

COUNTRY MINI LESSON



Netherlands



Welcome to The Netherlands!

Before we dive in, meet Archie and his friends, the Intrepid Explorers. They are five adventurous Aussie kids who travel the world on missions to recover stolen artefacts or protect endangered species. This time, they are headed to the Netherlands.

Before landing, they have decided to read up on the country's geography, history, and wildlife, and we hope you have fun learning with them!

And the adventure does not stop there. On our website, www.thelittleexplorersjournal.com, under the resources page, we've also shared fun resources from their journey, including landmarks, more wildlife facts, quizzes, games, and activities to keep your kids learning and having fun every step of the way.



The Netherlands Mini Lesson

The Netherlands is a small, flat country in Western Europe, bordered by Germany, Belgium, and the North Sea. Much of the land is actually below sea level, so the Dutch built giant walls called dykes and used windmills to pump water away and stop flooding. The country is covered by rivers, canals, and waterways, and the beautiful capital city of Amsterdam is famous for its many canals running through it.



About the Netherlands



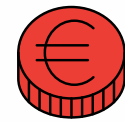
Population
17.8 million



Capital
Amsterdam



Official Language
Dutch



Currency
Euro

North Sea



Belgium

Germany

1

2

1. Germany
2. Belgium



Geography of the Netherlands

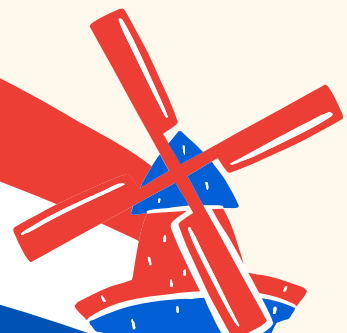
The Netherlands is located in Western Europe, bordered by Germany, Belgium and the North Sea. Much of the country lies below sea level and is protected by a sophisticated system of dikes and canals. The capital is Amsterdam, while The Hague is the seat of government. The population is around 18.1 million.

The Netherlands also has several important rivers flowing through it, including the Rhine and the Meuse, which are still widely used for transport and trade today. Despite being a small country, it is one of the most densely populated in the world, and its city of Rotterdam is home to one of the largest ports in Europe.



History of the Netherlands

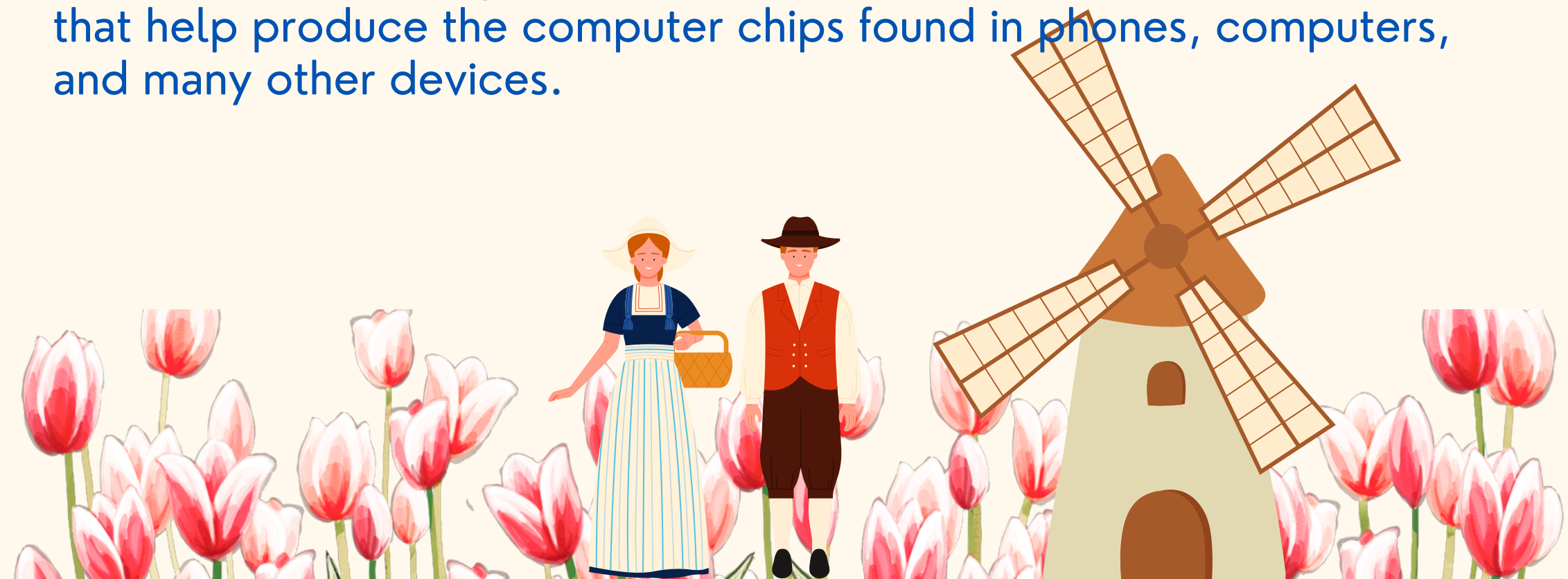
The Netherlands has a rich history as a maritime and trading nation. In the 17th century, known as the Dutch Golden Age, it became one of the most powerful and wealthy countries in the world, largely thanks to the Dutch East India Company, which was one of the first and most successful trading companies in history, establishing trade routes across Asia, Africa and the Americas. Dutch merchants and explorers sailed to every corner of the globe, bringing back spices, silk and other valuable goods that made the country enormously prosperous. This period of wealth and confidence also made the Netherlands a world leader in the arts and sciences, producing celebrated painters such as Rembrandt and Vermeer, as well as pioneering scientists and philosophers. The country gained its independence from Spanish rule on 26 July 1581, after a long struggle known as the Eighty Years' War, and went on to build one of the greatest empires of its time.



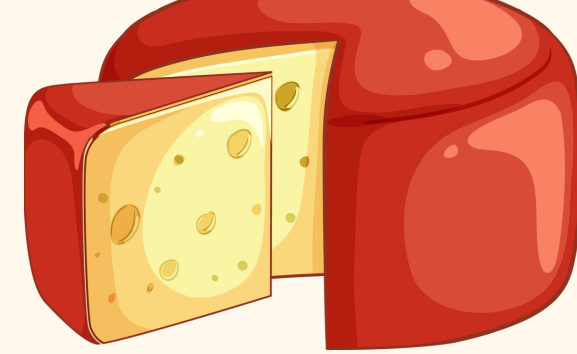


The Dutch Economy

The Netherlands has a strong and diverse economy. It is one of the world's leading exporters of flowers, dairy products and vegetables. Millions of colourful tulips are grown there each year and shipped to countries across the globe. The Dutch are also experts in technology, finance and international trade. The Port of Rotterdam, one of the largest ports in the world, acts like a giant gateway to Europe, helping transport goods between continents. Despite being a relatively small country, the Netherlands is one of the world's most important trading nations. Some of the Netherlands' biggest companies include Universal Music Group, ING Bank, Philips, and ASML. Philips is known for its electronics and healthcare technology, while ASML makes the advanced machines that help produce the computer chips found in phones, computers, and many other devices.



Tourism in the Netherlands



Tourists flock to the Netherlands for its charming cities, canals, windmills and museums. Amsterdam is famous for its scenic canal boat tours, the Van Gogh Museum and the Anne Frank House, which tells the story of Anne Frank, a young Jewish girl who hid with her family during the Second World War and wrote a diary that later became one of the world's most widely read books. Beyond the capital, visitors can explore the traditional cheese markets of Gouda, where one of the country's most famous cheeses is still celebrated in historical style. Nature lovers often travel to Texel, the largest Dutch island, known for its beaches, dunes, seals and sheep. Across the country, the windmills of Kinderdijk and Zaanse Schans show how the Dutch have managed water and land for centuries, while the Keukenhof Gardens transform each spring into a sea of colour with millions of blooming tulips.



The Netherlands Landmarks

Anne Frank



The Rijksmuseum is the national museum of the Netherlands and holds some of the country's most important artworks. It features famous paintings from the Dutch Golden Age by artists like Rembrandt van Rijn, known for dramatic light and shadow, and Johannes Vermeer, who painted quiet, detailed scenes of everyday life.



During World War II, Anne Frank, a Jewish girl, and her family were forced into hiding to escape persecution by the Nazi regime. They hid in a secret annex behind her father's business in Amsterdam. Several brave friends and colleagues risked their own safety by bringing the family food, news, and supplies. While in hiding, Anne wrote a diary about her daily life, fears, and dreams for the future. After more than two years in hiding, someone reported the annex to the authorities, and Anne and the others were discovered and arrested. Anne later died in a concentration camp, but her diary survived and became one of the world's most famous books. Today, visitors can explore the house where Anne lived in hiding and learn about her story, as well as the experiences of many Jewish families during the war.



Natural Life in the Netherlands

Despite being a highly developed country, the Netherlands places a strong focus on protecting its natural environment. In fact, 15% of the Netherlands' land area is under formal nature protection. Large areas of wetlands, dunes and coastal landscapes are carefully preserved to support wildlife and protect against rising sea levels. The country is an important stop for migratory birds, and it is common to see species such as storks, herons and geese resting in its marshes and nature reserves. In some areas, you may even spot bright green rose-ringed parakeets, a non-native species that originally escaped from captivity but has successfully adapted to urban life. Inland, national parks like Hoge Veluwe National Park offer a very different landscape, with vast forests, open heathlands and sand dunes. Here, wildlife such as red deer, wild boar and foxes roam freely, making it one of the best places in the country to experience nature up close.



Festivals and Traditions in the Netherlands

The Dutch celebrate King's Day with bright orange outfits, street parties, flea markets, and boat parades along canals, as the whole country turns into one big celebration for the King's birthday. In December, Sinterklaas (a traditional gift-giving figure similar to Santa Claus) arrives by boat from Spain in mid-November and brings gifts to children on 5 December, often with small surprises, poems, and shoes left out overnight. In the southern regions, Carnival is widely celebrated before Lent, with colourful costumes, music, parades, and towns temporarily adopting humorous names and traditions as people fill the streets for several days of festivities.

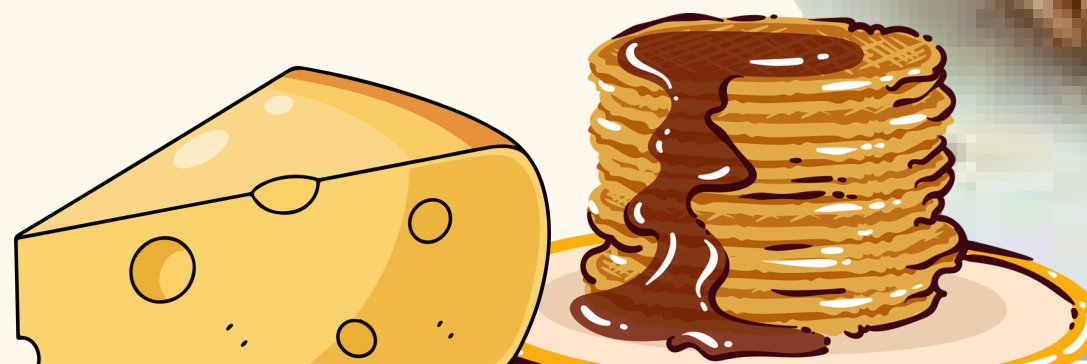
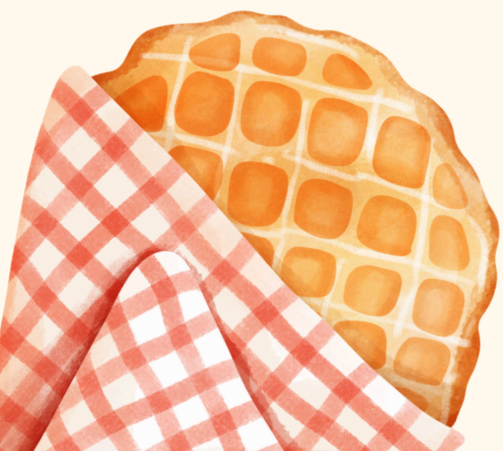


Dutch Culture and Cuisine

Dutch culture values freedom, equality and innovation, with a long history of trade and new ideas shaping everyday life. The country is famous for its artists such as Rembrandt van Rijn, Johannes Vermeer and Vincent van Gogh, whose work is displayed in museums around the world. Food is also an important part of Dutch culture and often reflects simple, hearty ingredients designed for sharing and everyday life. Traditional foods include stropwafels (thin waffles filled with caramel syrup), bitterballen (crispy deep-fried meat snacks often served in cafes), haring (raw herring fish traditionally eaten with onions), and famous cheeses such as Gouda and Edam, which have been produced in the Netherlands for centuries and are still exported worldwide today.



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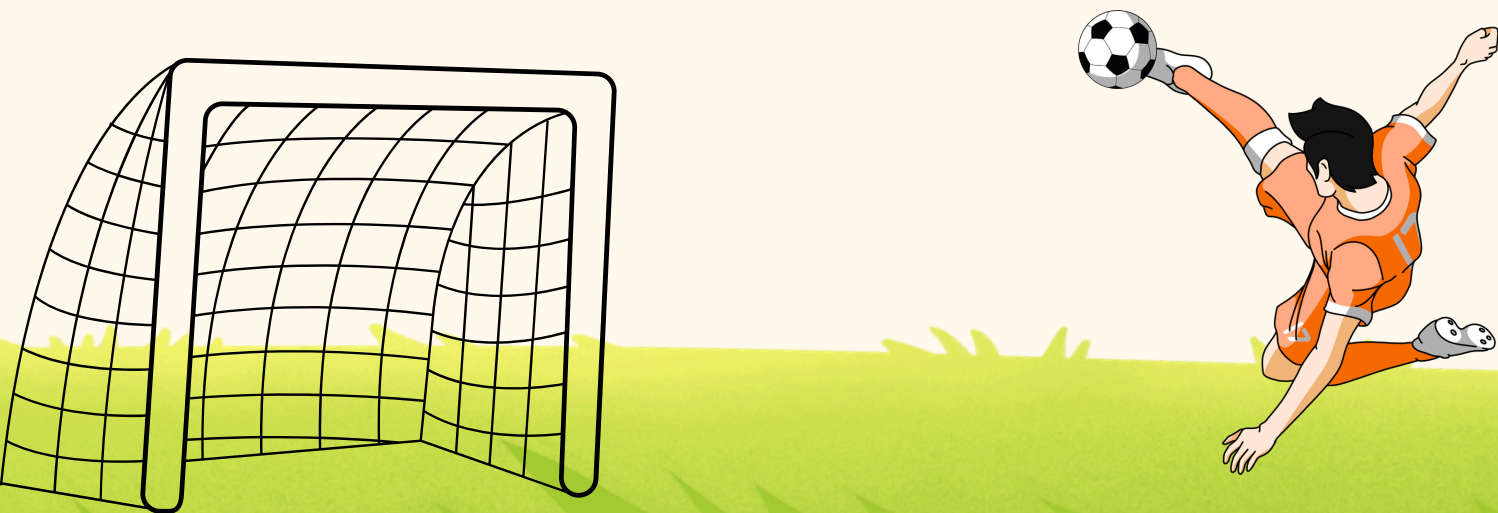
Curiosities about the Netherlands

There are more bicycles than people in the Netherlands. It's one of the most populous countries in the world. The Dutch are known for their direct communication style. Amsterdam has over 100 kilometres of canals. The Dutch royal family is very popular and active in national life. Dutch men are the tallest on the planet, averaging about 183 cm (6 ft) in height. Amsterdam has over 1,200 bridges!



Sports in the Netherlands

The Dutch are passionate about cycling, football and speed skating, which are deeply woven into everyday life and national identity. Cycling is not just a sport but a main way of getting around, with world-class infrastructure and Dutch cyclists regularly competing and winning in international races such as the Tour de France. Football is the country's most popular sport, with famous clubs like Ajax and a strong national team that has produced legendary players and competed in major tournaments like the World Cup. Speed skating is especially important in winter, and whenever canals and lakes freeze, skating becomes a traditional activity



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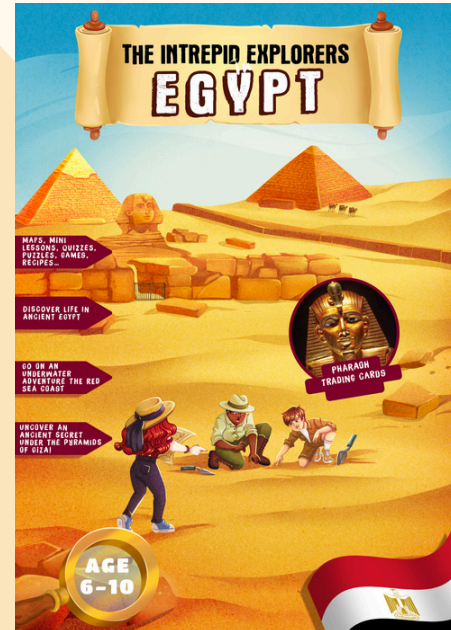
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AUSTRALIA!

FINLAND!

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Thank You

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