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| **Text: Antarctica** | **Topic:** |
| Antarctica is the coldest, windiest, highest and driest continent in the world. It is situated at and around the South Pole.  Most of Antarctica is covered in very thick ice and snow. In fact, the ice covering Antarctica makes up nearly 70% of the world’s fresh water.  The average rainfall on Antarctica is lower than in many deserts areas in the world. By that standard, it could be said that Antarctica is the largest desert in the world.  For obvious reasons, Antarctica is mostly uninhibited, apart from staff working at research stations. No land vertebrates live on Antarctica, but a handful of insects and worms have been found. Penguins, seabirds, seals, whales and dolphins inhabit the waters and shores.  To protect Antarctica, 12 nations signed the Antarctic Treaty” in 1959. The treaty ensures that the continent is used cooperatively and peacefully for scientific research. Nuclear or military testing is banned and scientific programs have limits. Information from the research is shared among the nations. Since 1959, many more continents have joined the treaty, making it one of the best examples of international cooperation in the world so far.  Antarctica is like no other continent in the world. It extremes make it one of the most spectacular and beautiful places on Earth. |  |