
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

Words in the News

Desert snows



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Transcript

Is it a **mirage**? No, it really is snowing in the desert.

For the third year running, parts of Saudi Arabia have been **blanketed**.

This year has been particularly cold – **sub-zero temperatures** have forced shepherds and their camels into their tents **to seek shelter**.

But some people are enjoying the wintry weather. These men are certainly **making the most of** it.

Vocabulary

mirage

something that looks real but is not really there

blanketed

covered

sub-zero temperatures

colder than 0° centigrade

to seek shelter

to look for somewhere safe

making the most of

using something while it lasts

Watch the video online: Desert snows <http://bbc.in/1Ijv3ne>

Exercise

Use one of the words or phrases below to complete each of these sentences from news reports. Note that you may have to change the form of a word to complete the sentence correctly.

mirage / blanketed / sub-zero temperatures / to seek shelter / making the most of

1. The record lows come as parts of the UK have already been hit by _____ and forecasters warned of further plunging temperatures over the next three days.
2. As we're currently in the middle of a heatwave, it is only sensible _____ from the sun.
3. A winter storm has _____ parts of Canada and the north-eastern US with up to 2ft (61 cm) of snow.
4. The UK is failing to _____ its heritage, according to new research by the Royal Society for the Arts.
5. British and American astronomers have discovered a cosmic _____ caused when the gravity of a distant galaxy distorts the light coming from an object even further away.

Answers

1. The record lows come as parts of the UK have already been hit by **sub-zero temperatures** and forecasters warned of further plunging temperatures over the next three days.

Source: Cold weather: Record 2014 freeze for England, Wales and Northern Ireland
<http://tinyurl.com/kcap4fg>

2. As we're currently in the middle of a heatwave, it is only sensible **to seek shelter** from the sun.

Source: DZ Deathrays – McHugh's Belfast
<http://tinyurl.com/lxztlh>

3. A winter storm has **blanketed** parts of Canada and the north-eastern US with up to 2ft (61 cm) of snow.

Source: US and Canada snowstorm causes travel chaos
<http://tinyurl.com/nu7je9e>

4. The UK is failing to **make the most of** its heritage, according to new research by the Royal Society for the Arts.

Source: UK 'failing' to get the most out of its heritage
<http://tinyurl.com/jwqlbvq>

5. British and American astronomers have discovered a cosmic **mirage** caused when the gravity of a distant galaxy distorts the light coming from an object even further away.

Source: Astronomers see cosmic mirage
<http://tinyurl.com/kl2fho3>