

Did You Know That:

1. Inuit live in the Arctic.
2. Other than scientists, no people live in Antarctica.
3. Polar bears live only in the Arctic.
4. Antarctica is home to penguins.
5. Seals are found in seas in both the Arctic and Antarctic regions.

Who Live in the Arctic?

People of many different cultures inhabit the Arctic. They live in various countries, but all have adapted to living in the North. Eskimos, or Inuit, live in Siberia, Alaska, Canada, and Greenland.

There are many animals in the Arctic. Some of the most familiar are polar bears, caribou, arctic fox, walrus, seals, reindeer, and lots of birds. Some live in the Arctic all year, others visit in the warmer months.

There are around 1,700 different types of plants growing in the Arctic, about 900 of them are flowers. These plants grow quickly in the brief period of summer when there is constant daylight.



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BOOKS TO READ

The Story of Admiral Peary at the North Pole by Zachary Kent (Chicago: Childrens Press, 1988). Grades 3 through 5.

Arctic Explorer: The Story of Matthew Henson by Jeri Ferris (Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, Inc., 1989). Grades 3 through 6.

Matthew Henson by Jan Gleiter and Kathleen Thompson (Milwaukee: Raaintree Childrens Books, 1988). For younger readers.

Arctic Memories by Normee Ekoomiak (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1988). Through grade 5.

A Closer Look at Arctic Lands by Jill Hughes (New York: Cloucester Press, 1987). Grades 2 through 4.

Q: What do you call 50 penguins in the Arctic?



A: Lost, really lost.
Penguins live in Antarctica.

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Where is the Arctic?



Where is the North Pole?
What is the weather like?
Who lives in the Arctic?



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Where is the Arctic?

Can you find the Arctic on the map? The Arctic region is in the northern part of the earth. It is at the top of the globe and includes three different continents: North America, Europe, and Asia. Most of the Arctic consists of a body of water called the **Arctic Ocean**.

The **Arctic Circle** is an invisible line around the northern part of the earth. All places north of the Arctic Circle experience at least one full summer day of sunlight. That is 24 hours of daylight. In the winter the areas north of the Arctic Circle experience at least one full day of darkness.

Imagine you are at the **North Pole**. It is at the northernmost point in the world and is in the very center of the map below. You are now in the middle of the Arctic Ocean. You should be all wet, but because the Arctic is a very cold place, the Arctic Ocean is frozen most of the time. You can stand on sea ice at the North Pole, but the sea ice is always moving.

View of the top of the world.



While everyone agrees that the Arctic region includes the North Pole, the exact boundaries of the Arctic depend on which definition you use.

Arctic Region Definitions:

1. Any area north of the Arctic Circle, where the sun does not set at least one night of the year.
2. The area north of the tree line, where trees cannot grow.
3. The place where summer temperatures are below 50° F.
4. Land where the ground is permanently frozen year round.

What is the Weather Like?

The Arctic is usually cold and the air is dry. Much of the Arctic is frozen all year.

Winter in the Arctic: In the winter, the North Pole is tilted away from the sun. This means that during this period the sun never rises above the horizon.

Children wake up, go to school, and play in the dark. Temperatures can drop to -50° F or lower. It is so cold that cars need special heaters to start.

Summer in the Arctic: During the summer the Arctic is tilted towards the sun so there is sunlight almost all day and all night. In the summer months because the sun stays out longer the Arctic warms up to about 45° F. Sometimes in July or August it can warm up to 70° F!

Arctic vs. Antarctic Matching

People often confuse the Arctic with Antarctica. Both regions are very cold but Antarctica is a continent, land surrounded by water, and the Arctic is water surrounded by land. They are also at opposite ends of the globe.

Draw a line from the word to the definition.

Antarctica	This animal lives only around the Antarctic
Arctic Ocean	This animal lives only in the Arctic
North Pole	Area surrounding the North Pole
South Pole	A point in the middle of the Antarctic continent
Polar Bear	Land that surrounds the South Pole
Seals	Northernmost point in the world
Penguin	Animals that live in the Arctic and Antarctic