Two King penguins are shown in the center, facing each other. Behind them is a white outline of the continent of Antarctica. The background consists of blue diagonal stripes.

A KIDS GUIDE TO ANTARCTICA



No one set foot on Antarctica until 1895. The South Pole was first reached in 1911. In 1956, the first year-round research station at the South Pole was established. Antarctica's history is packed full of extraordinary stories of heroism and survival.



The average annual temperature at South Pole Station is -56°F . During the summer at South Pole Station, the temperature may reach 0°F . Some areas on the continent can see summer temperatures as high as 55°F . The lowest temperature ever recorded on the continent is -128.6°F .



Much of the area in Antarctica enjoys one long day and one long night each year. During the summer, those living in Antarctica experience 24 hours of daylight, and in the winter 24 hours of nighttime.



Where in the World?

Antarctica is the southernmost continent in the world! The continent surrounds the South Pole and has more land than both Europe and Australia. All of the U.S., minus Alaska and Hawaii, could fit inside Antarctica, with room to spare.

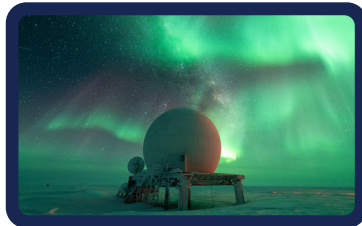
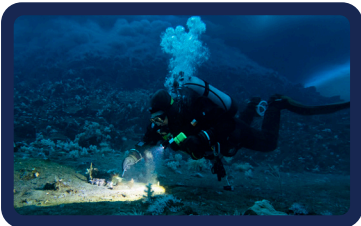
What Lives in Antarctica?

There are penguins, seals, whales and abundant sea life along the coast, but there is little life on the continent. The animals that live in Antarctica are specially adapted to the cold and harsh conditions. For example, there's a fish that has developed clear blood that won't freeze in the cold water! There are no native peoples of Antarctica...and no polar bears!



No One Owns Antarctica

The Antarctic Treaty reserves Antarctica as a zone for the peaceful conduct of research. Treaty nations, including the U.S., coordinate and cooperate to maximize science.



Science in Antarctica

Antarctica is a perfect location for scientific research. The United States Antarctic Program researches topics such as global warming, ozone changes, climatology, earth sciences, glaciology, astronomy, UV radiation, oceanic circulation, marine ecosystems and meteorite studies. What kind of science would you like to study in Antarctica?

Antarctica is the highest, driest, coldest, windiest, and emptiest place on Earth.

The Extremes of Antarctica

An ice sheet covers approximately 99% of Antarctica, which, at its thickest point, is three miles deep. This ice is approximately 90% of all the world's ice (by volume) and is 70% of all the world's fresh water.

Cross Section through Antarctica

