

EXTREME WEATHER

A) Have a look at these sentences from the News Report. Which of these sentences are in **present simple**? Which of these sentences are in **present continuous**?

1 At the moment, I'm covering the windows with wood.

2 We always help everyone.

3 The number of strong hurricanes is increasing.

4 Warm seas cause hurricanes.

B) Match the sentences 1-4 above with these grammar notes.

a) This is a regular action or habit.

b) This is an action happening now, or around now.

c) This is a fact or general truth.

d) This is a trend (i.e. a changing situation).

C) Complete these sentences. Use the present simple or present continuous of the verbs.

Storms hit the UK

There are heavy storms in the UK. Winds of 60 kilometres per hour 1 _____ (hit) the west coast, with more storms later this weekend. Experts say that these storms are unusual.

Today, these storms 2 _____ (be) very strong. We usually 3 _____ (get) this kind of weather in the winter, not now.' The heavy rain 4 _____ (cause) major transport problems - currently, the trains and ferries 5 _____ (not work). The emergency services are helping local residents. 'Right now, we 6 _____ (move) people to safe areas and we 7 _____ (give) them hot food. A group of fishermen are lost at sea and a rescue team 8 _____ (look) for them. We 9 _____ (not usually fly) in this kind of weather, but today 10 _____ (not be) a normal day.

D) This is a guide tour to Siberia. Read the text and complete it with these interview questions.

- 1- Really? why do they do that?
- 2- How do people keep warm?
- 3- Is the climate changing? Are winter getting warmer?
- 4- Is it really cold?
- 5- Does winter last a long time?
- 6- What do Russians think about their cold winters?
- 7- I see. What about snow? How much snow is there in Siberia?
- 8- What about you? What do you think about winter in Siberia?
- 9- And what's life like? Is it very difficult for people?
- 10- That's incredible! why is it so cold?

THE BIG CHILL

A _____

Yes, it does. Generally speaking, winter starts in September and lasts until May - so for about nine months. In the north, the sun never rises in December and January and it's dark nearly all day.

B _____

Well, minus 30 or 40 degrees Celsius is normal, but in northern Siberia the temperature sometimes drops to minus 60 or 70 degrees.

C _____

One reason is that, in the far north, the sun is always low in the sky and produces very little heat, so the ground stays cold all year. Another reason is that freezing winds come down from the Arctic because there are no mountains or trees to stop them.

D _____

It often snows, but it's rarely heavy. In the far north, snow cover lasts between 260 and 280 days.

E _____

Yes, they are. Definitely. Western Siberia is getting warmer faster than anywhere in the world. In fact, it's actually melting. And in some places in eastern Siberia, dangerous gases are rising from the ground. They're stopping the surface from freezing, even in the middle of winter. But it's still very cold!

F _____

They wear fur. In the West, we consider fur a luxury, but it's the only thing that keeps you warm when it's extremely cold!

G _____

Yes, it is. Without gloves, your fingers freeze. The little hairs in your nose freeze too. It's quite scary! The tyres of cars and lorries burst. Sometimes children can't go to school because it's so cold. They have lessons on TV!

H _____

Actually, they don't mind them. They enjoy a lot of outdoor sports. Ice-skating is the number one sport - it's really popular. They also like cross-country skiing and ice-hockey. Reindeer racing is quite popular too. Some people swim in rivers and lakes in the sub-zero temperatures.

I _____

They say there are health benefits to swimming in icy water. It's a way to avoid colds. Also, it's a real community event. Everyone takes part - men, women and children.

J _____

Well, to tell you the truth, I love it! In my home city, Liverpool, the winters are usually cloudy and mild and I don't like them much. You don't get many days when the weather's fine, you know, sunny and not raining. In Siberia, it's different. On bright sunny days, it's very beautiful.