Geography

1 Look at the photos. What do they tell you about Canada?

2 Read the text. Why do you think the south of Canada has more people than the north?

CANADA FACT FILE
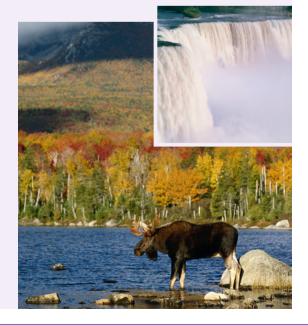

FACTS AND FIGURES

- It's the world's second largest country by total area (9.98 million km²) after Russia.
- It has the world's longest land border (8,891 km) with the USA, and has the world's longest coastline (202,080 km).
- It has the largest number of freshwater lakes in the world: approximately 31,700.
- Niagara Falls, which borders Canada and the USA, is the waterfall with the biggest flow of water in the world.
- Canada's highest mountain, Mount Logan, is in Yukon Territory in the north-west.
- 80% of Canadians live in urban areas and most of the population live near the southern border, within 150 km of the USA.
- Toronto is the biggest city with 5.58 million people, but the capital city is Ottawa.
- The total population of the country is 35 million.
- Canada experiences extreme weather conditions with very cold winters that can sometimes be lower than -40°. Some southern regions have hot summer temperatures that are often higher than 35°.
- A lot of the non-coastal areas have snow cover for almost six months of the year and some parts of the north have snow all year.
- The majority of the country is rural, with forests, mountains, lakes and tundra regions.
- Some of Canada's native animals include the moose, grey wolf, Arctic fox, bald eagle and several species of bears, including the brown bear and polar bear.
- Montreal, Canada's second city, is on an island called Île de Montréal in French. The island is surrounded by the St Lawrence and Ottawa rivers. It has more historic sites than anywhere else in the country.
- It's officially a bilingual country and many people speak English and French.

I live in Whitehorse in the north-west of Canada. It's a small city of 23,000 inhabitants and sometimes I feel bored here because it's very isolated. When I'm older, I'm going to live in one of the big cities in the south.

I feel happy and relaxed living in Canada. Many social problems, like unemployment, poverty and crime, aren't a big problem here compared to some other countries.

I'm from Montreal in the south-east of the country. Here, like much of Canada, we have very cold, snowy, icy winters. You get used to it though and at least the summers are usually warm.

3 Read the text again. Then complete the summary with the words in the box.

> bear • bilingual • capital • climate • higher
> mountains • rural • urban

Canada is one of the world's largest countries. It is very **(1)** .... with forests, lakes, **(2)** .... and tundra regions forming a large part of the land. The majority of the population inhabit the **(3)** .... areas in the south. The **(4)** .... city is Ottawa, but it isn't the largest, which is Toronto. Canada is famous for its beautiful scenery, and Mount Logan in Yukon Territory is **(5)** .... than all the other mountains in the country. Canada is also a country with an extreme **(6)** ....; it's very cold in winter and it can get very hot in summer in southern regions. Canada is known for its wildlife, and animals like the moose, brown **(7)** .... and grey wolf are common. It is also a **(8)** .... country, and in many areas people speak both English and French.

4 Read the sentences and circle the correct answers.

1 Canada is larger in area than this country.
Russia / the USA

2 There are more than 30,000 of them in Canada.
lakes / islands

3 It's Canada's second largest city.
Montreal / Whitehorse

4 It's a city, as well as a river.
Toronto / Ottawa

5 It's a geographical feature in the north-west.
Niagara Falls / Mount Logan

6 It's the length of Canada's coastline.
nearly 9,000 km / more than 200,000 km

7 People can sometimes feel this way in the north of Canada.
isolated / urban

8 Away from the coast, parts of Canada can experience this kind of weather for much of the year.
stormy / snowy

5 Discuss the questions in pairs.

1 Canada is a land of extremes. How does the geography of the country create differences in climate and landscape?

2 What are the geographical features of your country? Describe the differences in regions. Are the differences caused by the climate, the landscape or other factors? Does this affect where people live?

3 Are you happy where you live? Would you prefer to live in another part of your country? Why/Why not?

?? DID YOU KNOW?

- Queen Elizabeth II is the Queen of the UK and also the Queen of Canada.
- Montreal is the second largest French-speaking city in the world, after Paris in France.
- A.A. Milne wrote his famous *Winnie the Pooh* stories after his son saw a real bear at London Zoo. The bear came from Winnipeg in Canada.
- 60% of the world's population of polar bears live in Canada.

PROJECT

1 In groups, prepare a fact file on your country or a country of your choice. Include information about the geographical features, population, neighbouring countries, cities, languages, native animals, climate and any other relevant information.

2 Prepare a class presentation on your fact file. Compare your fact file with groups who have chosen to research a different country.

@ VOCABULARY FOCUS

approximately [adv]: *used to say that an amount is not exact*

bilingual [adj]: *able to speak two languages*

border [n]: *the official line separating two countries*

coastline [n]: *the land that is next to the sea*

flow [n]: *continuous movement of liquid in one direction*

get used to [v]: *become familiar with*

inhabitant [n]: *someone who lives in a particular place*

isolated [adj]: *a long way from other places or feeling alone*

moose [n]: *a type of large animal, similar to a deer, in North America*

native [adj]: *relating to the first people or animals to live in a particular area*

rural [adj]: *relating to the countryside*

scenery [n]: *natural things such as trees, lakes, mountains that are seen around us*

species [n]: *a plant or animal group with similar general features*

tundra [n]: *large area of flat, icy land without trees in very cold northern areas*

urban [adj]: *relating to towns or cities*