

Teacher Notes

Chapter 8, Lesson 3: Life in Brazil

- With 200 million people, a mix of several cultures, Brazil is the world's fifth largest country in population. There are European (mostly Portuguese, German, and Italian), African, and indigenous American people. Most Brazilians are of mixed-race ancestry. São Paulo is especially diverse; it includes a large Japanese community. About 80 percent of Brazil's people live within 200 miles (322 km) of the Atlantic coast.
- For most of Brazil's history, the majority of Brazilians lived in rural areas, on plantations, on farms, or in small towns. In the 1950s, people began migrating to cities to take manufacturing jobs. By 1970, more Brazilians lived in urban areas than in rural areas. Today, 89 percent of Brazilians live in and around cities. São Paulo, Brazil's industrial center, is one of the world's largest cities.
- Cities are home to middle-class and wealthy residents, as well as extremely poor people who live in shantytowns called favelas. São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro have the most favelas. Some favelas lack sewers or running water. Disease and crime are widespread there.
- Brazil's mix of people gives it a unique culture. One cultural event is the yearly Carnival. Soccer ("football") is the national sport, and Brazil's national team is one of the best in the world.
- Brazil has the world's seventh-largest economy, and ranks among its leaders in mining, manufacturing, and agriculture. Brazil is a member of several organizations designed to promote free trade, including MERCOSUR and the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR).
- Government programs to develop Brazil's interior may threaten the future of the Amazon rain forest. Logging has long been a problem. The Transamazonica Highway and other new roads have increased destruction of the forest by making it easier to get into the rain forest and to get logs out. The soil that remains is not good for farming, and poor Brazilians who are offered free land to farm often fail.