

# The Story of the Banana



The story of the banana is a very interesting one. In the United Kingdom, we can grow delicious fruits and vegetables such as strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, apples, tomatoes, potatoes, carrots, turnips and many more. However, the cold and changeable weather in the UK means that some fruits and vegetables are not able to grow here. To get these fruits and vegetables, they need to be **imported**. Imported means that goods or services are brought into a country from abroad to be sold.

Bananas are one of the fruits that are brought into the UK. Bananas grow on banana plants in very hot, wet climates. Countries that grow bananas include Costa Rica, Honduras, Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, Brazil and the Ivory Coast.

The following are the steps the banana takes on its journey.

1. The bananas grow on a banana plant in these countries which can grow up to five metres in height and it can take a year for the banana plant to produce bananas that are ready for the farmer.
2. The farmer cuts the bananas from the plant when they are still hard and green. He uses a special type of knife called a machete. The bananas are stored in a cool room straight away so they do not ripen too quickly.
3. The bananas are then washed and packed into boxes and trays. They are kept in a cool place so that they do not ripen too quickly.
4. When the boxes are full, they are put into containers and brought to huge ships and loaded onto them. Workers on the ship called seafarers make sure to keep the ship safe and clean. They look after the bananas and make sure everything is ok.
5. The ships make the long journey across the oceans until it reaches their destination. The ships are unloaded and the bananas are put into lorries. The lorries are brought to special warehouses where they ripen so that they are ready to eat.
6. Once the bananas are ready to be sold, they are loaded onto lorries. These lorries bring them to supermarkets and shops ready to be sold to their customers.

So next time you eat a banana think about the long journey it has made from growing on the banana plant to getting to you! Enjoy!



# Questions

After reading about the journey of the banana, answer the questions below.

- Which of these fruits and vegetables is **not** grown in the UK?
  - tomatoes
  - strawberries
  - bananas
  - potatoes
- Which of these countries can bananas be grown in? Tick **Two**.
  - Brazil
  - The United Kingdom
  - France
  - Costa Rica
- What does the word 'imported' mean?
  - Goods brought in from another country to be sold.
  - Packing fruits into boxes and trays.
  - A long journey across an ocean.
  - Something that is very important.
- What is the name of the special type of knife that is used to cut bananas from the plant?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Number these events from 1 to 5 to show the order they happen:
  - The bananas are stored in a cool room so they do not ripen too quickly.
  - The bananas are grown and cut from the plant with a machete.
  - The bananas are unloaded and sent to supermarkets to be sold.
  - The bananas are loaded onto ships which sail to other countries.
  - The bananas are packed into boxes and containers.
- How tall can a banana plant grow?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Why can't bananas grow in the UK?  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Answers

- Which of these fruits and vegetables is **not** grown in the UK?
  - tomatoes
  - strawberries
  - bananas**
  - potatoes
- Which of these countries can bananas be grown in? Tick **Two**.
  - Brazil**
  - The United Kingdom
  - France
  - Costa Rica**
- What does the word 'imported' mean?
  - Goods brought in from another country to be sold.**
  - Packing fruits into boxes and trays.
  - A long journey across an ocean.
  - Something that is very important.
- What is the name of the special type of knife that is used to cut bananas from the plant?  
**A machete**
- Number these events from 1 to 5 to show the order they happen:
  - 2** The bananas are stored in a cool room so they do not ripen too quickly.
  - 1** The bananas are grown and cut from the plant with a machete.
  - 5** The bananas are unloaded and sent to supermarkets to be sold.
  - 4** The bananas are loaded onto ships which sail to other countries.
  - 3** The bananas are packed into boxes and containers.
- How tall can a banana plant grow?  
**5 metres tall**
- Why can't bananas grow in the UK?  
**Because the climate in the UK is too cold and changeable.**

# The Story of the Banana

The story of the banana is a very interesting one. In the United Kingdom, we can grow delicious fruits and vegetables such as strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, apples, tomatoes, potatoes, carrots, turnips and many more.



However, the cold and changeable weather in the UK, unfortunately, means that some fruits and vegetables are not able to grow here. In order to get these fruits and vegetables, they need to be **imported**. Imported means that goods or services are brought into a country from abroad to be sold.

Bananas are one of the fruits that are brought into the UK. Bananas grow on banana plants in very hot, wet climates. Countries that grow bananas include Costa Rica, Honduras, Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, Brazil and the Ivory Coast.

The following are the steps the banana takes on its journey.

1. The bananas grow on a banana plant in these countries. These banana plants can grow up to five metres in height and it can take a year for the banana plant to produce bananas ready for the farmer to harvest.
2. The farmer cuts the bananas from the plant when they are still hard and green. To cut the bananas, the farmer uses a special type of knife called a machete. They are stored in a cool room immediately so they do not ripen too quickly.
3. The bananas are then washed and packed into boxes and trays. They are kept in a cool place so that they do not ripen too quickly.
4. When the boxes are full, they are put into containers and brought to huge ships and loaded onto them. Seafarers work on the ship making sure to keep the ship safe and clean. They look after the bananas and make sure everything is ok.
5. The ships make the long journey across the oceans until it reaches their destination. The ships are unloaded and the bananas are put into lorries. The lorries are brought to special warehouses where they ripen so that they are ready to eat.
6. Once the bananas are ready to be sold, they are loaded onto lorries. These lorries bring them to supermarkets and shops ready to be sold to their customers.

So next time you eat a banana, think about the long journey it has made from growing on the banana plant to getting to you! Enjoy!



# Questions

After reading about the journey of the banana, answer the questions below.

1. Which of these countries can bananas be grown in? Tick **two**.

- Brazil
- The United Kingdom
- France
- Costa Rica

2. Complete the table to show whether each statement is true or false. One has been done for you.

	True	False
You can grow bananas in the UK.		
Banana plants can grow up to 5 metres tall.		
Bananas are stored in a cool room after being cut from the plant so they ripen quickly.		
Bananas are unloaded from ships and taken to warehouses before going to supermarkets.		

3. What does the word 'imported' mean?

- Goods brought in from another country to be sold.
- Packing fruits into boxes and trays.
- A long journey across an ocean.
- Something that is very important.

4. What is a 'machete'?

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5. Why can't bananas be grown in the UK?

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6. How long does it take for a banana plant to start producing bananas?

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7. What do you think would happen if the bananas were not put into cold storage after they were picked?

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8. Number the following statements from 1 to 6 in the correct order of the banana's journey:

The bananas are then washed and packed into boxes and trays. They are kept in a cool place so that they do not ripen too quickly.	
The ships make the long journey across the oceans until it reaches their destination. The ships are unloaded and the bananas are put into lorries. The lorries are brought to special warehouses where they ripen so that they are ready to eat.	
The bananas grow on a banana plant. These banana plants can grow up to five metres in height and it can take a year for the banana plant to produce bananas ready for the farmer to harvest.	
When the boxes are full, they are put into containers and brought to huge ships and loaded onto them. Seafarers work on the ship making sure to keep the ship safe and clean. They look after the bananas and make sure everything is ok.	
Once the bananas are ready to be sold they are loaded onto lorries. These lorries bring them to supermarkets and shops ready to be sold to their customers.	
The farmer cuts the bananas from the plant when they are still hard and green. To cut the bananas, the farmer uses a special type of knife called a machete. They are stored in a cool room immediately so they do not ripen too quickly.	

# Answers

1. Which of these countries can bananas be grown in? Tick **Two**.

- Brazil**
- The United Kingdom
- France
- Costa Rica**

2. Complete the table to show whether each statement is true or false. One has been done for you.

	True	False
You can grow bananas in the UK.		✓
Banana plants can grow up to 5 metres tall.	✓	
Bananas are stored in a cool room after being cut from the plant so they ripen quickly.		✓
Bananas are unloaded from ships and taken to warehouses before going to supermarkets.	✓	

3. What does the word 'imported' mean?

- Goods brought in from another country to be sold.**
- Packing fruits into boxes and trays.
- A long journey across an ocean.
- Something that is very important.

4. What is a 'machete'?

**A special knife to cut bananas off the plants.**

5. Why can't bananas be grown in the UK?

**Pupil's own response. Should include references to cold climate and unpredictable weather in the UK.**

6. How long does it take for a banana plant to start producing bananas?

**1 year**

7. What do you think would happen if the bananas were not put into cold storage after they were picked?

**Pupil's own response. Should include references to bananas going ripe too quickly, being rotten/overripe by the time they are imported, will be unsuitable for being sent to other countries.**

8. Number the following statements from 1 to 6 in the correct order of the banana's journey:

The bananas are then washed and packed into boxes and trays. They are kept in a cool place so that they do not ripen too quickly.	<b>3</b>
The ships make the long journey across the oceans until it reaches their destination. The ships are unloaded and the bananas are put into lorries. The lorries are brought to special warehouses where they ripen so that they are ready to eat.	<b>5</b>
The bananas grow on a banana plant. These banana plants can grow up to five metres in height and it can take a year for the banana plant to produce bananas ready for the farmer to harvest.	<b>1</b>
When the boxes are full, they are put into containers and brought to huge ships and loaded onto them. Seafarers work on the ship making sure to keep the ship safe and clean. They look after the bananas and make sure everything is ok.	<b>4</b>
Once the bananas are ready to be sold they are loaded onto lorries. These lorries bring them to supermarkets and shops ready to be sold to their customers.	<b>6</b>
The farmer cuts the bananas from the plant when they are still hard and green. To cut the bananas, the farmer uses a special type of knife called a machete. They are stored in a cool room immediately so they do not ripen too quickly.	<b>2</b>



# The Story of the Banana

The story of the banana is a very interesting one. In the United Kingdom, we are very lucky that we can grow delicious fruits and vegetables such as strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, apples, tomatoes, potatoes, carrots, turnips and many more. However, the cold and unpredictable weather in the UK, unfortunately, means that some fruits and vegetables are not able to grow here. In order to get these fruits and vegetables, we must **import** them.

Bananas are one of the fruits that are imported into the UK. Bananas grow on banana plants in very hot, wet climates. Countries where bananas grow include Costa Rica, Honduras, Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, Brazil and the Ivory Coast. The banana plants can grow up to five metres in height and the bananas grow in large, hanging bunches.



The farmer looks after these hanging bunches by putting protective wrapping around them to protect them from mosquitoes and other insects until they are ready. It can take up to a year for the bananas to be ready for the farmer to harvest. The farmer uses a special strong knife called a machete to cut down the large hanging bunches when they are still green. The bunches are brought to a cool room immediately so they do not ripen.

Later they are brought to be washed and separated into smaller bunches of about six bananas in each bunch. The bunches are then packed into boxes and trays which are kept in a cool place so they do not ripen too quickly. When the boxes are all full they are transferred to containers and are brought to be loaded onto huge ships. On the ships, seafarers have the job of looking after the containers, making sure they are stored in a cool place and that the ship is clean and safe. The ships make the long journey across the oceans to deliver the bananas to different countries.



When the ships arrive at their destinations, they are unloaded and the boxes are brought to warehouses where they have time to ripen fully. Once the bananas are ready, they are brought to supermarkets and shops where they can be sold to customers.

So next time you eat a banana, think about the long journey it has made from growing on the banana plant to getting to you! Enjoy!

# Questions

After reading about the journey of the banana, answer the questions below.

1. Name three countries bananas grow in.

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2. Which of these fruits and vegetables can be grown in the UK? Tick **two**.

- carrots
- pineapple
- turnips
- oranges

3. Which of these best fits the meaning of the word 'unpredictable'?

- something is very weak
- you can't tell what will happen
- you don't like something
- something that makes sense

4. Why is protective wrapping put around the bananas?

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5. Find and copy one word that means the same as 'groups'.

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6. What do you think would happen if the bananas were not put in a cool room after being harvested?

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7. Summarise the journey of the banana into six steps:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

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2. \_\_\_\_\_

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3.

4.

5.

6.

# Answers

1. Name three countries bananas grow in.

**Any 3 of: Costa Rica, Honduras, Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, Brazil and the Ivory Coast.**

2. Which of these fruits and vegetables can be grown in the UK? Tick **two**.

- carrots**
- pineapple
- turnips**
- oranges

3. Which of these best fits the meaning of the word 'unpredictable'?

- something is very weak
- you can't tell what will happen**
- you don't like something
- something that makes sense

4. Why is protective wrapping put around the bananas?

**To protect them from insects, e.g. mosquitos.**

5. **Find** and **copy** one word that means the same as 'groups'.

**Bunches.**

6. What do you think would happen if the bananas were not put in a cool room after being harvested?

**Pupil's own response. Should include references to bananas going ripe too quickly, being rotten/overripe by the time they are imported, will be unsuitable for being sent to other countries.**

7. Summarise the journey of the banana into six steps:

**1. The bananas grow on banana plants in warm countries. These banana plants can grow up to five metres in height and it can take a year for the banana plant to produce bananas ready for the farmer to harvest!**

**2. The farmer cuts the bananas from the plant when they are still hard and green. To cut the bananas the farmer uses a special type of knife called a machete. They are stored in a cool room immediately so they do not ripen too quickly**

**3. The bananas are then washed and packed into boxes and trays. They are kept in a cool place so that they do not ripen too quickly.**

**4. When the boxes are full they are put into containers and brought to huge ships and loaded onto them. Seafarers work on the ship making sure to keep the ship safe and clean. They look after the bananas and make sure everything is ok!**

**5. The ships make the long journey across the oceans until it reaches their destination. The ships are unloaded and the bananas are put into lorries. The lorries are brought to special warehouses where they ripen so that they are ready to eat!**

**6. Once the bananas are ready to be sold they are loaded onto lorries. These lorries bring them to supermarkets and shops ready to be sold to their customers!**