

Why Does Trump Want Greenland?

March 2025

Greenland is the biggest island in the world and is part of the Kingdom of Denmark. Even though it belongs to Denmark, Greenland governs itself and has its own elections. Greenland has a very small population of around 50,000 people. The land is covered in ice, with no forests, only small trees in the south. Most people live along the coast in the southern part of the island, where conditions are a little less harsh. There are no roads between towns, so people travel by boat, plane, or even dog sleds.

The first people came to Greenland about 4,500 years ago from what is now Canada. Later, in the 10th century, people from Iceland settled in the southern part of the island. Greenland is important for its location and resources. It has large amounts of rare earth minerals, including uranium and iron. In the past, the US was a leader in rare earth production, but now China controls most of the market. The US sees Greenland as a way to reduce its reliance on China.

The US is also interested in Greenland because of its location. The Arctic Ocean offers a shortcut for ships traveling between continents. This makes Greenland important for trade and national security.

US President Donald Trump has been interested in acquiring Greenland since at least 2019. He has suggested buying it, applying economic pressure, or forming a strategic agreement. However, Greenland and Denmark have repeatedly said the island is not for sale. A poll in January showed that 85% of Greenland's residents do not want to be part of the US.

Comprehension Questions:

- What do we know about Greenland's government?
 - It is fully controlled by Denmark.
 - It is independent from Denmark.
 - It governs itself but is part of Denmark.
 - It is ruled by the US.
- Why does Donald Trump want to buy Greenland?
 - To build a luxury resort.
 - To gain access to resources and strategic location.
 - Because Denmark offered to sell it.
 - Because Greenland's people want to join the US.
- Why do most people in Greenland live along the coast?
 - The land in the center of the island is too expensive
 - The government does not allow people to live in other areas
 - There are more forests and farmland inland
 - The weather is milder, making it easier to live there.



4. Which of these statements is false?
- a) Greenland is completely independent from Denmark
 - b) Greenland has its own elections
 - c) People first arrived in Greenland thousands of years ago
 - d) Most of Greenland is covered in ice
5. What is a challenge for transportation in Greenland?
- a) The island is too small for large roads
 - b) There are no airports in Greenland
 - c) The harsh climate and lack of roads make travel difficult
 - d) The government does not allow people to travel between towns
6. Why is Greenland's location important for international trade?
- a) It has many roads connecting towns.
 - b) The Arctic Ocean provides a shortcut for ships.
 - c) It has a very large population.
 - d) It is easy to travel across the ice.
7. What is a reason the US is not able to buy Greenland?
- a) Denmark does not have the legal right to sell it
 - b) The people of Greenland and Denmark do not want to sell it
 - c) Greenland has too many economic problems
 - d) It is too far from the US
8. Why might Greenland's resources become more valuable in the future?
- a) The world needs more rare earth minerals for technology
 - b) Denmark will use all of Greenland's resources
 - c) Greenland is planning to build more forests
 - d) People will stop using rare earth minerals
9. Why is Greenland important to the US?
- a) The US sees Greenland as an important strategic and economic location
 - b) The US wants to move its capital to Greenland
 - c) The US is not interested in Greenland's resources
 - d) The US believes Greenland should belong to China
10. What is the main idea of the article?
- a) Greenland is a beautiful island with icy landscapes.
 - b) Greenland has a very small population.
 - c) Greenland is part of Canada.
 - d) Greenland's resources and location make it important, leading to US interest.

Speaking and Writing Activities:

- Discuss these questions with a partner or a small group
 - Choose one topic and write a response to it. Show your writing to a classmate or teacher.
1. What are some of challenges of living in a very cold climate?
 2. Do you think a country should be able to buy another place? Why or why not?
 3. What do you think would happen if the world ran out of rare earth minerals?