

## The Last True Wilderness

**Time:** 1 hour

**Introduction** Relatively unexplored as it is, there are still plenty of places to get to know in and around Antarctica. Many of these places have been named after famous explorers. This lesson introduces the different places in Antarctica and where they are on this frozen continent.

### Learning Objective:

To appreciate the size, key features and key bases of Antarctica.

### Resources:

Detailed map of Antarctica with key geographical features and research bases.

Blank map of Antarctica blown up to A3 size for each child / team.

**1** Superimpose a map of Antarctica onto other continents and countries on the IWB to show how big and empty the continent is. (A good map of Antarctica can be found on Wikipedia; search for Antarctica and then scroll down the Antarctic page two thirds until you see a map for territorial claims, which you can enlarge on the IWB).

**2** Give the class a plain outline map of Antarctica. A copy can be printed off [www.worldatlas.com](http://worldatlas.com) once you have clicked on Antarctica (<http://worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/polar/anaroutl.htm>). Ask the children to use the map to learn and record the list of places below with words and simple symbols -

1. The South Pole (small circle)
2. Vinson Massif (highest point in Antarctica) (small triangle)
3. Ross Ice Shelf (small thin triangle)
4. Ronne Ice Shelf
5. Larsen Ice Shelf
6. Amery Ice Shelf
7. Shackleton Ice Shelf
8. Ross Sea (2 wave lines)
9. Weddell Sea
10. Amundsen Sea
11. Bellingshausen Sea
12. Antarctic Peninsula
13. Drake Passage (3 wave lines)

If you have time, mark with a dot some of the bases. Here is a good list to start with. It gives you an idea of how many countries stake a claim to Antarctica:

1. Scott (NZ)
2. McMurdo (US)
3. Dumont d'Urville (Fr)
4. Casey (Aus)

5. Mirnyy (Rus)
6. Zhong Shan (China)
7. Mawson (Aus)
8. Syowa (Japan)
9. Maitri (India)
10. Neumayer (Ger)
11. Halley (UK)
12. Esperanza (Arg)
13. Rothera (UK)
14. Vostok (Rus)
15. Amundsen-Scott (US).

**4** Some questions to ask the class: Why do you think the bases are in certain places? What might the research teams want to learn about? What would you want to learn about if you went there?

**5** When the children have filled in their maps, ask them to shade in the blue of the ocean around Antarctica. Tell them that this area freezes in winter and makes Antarctica twice the size it normally is!

### Differentiation

The children can highlight on the map the South Pole, the Vinson Massif and the different Ice Shelves, along with the Antarctic Peninsula, the most visited region of Antarctica.

More able students can find out about some of the explorers whose names have been used for key geographical features in Antarctica.

### Success Criteria

The children can identify the key features on a map of Antarctica and start to know the names of some of the research bases.