



Embratur

## 5b. Living in Manaus with Carlos

Come and meet two children who live in different parts of the country. See how their lives are similar and different to yours.

### Living In Manaus

With Carlos Melo de Souza, aged 9

This locality study is based around the life of Carlos and his family who live in Brazil. In this study we are taking part in the life of the Melo de Souza family. They live in a booming city called Manaus, which is situated in the developing Northern region of Brazil. The city is surrounded by the Amazon rainforest.

### 1. Meet the Melo de Souza Family

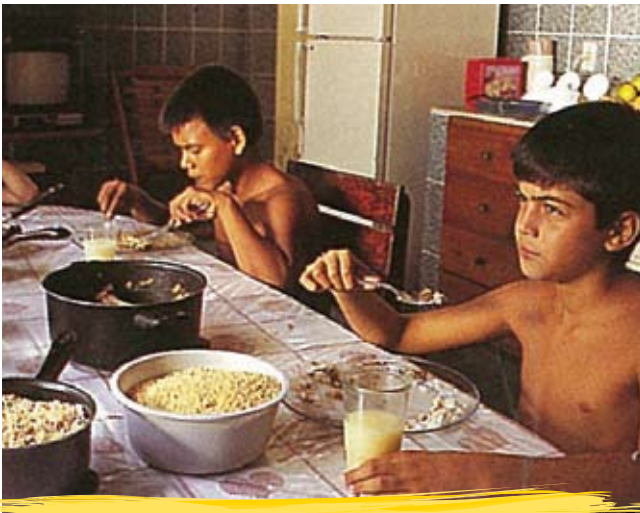
Carlos is nine and lives in a big city called Manaus. It is in the middle of the Amazon Forest. It is the capital of the Brazilian state of Amazonas. The area where he lives is named “Cidade Nova” (New City in Portuguese). It is a new area of the city east of the old centre.

Carlos lives with his father, mother and 3 sisters who are 20, 17 and 7 years old. His 11-year-old brother, adopted when he was born, is an Amazonian Indian.

Carlos’s father owns a shop. He sells menswear such as shirts and trousers. He travels into Manaus each day by car. It takes him 25 minutes when the traffic is not too busy.



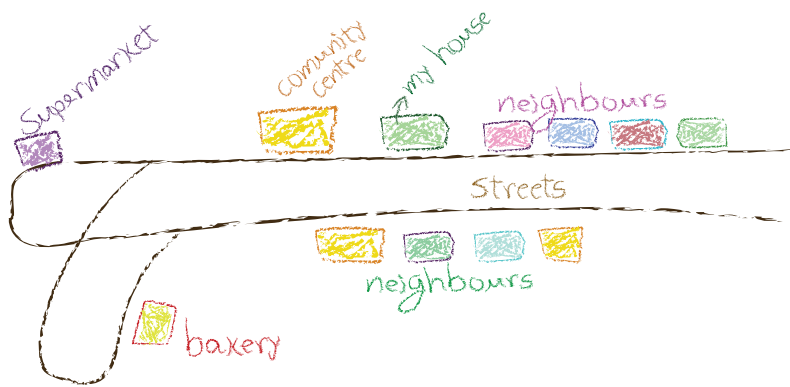
THE SOUZA CHILDREN AT HOME



LUNCH BEFORE SCHOOL



CARLOS OUTSIDE HIS HOUSE



CARLOS'S OWN MAP OF HIS STREET

Carlos's mother does not work but she looks after the family. Her brother also lives in the Amazon Forest, about 785 km north of Manaus, in Boa Vista. This town is the capital of another state called Roraima. Carlos often visits them in the school holidays.

Carlos's surname is Melo de Souza. In Brazil, children's surnames are made up of their father's name (José Francisco Oliveira de Souza, in this case), and their mother's (Neide Gomes de Melo). Think about what your surname might be if we followed this custom in the UK.

## Carlos's House

Carlos's family began building their house about ten years ago. It is a modern house and within Carlos's housing estate there is a bank, a large supermarket called DB, several shops

including a bakery called 'Estivão', a petrol station and a chemist. Two health centres and a hospital have also been built for his family and their neighbours.

## Going to School In Manaus

Carlos goes to the Princesa Isabel school. It receives money from the Brazilian government but it is run by the state of Amazonas. It is about 20 minutes away by car. Unlike in British schools the school day is split into three parts. Children attend one of them each day. Carlos goes in the afternoon between 1 and 5pm. Other primary children go to school in the morning but only older children attend the evening classes.

There are 36 pupils in Carlos's class. His favourite subject is mathematics and he hopes this will be useful when he begins work in his



father's shop. The school has recently been provided with computers and Carlos has a computer at home and so he can use it to help him with his homework.

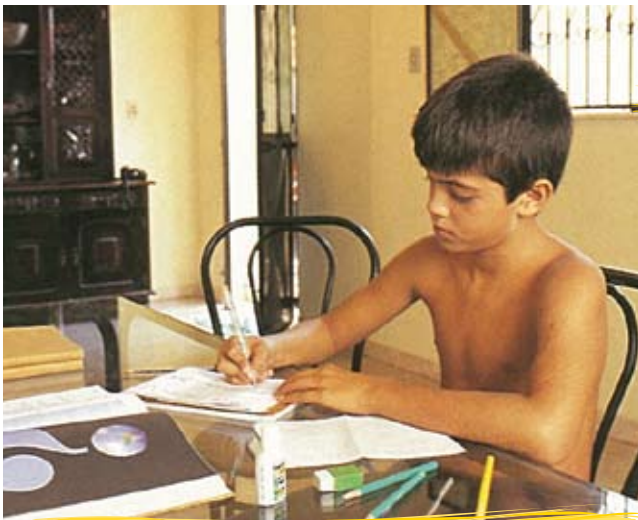
Carlos works hard at school. During a week his lessons include Portuguese, mathematics, social studies, music, art, and drama.

As he gets older he will get the chance to study English and science.



Sara Tomlinson

THE END OF THE SCHOOL SESSION



CARLOS WORKING AT HOMEWORK



CARLOS READING A MAGAZINE



IN SCHOOL



ICT LESSONS

Sara Tomlinson



## 2. Manaus

Carlos enjoys his social studies lessons. He often works on the history and geography of the city of Manaus.

Sometimes Carlos goes with the school to visit the city centre. Here there are some old buildings. The most famous is the Amazonas Theatre. This beautiful building was opened in 1896 and restored in 1996. Carlos went to find out why the theatre was built in the middle of a tropical forest. He found out that Manaus began as a small river port as European people began to explore the Amazon Forest.



CARLOS AT SCHOOL

### Map of Manaus & Rivers Meeting

The map shows that it was in a good position. Two important rivers that start in the Andes mountains meet at Manaus. The Rio Solimões meets the Rio Negro. They join at Manaus. They then flow 1500km to the sea as the River Amazon.

Early travellers needed a river port where they could buy food, water and change boats. These explorers soon discovered the rubber tree in the surrounding forest. People in Europe and the USA then began to find many uses for rubber. Most important was its use to make the tyres for the early cars and bicycles. The forest was searched for the trees and the liquid rubber, called 'latex', was collected. Manaus became the centre of the rubber trade. It became very rich. The wealthy people wanted the sort of theatres they had in London or New York. So they built this wonderful theatre with material from all over the world.



THE AMAZONAS THEATRE



CARLOS IN THE THEATRE

Embratur





**A RUBBER TAPPER**

Across the world in Malaysia, the people there developed a way to produce rubber more cheaply. They planted all the rubber trees in rows like an orchard. This meant they could collect the latex more quickly. Manaus became less important and its lovely buildings became disused. Today, Manaus is once again a rich city. In 1967 the Brazilian Government made it a 'Free Trade Zone'. This allowed many goods made in the city to be sold more cheaply than in the rest of Brazil.



**CAFÉ AT MANAUS CENTRE**

People have been attracted from all over Brazil into the city to build factories. Some like Carlos's father, have opened shops. Today Manaus is a modern city with nearly two million people.

### 3. The Amazonian Forest

Carlos, like most Brazilian boys and girls, loves football. He often plays with his friends after school. His other favourite sport is swimming and he goes to a local club. There are very few public pools in Brazil. At weekends the family drive to one of their favourite places for swimming.

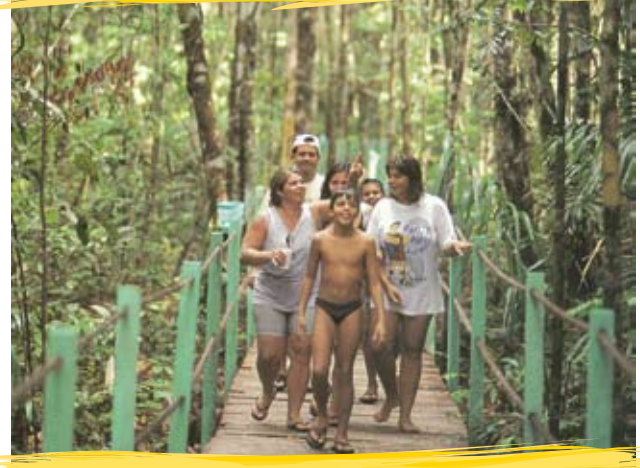
The family do not have to travel far on the BR 174 road before they leave Manaus behind. Quite suddenly the road passes through thick, tropical forest.

They travel north for about 100 km to the town of Presidente Figueiredo. In the nearby river the waterfalls make swimming exciting.

Waterfalls are common on many rivers. They are formed when the river flows over hard bands of rock which it cannot easily wear away, or erode. Sometimes they can be hundreds of



**PORT OF MANAUS**



**FAMILY DAY OUT**

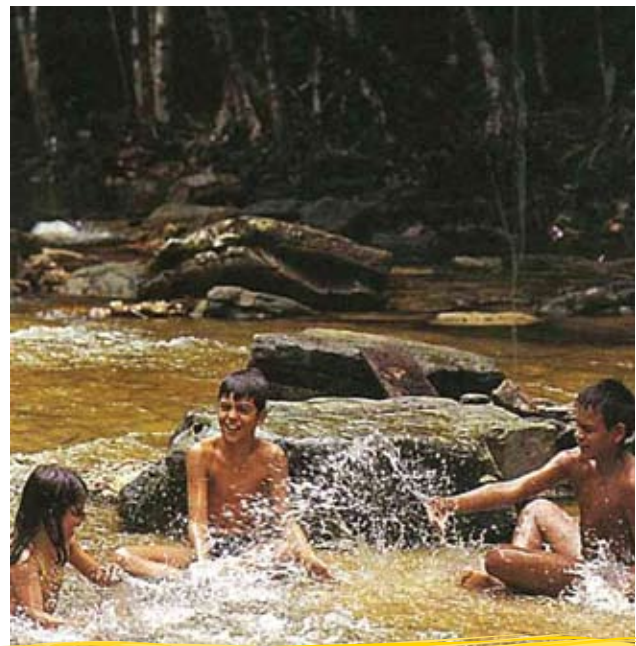


metres high. Southern Brazil has some of the largest waterfalls in the world. They are on the Paraná River and are called the Iguaçu Falls. Look for photographs of them as they are one of the greatest natural wonders of the world.

The place in which Carlos and his family are spending their weekend is part of the world's largest tropical forest. It has the greatest number of plants. The trees are enormous and their tops so big they block out nearly all the light. Many of them are useful for food, medicines, oils and dyes. High temperatures and heavy rainfall make it like a big greenhouse. No wonder the children enjoy splashing in the cooler water.

The forest is made up of different layers. In the photograph you can see the lowest layer and the forest floor.

A great number of animals live in the forest, and native Indians have also made it their home for centuries. They have found a way of living within the forest. They use the plants to build their houses and for food and they hunt the animals and fish in the rivers. Sadly, many of the native Indians have been killed by European settlers or have died of Western diseases. Today their numbers are much smaller. There are 460,000 native Indians left and more living outside native Indian lands. The Brazilian government has set aside land for them deep in the Amazon Forest so they can continue their way of life.



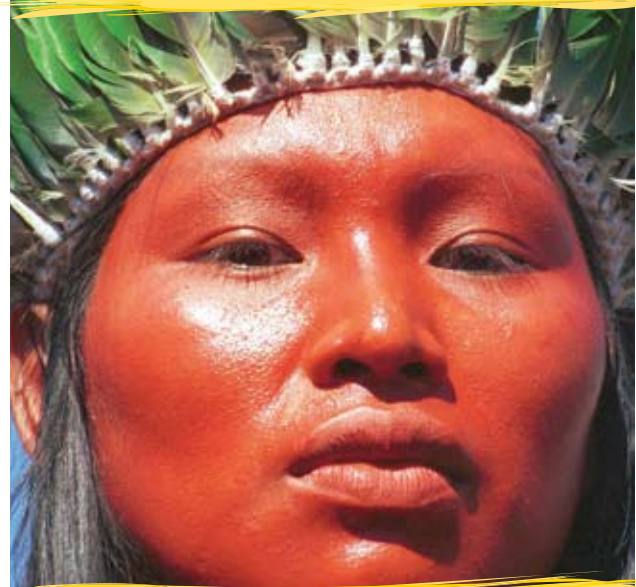
**BATHING**



**THE LAYERS OF THE RAINFOREST**



**INDIAN HUT**



**XINGU INDIAN**

Antônio Silva

José Medeiros



## 4. The Rio Negro

All Brazilians like ice cream and Carlos and his family are no different. It is very cooling in the hot climate. On a day trip to the banks of the Rio Negro the children bought ice creams. What flavour did they choose? Strawberry or chocolate?

Well no, it was called 'cupuaçu' – what is that like? It is the fruit of an Amazon forest tree which has big pods about the size of the yellow melons you see in our shops. It is an Indian word that means oblong form of fruit. It is not sweet like chocolate but rather acid like pineapple. It is a great Amazonian favourite and it is used for many puddings.

Even today the River Amazon and its tributaries, like the Rio Negro, are still the most useful way of moving people and goods around the forest. Behind the ice cream seller you can see the river boats called "gaiolas" tied up on the river bank.

They are small boats with no cabins, just hammocks strung across the decks. They only serve simple meals and have basic toilets. These boats travel up the rivers into the Andes mountains and down river to the Atlantic Ocean.



THE MEETING OF WATERS



BOAT RIDE AT RIVER NEGRO



RIO NEGRO DOCKS



RIO NEGRO'S BEACH IN MANAUS

Remember Manaus is over 1500km from the sea. The journey takes about a week to the town of Belém at the Amazon's mouth

Carlos has come to the river bank, not just to eat ice-cream and look at the boats but to see one of the tourist sights of Manaus. In Portuguese it is called the "Encontro das Águas", or the meeting of the waters.

Carlos came to see where these two great rivers meet. The clear darker water of the Rio Negro does not mix with that of the muddy 'Solimões' which is the name for the Amazon before it joins the Rio Negro. From this point the Negro and the Solimões run next to each other like two different coloured stripes for over 20km. But don't forget that the river is also about 8km wide.

The River Amazon is not the longest river in the world but it is certainly the biggest, with about 1,000 tributaries. These cover an area of 12 million sq. km. But how big is that area? On the next page you'll see that a map showing just how big the Amazon Basin and Brazil are compared to the UK and the other countries of Europe.

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Fernanda Dias



## BRAZIL AND EUROPE

### 5. Holidays

At weekends Carlos often visits his father's parents. They have a small farm by the River Amazon, 20km from Manaus. They grow vegetables, herbs (like parsley) and corn and keep pigs and chickens.



VEGETABLE PATCH



WATERING THE VEGETABLES

Antônio Silva





**A FAMILY BARBECUE**

One of their favourite things when they visit their grandparents' farm is to have a barbecue by the river. Look at the photograph. The family are eating the ribs of a river fish called 'tambaqui'. Notice the forest in the background. Most of the fish sold in the UK, such as cod, comes from the sea. The fish from the Amazonian rivers are often so big that the ribs are like pork chops.

Carlos likes to come with some of his friends. This is because although the Amazon is a river it is big enough to have sandy beaches.

During the school holidays the family often drive to see Carlos's aunt and uncle in Boa Vista. This town is 785km away. It is a long tiring drive. They start when it is cooler, at 6am, and usually arrive about 3pm. They often stop at a roadside stall for a snack.

Look at the photo below. Can you recognise any of the words?



**ICE CREAM**

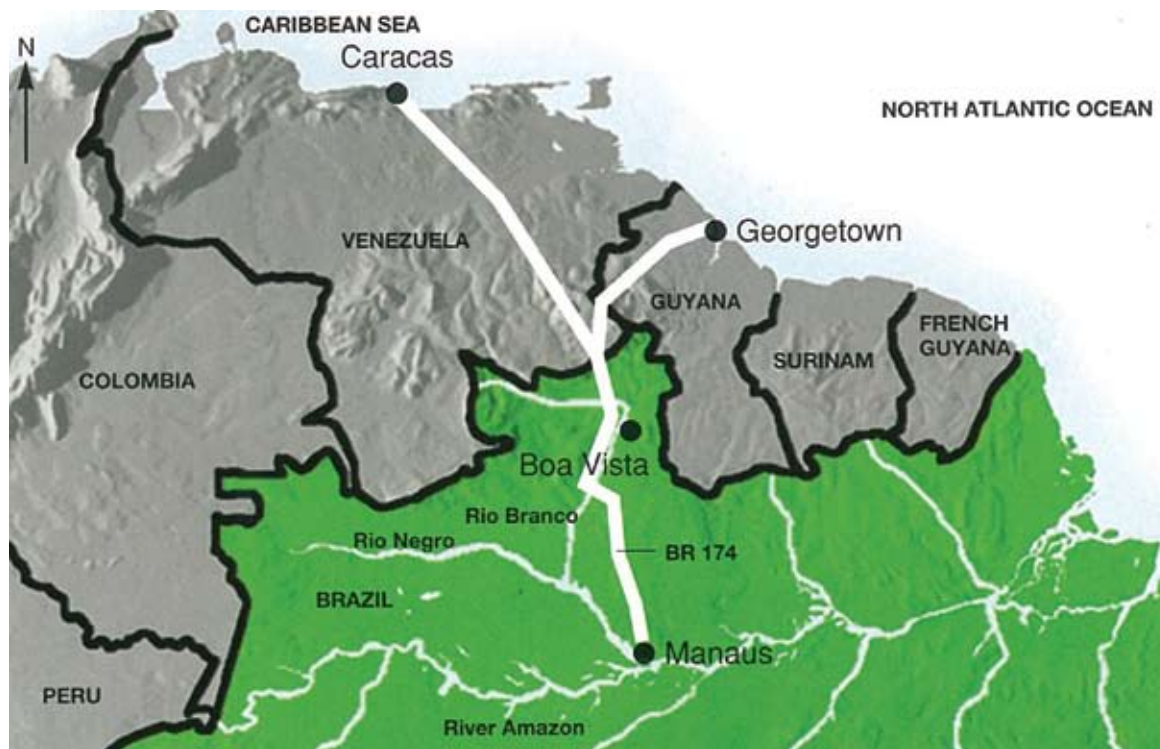


**LET'S GO FISHING!**

Fernanda Dias



The BR174 Manaus to Boa Vista road, like most of the roads in Manaus, is paved. However, many of the roads through the Amazon Forest are only gravel. This means that in the dry weather they are dusty, but when it rains they become muddy. A new road bridge across the River Orinoco was opened in 2006 and it allows four lanes of traffic and one railway track to cross the river into Venezuela, eventually reaching the city of Caracas. This is a port across the border in Venezuela, on the Caribbean Sea. This is an important trade link between the 'free trade zone' in Manaus and many other countries. Look on a world map to see why.



Boa Vista is a much smaller place than Manaus. It has about 230,000 people, about the size of a small town in the UK. The town has changed since Carlos's family settled there.

Look at the information below to see how the town's shops and services have changed.

- 🍃 In the 1920s - Fourteen grocers, one bar, one chemist, one carpenter, two blacksmiths, one undertaker, one barber, one shop selling fabrics, soap and odds and ends. The shop was the only building with electricity and its own water pump.
- 🍃 In the 2000s - Several bakeries selling French bread, beauty salons, bars, shops selling salad vegetables, frozen chickens, dairy products such as yoghurt, a hospital, cinema, museum, airport and a paved highway to Manaus.

Think why the shops and services were so different in the 1920s. Today there are plenty of activities in Boa Vista for Carlos to enjoy on his holidays.

## 6. Linking Manaus

Carlos lives in one of the most remote cities in the world. It is surrounded by the world's greatest tropical forest. Even to visit his relatives in the next state it is a day's journey. To visit the Atlantic Ocean it would take over a week on a river boat. By air, Manaus is 1940km from Brazil's capital, Brasília, and a further 940km from Rio de Janeiro, where Maria, the girl in the other locality study, lives with her family.



HOUSE ALONGSIDE THE RIVER

Fernanda Dias





Erika Tambke

**DIRT ROAD**

Today children like Carlos are not as isolated as they were because they can see the world through TV programmes and access computers and the internet. Football is his other TV favourite, especially watching the famous Brazilian national team play all over the world.

Brazil and many other countries have concerns about the Amazon Forest around where Carlos lives. Large areas of forest have been destroyed in recent years. However, the Brazilian government is implementing measures to reduce this loss of rainforest and has had some success in recent years.

Measures introduced to combat illegal deforestation — such as satellite monitoring and an intensification of federal police operations — are starting to produce results.

In the last five years there has been a clear downward trend in the rate of deforestation. In 2008, even with the small increase that took place over the course of the year, the total deforested area was 65% smaller than in 2004. And in 2009 the total area deforested between February and April, measured using satellite images, was the smallest in any three-month period in the last 20 years.

Tourists are another group of people who are visiting Manaus and Amazonia. They come from North America, Europe and Japan to see the forest.

They can ride through the flooded forest by canoe in search of birds and piranhas, spot alligators at night, or jungle trek to discover



Fernanda Dias

**TALL TREES IN THE FOREST**



Fernanda Dias

**WATER LILIES**



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**BOATING**



Fernanda Dias

**MANY TOURISTS VISIT THE AMAZON BASIN**

the wonders of the Amazon Forest. The 'city in the forest' where Carlos lives with his family is changing very rapidly.