World Climates

Cross-Curricular Focus: Earth Science

Earth's atmosphere is the layers of gases that surround our planet. A climate is the usual condition of the atmosphere in a certain area. The climate of a certain area can change a little from day to day. A climate is what the weather is usually.

There are quite a few different **climates** found in the world. Scientists have identified 11 different climates on Earth. They are named either for the region where they occur or for the weather found there. The polar regions of Earth are the areas near the North Pole and the South Pole. They have two extremely cold climates, called ice caps and tundra. The regions near the equator are warm and tropical. They have three separate climates, known as monsoon, wet and savannah/grasslands. The subtropical regions are between the tropical regions and the polar regions. They have six different climates, These are called dry summer, dry winter, humid, marine west coast, Mediterranean and wet.

Why are the warmest climates found near the equator? Earth is shaped like a sphere. The equator is the line that is equal distance from the North Pole and the South Pole. The sun shines directly on the equator when Earth is facing the sun. The surface of the Earth curves as it moves away from the equator. Those curved areas receive less direct sunlight. The poles, at the top and bottom of Earth, receive the least direct sunlight of all. The poles don't get enough warmth from the sun. That's why they have a layer of ice all year.

Name: _____

Answer the following questions based on the reading passage. Don't forget to go back to the passage whenever necessary to find or confirm your answers.

1) What is a climate? _____

_____

2) What is the climate of the region where you live? _____

_____

3) Why is it coldest in the polar regions?

_____

_____

4) How does the shape of Earth affect the climate of different regions? _____

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5) Are you more likely to have a warm climate in Canada or in Mexico? Why? _____

_____

_____

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Name: Key

Answer the following questions based on the reading passage. Don't forget to go back to the passage whenever necessary to find or confirm your answers.

Actual wording of answers may vary.

1) What is a climate? **the usual condition of the atmosphere in an area**

2) What is the climate of the region where you live? **student's choice**

3) Why is it coldest in the polar regions?

They receive the least amount of direct sunlight.

4) How does the shape of Earth affect the climate of different regions? **The earth is a sphere. The equator gets the most direct sunlight, so it is the warmest. As the earth curves away from the equator, the sunlight gets less and less direct, so it gets cooler and cooler.**

5) Are you more likely to have a warm climate in Canada or in Mexico? Why? **Mexico, because it is closer to the equator**