

Antarctica

by David Petersen

A Frozen World

Of Earth's seven continents, only one, Antarctica, has no rivers, no forests, and no native people. Very few creatures of any kind can live in the interior of this continent.

This is because Antarctica is the coldest place on Earth, and it is almost completely covered with ice. In 1983, the world-record low temperature of -128.6 degrees Fahrenheit (-89.2 degrees Celsius) was recorded there.

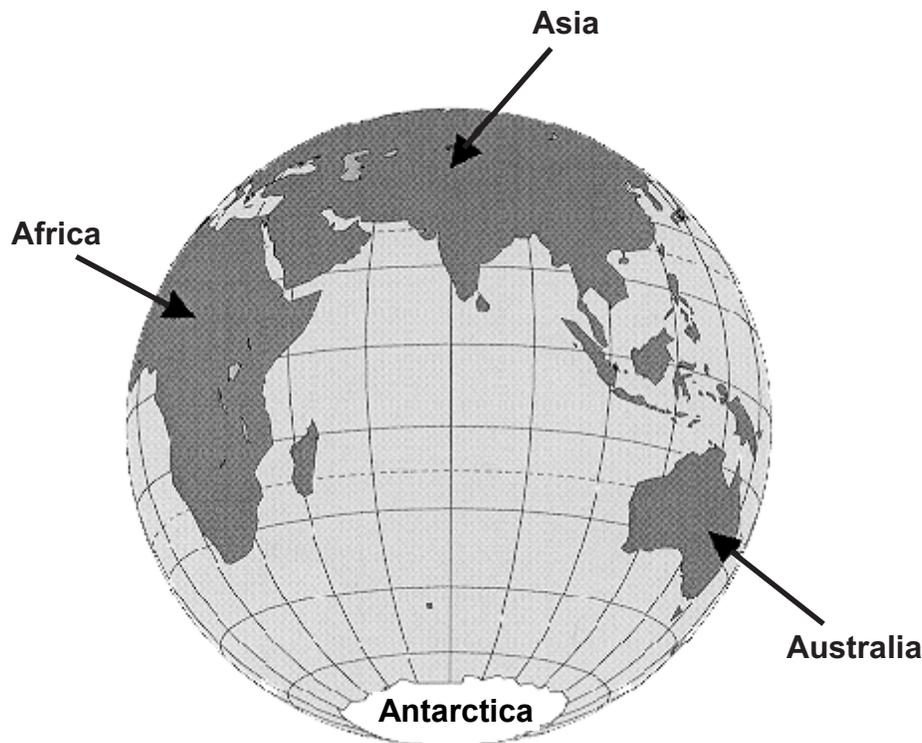
In the permanently frozen Antarctic interior, the temperature reaches the freezing point, which is 32 degrees Fahrenheit (0 degrees C), on only the mildest summer days. Nearer the sea coasts, it gets a little warmer, but it is still bitterly cold most of the year.

Why is this?

Antarctica, hidden at the bottom of the globe, is shaded from the sun's most direct and warmest light. The sunlight it does receive is so weak that it doesn't warm up the continent very much.

The Antarctic winter (May through August) is brutally cold. For much of the winter, the sun never rises over most of Antarctica. In summer (December through March) the sun never sets in these areas. But the sun is so low in the sky that most of its heat is reflected away by the ice.

Antarctica is also one of the windiest places on Earth. Near the coasts, gusts of wind often reach speeds of 120 miles (190 kilometers) per hour.



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1. What is the **main** purpose of this selection?
- A to convince people to visit Antarctica
 - B to describe the wildlife of Antarctica
 - C to explain why Antarctica has severe winds
 - D to describe weather conditions in Antarctica
2. According to the selection, what is the **main** reason few animals live in Antarctica?
- A It is at the bottom of the globe.
 - B It is the windiest place on Earth.
 - C It has no rivers or forests.
 - D It is the coldest place on Earth.
3. In the third paragraph, the author writes about the “mildest summer days.” What does *mildest* mean?
- A less mild
 - B little mild
 - C most mild
 - D not mild
4. Why does Antarctica have such cold weather?
- A It has the strongest winds on Earth.
 - B It has a very short summer season.
 - C It gets little direct sunlight.
 - D It has lots of snow and ice.
5. In the selection, what is the **most likely** reason that temperatures are listed in both Fahrenheit and Celsius?
- A Only scientists would normally read this selection.
 - B More people can understand the information.
 - C The numbers look more impressive listed this way.
 - D Celsius temperatures make Antarctica seem colder.

6. According to the selection, which statement about Antarctica's winter is true?
- A During Antarctica's winter, the days are very dark.
 - B During Antarctica's winter, the sunlight is the most direct.
 - C During Antarctica's winter, the ice keeps the sun's heat.
 - D During Antarctica's winter, the temperature reaches the freezing point.
7. Which is a difference between summer in Antarctica and summer in North Carolina?
- A Summers in Antarctica have shorter days.
 - B Summers in Antarctica are less windy.
 - C Summers in Antarctica last from December to March.
 - D Summers in Antarctica are warmer.

End of Set

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EOG Grade 4 Reading Sample Items

Selection Title	Question Number	Correct Answer	Thinking Skill	Objective Number
Antarctica	1	D	Analyzing	2.02
Antarctica	2	D	Knowledge	2.02
Antarctica	3	C	Knowledge	1.02
Antarctica	4	C	Analyzing	2.05
Antarctica	5	B	Generating	3.01
Antarctica	6	A	Analyzing	2.05
Antarctica	7	C	Organizing	2.02