

Lesson Five Living and learning on the ice

Key Questions

- Do people live on Antarctica?
- What is daily life like on Antarctica?

Subject Content Areas

- Geographical skills and fieldwork: mapping skills combined with grid references
- Physical geography: interactions between physical geography and everyday life, physical features of Earth's orbit and its effects upon the weather and expeditions

Downloads

- Factsheet PDF | MSWORD
- Example of Pupils' Work PPT
- Postcard Template PDF | MSWORD

Living and learning on the ice

Continuing with both human and physical geography learning, children now begin to interpret the position and significance of the Antarctic Circle. Using role play, pupils can appreciate a day in the life of an Antarctica research station via the use of a variety of existing research centres. Pupils map and locate their role play station on Antarctica. Use of teacher questioning, and wider research by pupils, encourages discussions regarding this as a fragile environment of temporal significance as differing time zones and daylight hours at the poles and how the tilt of the Earth affects this. Parallel to this, use of grid references and wider mapping activities will be used to locate research stations. Opportunities to link with research stations are offered here.

Starter

This lesson is designed to further develop the 'human geography' element of Antarctica whilst drawing links to the extreme physical nature of this remote polar landscape.

Pose key questions for the lessons and show videos to introduce two case studies:

Case Study 1: The Penguin Post Office

Find out more (including video) about the most remote post office Port Lockroy. Go to the Antarctic Heritage Trust website <http://www.ukaht.org/where-we-work/port-lockroy>

There are also clips from the BBC series 'Penguin Post Office' to introduce daily life. Go to the BBC website <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b04bzsjj/clips>

Case Study 2: Scientists - British Antarctic Survey

British Antarctic Survey (BAS) is one of the world's leading environmental research centres and is responsible for the UK's national scientific activities in Antarctica. Go to the British Antarctic Survey website http://www.antarctica.ac.uk/living_and_working/index.php

Main

Once pupils have gained an understanding of how humans live on Antarctica (but not for extended periods of time) they are able to take on the role of a person living in this extreme environment.

The focus here is role play and exploring daily life on Antarctica. Using role play, pupils can create a 'day in the life' of an Antarctica research station based on the sources already introduced. The aim is to get pupils to consider the unique human geography of Antarctica and how different industries (tourist and scientific) function in this environment. This includes thinking about housing, food, and animal management in relation to the extremes of temperature and seasonal changes.

Pupils should map and locate their 'role play' research station on the map. Use of teacher questioning and wider research by pupils, encourages discussions regarding this as a fragile environment of temporal significance, differing time zones and daylight hours at the poles and how the tilt of the Earth affects this.

Pupils can also use the postcard template to write a short account of their 'research station experience' that reflects what they have learnt about life in Antarctica. These can be added to the 'research station' corner or display produced in the classroom.

See example of pupils' images of how a role play area could look in a classroom.

Summary of the main British Antarctic Survey (BAS) research stations. Go to the British Antarctic Survey website

http://www.antarctica.ac.uk/living_and_working/research_stations/

Suggested areas of focus for role play, written work or 'making' activities. Go to links below on the British Antarctic Survey website

- [Daily Life](#) - Food, clothing, health, communications
- [Research Stations](#) – Location of stations and facilities in Antarctica
- [Research Ships](#) - RRS *James Clark Ross* and RRS *Ernest Shackleton*
- [Artists and Writers](#) – Consider why records such as this are so important (link to Endurance artist Marston and photographer Hurley)
- [Diaries](#) – Consider why records such as this are so important
- [Camping](#) - Living in tents in the Antarctic
- [Aircraft and Vehicles](#) – Transport links e.g. aeroplanes, skidoos, sno-cats, cranes, tractors
- [Research Activities](#) – What are the scientists looking at and for?

Plenary

Teachers should provide feedback on choice of location within Antarctica for their 'research' station and think about how contemporary human experience, of living and learning in Antarctica, is different to that of Ernest Shackleton and the Endurance expedition experience.