of these resources has seen increasing global demand and has been a major export for several South American countries?**

- A) Coal
- B) Natural Gas
- C) Lithium
- D) Uranium