**What is a state?** A state is an area of land with clearly defined borders separating it from surrounding areas. Within a state, there may be many different nations which share a common culture, language, and norms and values.

Introduction: Explain what a state is in greater detail. ‘I believe that a state denotes the area of land/system of government that rules over a certain area rather than what the people living in that state may or may not share’. Talk about what sources I am going to use in order to prove this.

There are many different interpretations of what a state is. States are usually defined as follows:

- The state is a historical construct
- The state is a central actor in global politics

This, is the case for most areas now officially recognised as States, such as France and the UK. Many of the states that we would consider ‘historical’ have a long history and enjoy their status as world superpowers, while others (like the USA) have previously been considered part of the territory of these states.

However, there is a growing number of ‘new states’ that don’t always fit into these definitions. Most recently, the UN recognised South Sudan as a separate state in 2011.

Many other areas are now demanding to be recognised as separate states, for example, Scotland. This is partly due to the growing feeling among these smaller areas that they don’t share common values, language, culture, or identity with the state as a whole, and therefore, they aren’t being well represented by their state’s government. As is the case with South Sudan, however, many states worry that these smaller areas would not be able to fend for themselves if they were to separate from the main state.