



by
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What do you know about Antarctica? Did you know that there aren't any countries on this continent? Did you know that Antarctica is called the largest desert in the world? Grab your warmest coat, a hat, goggles, scarf and gloves and let's explore the continent of Antarctica!

1. Unlike all other continents, there are NO time zones on the continent of Antarctica! Who was the first to spot the land of Antarctica? _____ In the 1840s, what did several countries determine about the area called Antarctica? _____ Which explorer was the first to reach the South Pole(in 1911)? _____ Only a couple of weeks later, Robert Scott also reached the South Pole. What happened to Scott and his crew? _____ What did American Admiral Richard E. Byrd become

the first to do in 1929? _____ Find the answers at this link: <http://www.coolantarctica.com/Antarctica%20fact%20file/History/exploration-history.php>

2. From a Greek word meaning "opposite to the north", **Antarctica** has 90% of the world's ice. Much of the ice is 1 mile thick! Click on the different slides to learn about some of the **mammals** that call Antarctica home. Which mammal's name is misleading as it doesn't eat what its name implies? _____ Of all the seal species, what can be said about this particular seal? _____ The Weddell seal can hold its breathe for as long as 45 minutes! What seal has very large eyes? _____ Which seal is known for its underwater singing? _____ Find the answers at this link: <http://www.activewild.com/antarctica-facts-for-kids/>

3. What are TWO reasons for Antarctica being called the "largest desert in the world"? _____ and _____ What are THREE reasons for the lack of plant life in Antarctica? _____ and _____ Some plant life **can** be found in Antarctica. Name two flowering plants that grow in the summer months: _____ and _____ Find the answers at this link: <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/facts-about-antarctica-for-kids.html>

4. The **Emperor** Penguins, the biggest penguins in the world, call Antarctica home. About how tall are they? _____ During breeding time, colonies of penguins form groups called **rookeries**. What important job does the male penguin do to assist with the egg of the baby penguin? _____ How do the male penguins stay warm in the winter months? _____ What are two things which help the penguin survive the cold weather of Antarctica? _____

and_____The other species of penguin that breed near Antarctica include the **Chinstrap**, **Gentoo** and the **Adelie**. Find the answers at this link: <http://www.animalfactguide.com/animal-facts/emperor-penguin/>

5. What type of fossils were found on the many rock samples brought back by Robert F. Scott from his 1911-12 expedition to Antarctica?_____ What do such fossils suggest to scientists?_____. What are two areas in Antarctica where fossils of dinosaurs have been found? _____ and _____What is the name for a flying reptile dinosaur, whose bones were found in Antarctica? _____ What is the name for a reptile dinosaur also found? _____ Find the answers at this link: <http://expeditions.fieldmuseum.org/antarctic-dinosaurs/antarctic-fossils>

6. The largest under-the-ice lake in Antarctica is called Lake Vostok. It is more than _____feet below the surface ice. What is the term for such a lake?_____ The lake is 30 miles wide and 160 miles long! When scientists drilled down to the lake, what did they find in the samples brought back?_____What two other samples were taken from this lake?_____and _____It is thought that the lake has been untouched for about 20 million years! What do you think scientists hope to learn from studying this lake?*(Thought Question)_____Find the answers at this link: <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/interesting-facts-about-lake-vostok.html>

7. More than 10,000 meteorites , some 700,000 years old, have been discovered in Antarctica(since 1970). Mount Erebus,found on Ross Island, is an active volcano. Which explorer was the first to see

Mount Erebus? _____ How tall is Mount Erebus?
_____ Which scientific research station is located close to the volcano? _____ A United States research base, it is the _____ of all the scientific stations on Antarctica. Find the answers at this link and see awesome photographs of Mt. Erebus!
<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/view.php?id=87444>

8. About how many research stations are located in Antarctica?
_____ The British established a permanent base in Antarctica in 1944. According to the reading, how many permanent stations are there on Antarctica? _____ What is the primary study at these research stations? _____ During the winter months, with lack of sunlight, what else can easily be studied? _____ At which research station was the coldest ever recorded temperature? _____ Which country runs this station? _____ Which research station is the oldest occupied? _____ Which country runs this station? _____ Find the answers at this link: <http://www.destination360.com/antarctica/research-stations>

9. There are several species of whales that can be found in the waters around Antarctica. Name three species: _____, _____ and _____. Both the humpback and right whales often can have what growing on their bodies? _____ Which species of whale was especially hunted, almost to extinction? _____ WHY? _____. Which is the deepest diving whale of the group and for about how long can they stay underwater? _____ Which is the largest species of whale AND creature on the entire planet? _____ Instead of teeth, what fills this whale's mouth? _____ Find the answers at this link: <http://www.whalefacts.org/whales-in-antarctica/>

10. Not seen until 1820, the first person credited with setting foot on Antarctica (Cape Adare) was Henryk Bull, in 1895. He was a whaler. Which famous ancient Greek wrote that there was a continent in the lower Southern Hemisphere?

_____ What was the reason he believed this to be true?

_____ Which explorer first tried to find the continent? _____

Who was the first person to actually see the landmass? _____

What did Norwegian Carl Larson find in Antarctica? _____ How was this an important discovery? _____ Find the answers at this link:

<http://www.localhistories.org/antarctica.html>

Did You Know?

1. The continent of Antarctica was once part of a larger mass called Gondwanaland. India, Australia, SA and Africa were also part of Gondwanaland.
2. The highest point in Antarctica is Vinson Massif. It is 16,070 ft. (4897 m)
3. The coldest temp ever recorded was -128.6 F (-89.2 C) on July 21, 1983, at the Russian Vostok Station, on Antarctica.
4. Did you know that 98% of Antarctica is covered by ice and snow?
5. Did you know that only 100 tourists are allowed to be ON Antarctica at any one time?
6. No country "owns" Antarctica.
7. Antarctica is the windiest continent!
8. The Ross Ice Shelf (about the size of the state of Texas) is the biggest body of floating ice, in Antarctica. 90% of the ice is underneath the water's surface!

9. Sledging biscuits from the Shackleton's 1910 and 1914 expeditions to Antarctica, have sold for thousands of dollars!
10. In 1995, the very first Antarctica Marathon was held. The 26 mile race was held on King George Island.
11. There is an Antarctic Cup Ocean Race, a yacht race!
12. There aren't any ants on Antarctica to ruin a picnic!
13. The wife of a whaling captain, Caroline Mikkelsen, of Norway, was the first woman to walk on Antarctica.(1935)
14. Remember, polar bears only live in the Arctic not Antarctica!

Comprehension Questions:

1. Roald Amundsen's expedition reached the South Pole just weeks before Robert Scott. How do you think you would have felt to have been number two?
2. What are two reasons why scientists called Antarctica a desert?
3. What are 2-3 things which have been discovered to suggest that Antarctica once had a different type of climate?
4. What two samples have scientists taken from Lake Vostok? What was found in the frigid waters? What do scientists hope to learn from studying this subglacial lake?
5. Why did ancient Greek Aristotle believe there had to be a southern continent? Who was the first explorer to try and find the continent?
6. Why do you think there is a limit to the number of tourists allowed onto Antarctica at any one time?(thought question)
7. Would you like to be a tourist or scientist to go to Antarctica? Why or why not?
8. What are TWO things studied at the research stations on Antarctica?
9. Why do you think countries of the world have signed a treaty to keep countries from taking possession of Antarctica? Why do you think dirt is not allowed to be brought to the continent?