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**Listening:**

I love snow. I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ excited when it snows. I live in a country where it doesn’t \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Some winters, it doesn’t snow \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. So when it does snow, I’m really happy. The more \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. When I was a kid I used to pray for snow in the winter. That’s because the school \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ so we couldn’t go to school. Now I’m older, I still want it to snow a lot. I love the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the landscape. There’s nothing \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ beautiful than looking at fields, trees, mountains, and houses covered with snow. I have to go \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the snow. It’s great fun. Of course I have to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_snow balls, perhaps have a snowball fight. And I have to make\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ my kids.

Do you like snow?

What are your earliest memories of snow?

What fun things can you do in the snow?

Can snow be dangerous?

Do you think snow is beautiful?

Do you ever really hope that it snows?

Which is more fun, having a snowball fight or making a snowman?

Would you prefer to live in a snowy place or a desert?

How do they make artificial snow?

What do you think it would be like to have snow drifts 3 metres high come to your town?

What would you do if you were hiking and there was a snowstorm?

Which would / do you prefer – snowboarding or skiing?

What is an avalanche? Do you know what to do to prevent it and how to behave in it?

What are some special things you eat and drink during winter?

Do you often get sick in winter?

How does winter weather affect your mood?

How does winter weather affect your schedule or work load?

Do you travel somewhere warm to get away from the cold?

How do you make a snow angel?

Have you ever been in a blizzard?

Have you ever slipped on ice and hurt yourself?

How do people keep safe on the roads in winter?

How do you prevent avalanches in mountains?

Is your house cold?

What do you usually do to keep warm in winter?

In winter we see a lot of frozen water. What is the difference between frost, snow, hail, and slush?

Have you ever looked at a snowflake carefully?

**SNOW FACTS** - Complete the sentences

***hail, powder, vapour, transport, visibility, shapes, crystals, precipitation, fog, blizzards, snowstorms***

Snow forms when water \_\_\_\_\_ in the atmosphere freezes into \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Snowflakes form in a variety of different \_\_\_\_\_.

Snow is a form of \_\_\_\_\_\_, other forms of precipitation are rain, \_\_\_\_\_and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Light and fluffy snow is often called \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Heavy snowfalls are often called \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Snowstorms with high winds are often called \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Snow can lower \_\_\_\_\_, making driving conditions dangerous.

Skis, sleds and snowmobiles are useful \_\_\_\_\_ options through snow.

**A Siberian Winter**

It was only minus 28 degrees Celsius when we landed in Irkutsk. But that was cold enough to make breathing very difficult - the air felt like ice as it scraped the back of my throat. Five minutes later, I needed a second pair of gloves and pulled my scarf tight over my nose and mouth. I was obviously a beginner at this.

At the petrol station, Mikhail the attendant laughed when we asked if he wasn't freezing. He'd spent the whole day outside with no more than his **fur hat** and a sheepskin coat for warmth. It was mid-afternoon and **icicles** were hanging from his moustache. He said he never drank to stay warm - unlike many others.

**Vodka**

There's a belief in Siberia that enough vodka will **protect** you **against** the cold. The past few weeks showed it was tragically wrong. Dozens of bodies of the homeless or men walking drunkenly back from the pub were found in the snowdrifts, frozen or so badly **frost-bitten** that many will never walk again.

The local hospital in Irkutsk is extremely busy. Ironically, it's the burns unit that tries to help the frostbite victims - 200 of them in just two weeks in one town. In the building, icicles are hanging down on the inside of the windows, although the heating is on full power. The doctor was too busy performing amputations to talk to us.

**Shortages**

But we could hear the screams from the operating room. They were no anaesthetic left after performing 60 amputations that week. The other patients could hear it too, and one girl in the corridor was near to tears.

Nastya is only 16. Last week she missed her last bus home, so she walked instead - seven kilometres through the snow, in temperatures of minus 40. She had no gloves. Now her hands are bandaged and hang down uselessly. She'll find out soon if they need to be amputated.

**Toughness**

That incredible stoicism is everywhere. In Irkutsk at least, people simply accepted that winter is harsh - and this one especially so. It is without doubt the cruellest Siberian winter in living memory. Yet outdoors, everything seems to function normally - even schools re-opened as the temperature rose briefly to minus 25.

The trams and buses are back on the roads, though everyone drives slowly to avoid **skidding** on the layers of ice. People in the streets hurry, wrapped in layers against the cold. But even indoors, the chill is inescapable. After her shift as a tram conductor, Natasha Fillipova comes home to a freezing house. She shows us the bedroom - where ice has built up on the inside walls. She scrapes it off with her fingers, but that has little effect. One night, Natasha says, she washed her hair before going to bed. When she woke up, it was frozen **solid** to the wall. The children are doing their homework in the bathroom - the only room warm enough to sit in. Natasha doesn't want to complain. But she is angry with the state and the architects for building poor houses.

The flats here are supposed to **withstand** up to minus 40 degrees. They don't, and her children are ill with coughs and colds. Natasha's anger is short, and she seems a little embarrassed about it. Siberians are used to cold weather, she explains. Here, she tells us, people prefer to rely on themselves - and the knowledge that one day, spring will come again.

How did the author arrive in Irkutsk?

What is local theory about vodka?

Which unit in hospital is responsible for treating frostbitten victims?

Why was Nastya in hospital?

What do you know about Natasha?

Why did she complain?

**Explain the following words:**

fur hat –

icicles-

amputation-

frost-bitten-

shortages -

toughness-

skid –

solid -

withstand -