

An unusual place to live

1. Match the photos¹ of places with the names and explain your answers. Then, discuss the questions below.

Meteora, Greece

Shibam, Yemen

Whittier, Alaska, the US



- What might make each of these places unusual for many people?
- What is the strangest place you have ever visited?
- Do you know a place:
 - with extremely cold winters?
 - with extremely hot summers?
 - which is very difficult to get to?
 - where very few people live?

2. Match the sentence halves.

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. During a frigid winter, | 1. made it hard to stay outside for long without feeling dizzy and exhausted. |
| B. The volcanic landscape was so inhospitable | 2. temperatures drop so low that even stepping outside feels painfully cold. |
| C. The town was nearly inaccessible , | 3. as they had to step carefully on uneven ground. |
| D. The rocky terrain made the hike challenging, | 4. and suffered from frequent storms and strong winds. |
| E. Living in such a remote area | 5. that no plants or animals could survive, leaving the area empty and unwelcoming. |
| F. The scorching heat of the midday sun | 6. with only one narrow road leading to it. |
| G. The coastal village was exposed to the elements | 7. meant they were far from any towns or services. |
| H. The intense heat in the tropical rainforest became unbearable , | 8. making it difficult to stay outside even for short periods. |

3. Read the texts about the places in the photos you talked about in ex. 1. In each text, find words or phrases with the same meaning as the words and phrases in the boxes.

frigid

inaccessible

remote

A.

Whittier, Alaska, is an isolated place known as the “town under one roof”, with most of its 300 residents living in the 14-storey Begich Towers. Originally established by the US Army during WWII, the town was once impossible to access by road. It is now reachable via a 2.7-mile-long tunnel, which operates on a scheduled, one-way basis. Despite its location, Whittier doesn’t experience extremely cold winters and is a popular holiday destination, offering a variety of activities such as day cruises, kayaking or diving.

inhospitable

rocky

B.

The Holy Monastery of Roussanou, Greece, set on a cliff made of rocks at Meteora, Greece, was established in the 14th century and expanded in the 16th century to increase its space. Originally founded and inhabited by a community of monks who lived, worked and prayed together, the monastery was transformed into a convent in 1988. It now houses more than 15 nuns who are dedicated to a religious life. Although the surrounding terrain is difficult to live in, Roussanou’s lower elevation makes it easier to access than other monasteries in Meteora.

exposed to the elements

scorching

unbearable

C.

Shibam, Yemen, a UNESCO World Heritage Site with around 7,000 inhabitants, is famous for its mudbrick towers, some rising five to eleven storeys high. These buildings face constant threats from extreme heat and erosion, requiring regular conservation work. The city’s structures are often left unprotected from bad weather, including strong winds or heavy rain, and suffer from intolerable conditions.

4. Discuss the questions.

- Would you like to live in any of these places? Why/Why not? What would be the most challenging part of living in these places?
- Why might people choose to live in such challenging conditions?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of living where you live?

5. You are going to watch a video about people living underground. Try to guess the answers to the following questions.

- A. Where in the world do they live?
- B. What is the landscape like?
- C. What is the weather like in the summer and in the winter?
- D. Do they have water, electricity and internet access?
- E. Why do they live there?

6. Watch the [video](https://youtu.be/uFA-OB-nJ_I) [https://youtu.be/uFA-OB-nJ_I] and check your ideas in ex. 5.