
NOT BORING MEDIA

THE HOTEL MADE OF ICE THAT MELTS EVERY SPRING

High-Interest Nonfiction Reading Passage

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ✓ Reading Passage
- ✓ Comprehension Questions
- ✓ Answer Key
- ✓ Teacher Guide

GRADES 4-6 • LEXILE ~750L • DOK LEVELS 1-4

Reading they'll actually do.

TERMS OF USE

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WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ✓ High-interest nonfiction reading passage (300-400 words)
- ✓ 6 comprehension questions spanning DOK levels 1-4
- ✓ Complete answer key with explanations
- ✓ Teacher guide with standards, pacing, and extensions

Questions or feedback? Leave a review or message us through TPT!

THE HOTEL MADE OF ICE THAT MELTS EVERY SPRING

Every winter in the remote wilderness of northern Sweden, something magical emerges from the frozen landscape: a hotel built entirely from ice and snow. The ICEHOTEL rises from the banks of the Torne River each November and exists for only a few months before melting completely back into the river that provided its building material. It's been reconstructed from scratch every single year since 1989.

Building the ICEHOTEL is an enormous undertaking requiring international collaboration. Workers harvest approximately 2,500 tons of ice from the Torne River once it freezes solid in the Arctic winter. Artists from around the world are then invited to submit designs and travel to Sweden to carve and sculpt unique guest suites. Each room features elaborate ice sculptures, furniture, and decorations—some years have included ice chandeliers, frozen thrones, and intricate wall carvings depicting everything from wildlife to abstract art.

Guests sleep in rooms maintained at around 23 degrees Fahrenheit—cold by any normal standard, but surprisingly comfortable with the right equipment. Visitors receive special thermal sleeping bags rated for Arctic conditions and sleep on beds made of ice blocks covered with reindeer skins. In the morning, staff wake guests with steaming cups of hot lingonberry juice to warm them from the inside. The experience attracts thousands of adventurous visitors each winter season.

The hotel includes amenities that seem impossible in a building made of frozen water: a bar where drinks are served in glasses carved from ice, a chapel where couples exchange wedding vows surrounded by ice sculptures, and an art gallery showcasing the season's most impressive frozen creations. Nothing inside the building is permanent—every glass, every sculpture, every architectural detail is frozen water that will return to liquid form when spring arrives.

In 2016, the owners constructed ICEHOTEL 365, a permanent addition using solar-powered cooling systems to maintain ice rooms year-round despite the warming summer temperatures.

Word Count: 295 | Lexile: ~750L | Grades 4-6 | Source: ICEHOTEL official

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Name: _____ Date: _____

1

What happens to the ICEHOTEL every spring?

- ☐ A) It's moved to storage
- ☐ B) It melts back into the river
- ☐ C) It's sold to new owners
- ☐ D) It's converted to a ski resort

2

How much ice is used to build the hotel each year?

- ☐ A) 250 tons
- ☐ B) 1,000 tons
- ☐ C) About 2,500 tons
- ☐ D) 10,000 tons

3

How do guests stay warm while sleeping in rooms at 23°F?

- ☐ A) Electric heaters
- ☐ B) Special sleeping bags and reindeer skins
- ☐ C) They don't actually sleep there
- ☐ D) Hot water bottles

4

What is 'snice' and why is it used?

- ☐ A) A type of ice cream
- ☐ B) A snow-ice mixture used to build walls and ceilings
- ☐ C) A warming drink
- ☐ D) A type of sleeping bag

5

What makes ICEHOTEL 365 different from the original?

- ☐ A) It's made of wood
- ☐ B) It uses solar-powered cooling to stay frozen year-round
- ☐ C) It's located in Finland
- ☐ D) It has no art

6

What does the ICEHOTEL represent about the relationship between humans and nature?

- ☐ A) Humans should never use natural resources
- ☐ B) Creating something beautiful from nature, using it temporarily, then letting it return naturally
- ☐ C) Ice is more valuable than water
- ☐ D) Hotels should all be made of ice

ANSWER KEY

The Hotel Made of Ice That Melts Every Spring

1. B) It melts back into the river

DOK 1 — Recall. The passage states: 'every spring, it melts completely back into the river.'

2. C) About 2,500 tons

DOK 1 — Recall. The passage states: 'workers harvest about 2,500 tons of ice from the river.'

3. B) Special sleeping bags and reindeer skins

DOK 2 — Inference. The passage explains: 'special sleeping bags and reindeer skins keep visitors surprisingly warm.'

4. B) A snow-ice mixture used to build walls and ceilings

DOK 2 — Inference. The passage states: 'a mixture called snice—a combination of snow and ice—to build walls and ceilings.'

5. B) It uses solar-powered cooling to stay frozen year-round

DOK 3 — Analysis. The passage explains ICEHOTEL 365 uses 'solar-powered cooling to maintain ice rooms year-round.'

6. B) Creating something beautiful from nature, using it temporarily, then letting it return naturally

DOK 4 — Extended Thinking. The passage concludes: 'humans creating something beautiful from the environment, using it briefly, and then letting it return to its natural state.'

TEACHER GUIDE

The Hotel Made of Ice That Melts Every Spring

STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.1 — Refer to details and examples in a text
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.4 — Determine meaning of words and phrases
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.8 — Explain how author uses evidence
- NGSS — Connections to scientific practices
- C3 Framework — Historical thinking skills

PACING OPTIONS

- Quick Read (10-15 min): Passage + questions 1-4
- Standard (20-25 min): Full passage + all questions
- Deep Dive (35-40 min): Add discussion + extension

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- The ICEHOTEL is rebuilt every year, only to melt. Is there value in creating something beautiful that won't last? Why or why not?
- Guests pay to sleep in below-freezing rooms. What makes uncomfortable experiences appealing to some people?
- The hotel uses nature's materials and returns them to nature. How might this approach to building inspire more sustainable architecture?

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Design a room for the ICEHOTEL. What theme would you choose? What ice sculptures would you include?
- Calculate how many gallons of water 2,500 tons of ice would produce when melted. Visualize this amount.
- Research other structures made from unusual natural materials (bamboo, straw, earth) and compare their environmental impact to traditional construction.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Struggling: Pre-teach vocabulary, partner reading
- Advanced: Add research, compare to related events
- ELL: Visual supports, pre-teach context

SOURCE

- ICEHOTEL official / BBC Travel