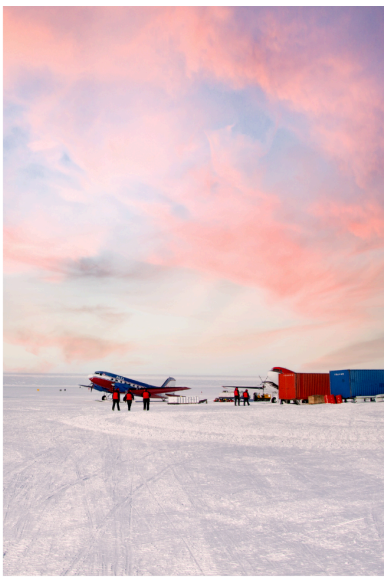




Incredible Weather

READING UNIT 9

1. Read the text below about three places with incredible weather:

The Driest Place on Earth



Most people think the driest place on Earth is the Sahara Desert in Africa or the Gobi Desert in Asia. But the real driest place is somewhere very unexpected—Antarctica!

This area is called the Dry Valleys. Here, it has not rained for almost two million years. The strong winds, which can reach 320 kilometers per hour, take away all the moisture from the air. While Antarctica is usually full of snow and ice, the Dry Valleys are almost completely without it.

The Dry Valleys are not only the driest place on our planet. They are also one of the largest deserts. Scientists even study them because the land is similar to the surface of Mars

1. **Which two deserts do most people usually think of as the driest places on Earth?**
2. **Where is the real driest place on Earth located?**
3. **What is the name of this very dry area in Antarctica?**
4. **How many years has it been since it rained in the Dry Valleys?**
5. **How strong can the winds in the Dry Valleys get?**

The Hottest Place on Earth



The hottest temperature ever recorded on Earth didn't happen in the Sahara or in Death Valley. It was actually in the Lut Desert in Iran. A NASA satellite measured the ground here at an incredible 71°C (159°F)—hot enough to cook food without fire!

The hottest temperature ever recorded on Earth was in Death Valley, California, USA. In 1913, the temperature reached an unbelievable 56.7°C (134°F)—hot enough to feel like an oven outside!

Death Valley is a huge desert valley surrounded by mountains. Its low elevation

and dry air trap heat, making the ground even hotter. Some parts of Death Valley also have dark rocks and sand that absorb the sun's rays, pushing the temperature even higher.

Although a few plants and animals have adapted to survive there, the extreme heat makes life very difficult. For humans, visiting in the summer can be extremely dangerous, and people are warned not to hike without plenty of water and protection from the sun.

1. **Where was the hottest temperature on Earth recorded?**
2. **What year did this record happen, and how hot was it?**
3. **Why does Death Valley trap so much heat?**
4. **Why do the dark rocks and sand make Death Valley even hotter?**
5. **What dangers do humans face if they visit Death Valley in the summer?**
6. **In your opinion, why might some plants and animals still manage to survive there?**

The Coldest Place on Earth



In 1983, at the Russian Vostok Base in Antarctica, scientists recorded the coldest temperature in history. The air reached –129°F (almost –90°C), which is colder than dry ice!

Antarctica is a unique continent because no country owns it. Besides being the coldest place on Earth, it is also the windiest, wettest, and even the driest. Almost all of its land is covered in snow and ice. The very lowest temperatures usually happen in late August, when the continent has no sunlight at all.

There are no native people living in Antarctica. The conditions are simply too

extreme for humans to survive there. In fact, even today, scientists cannot explore every part of this frozen land because of the dangerous weather.

1. **Where was the coldest temperature in history recorded?**
2. **What was the temperature in Fahrenheit and Celsius?**
3. **When do the coldest temperatures usually happen in Antarctica?**
4. **Why is Antarctica described as both the coldest and the driest place on Earth?**
5. **Do you think people will ever be able to live in Antarctica permanently? Why or why not?**