

Video Teaching Notes: Report Units 4–6

The Atacama Desert

Report Summary

Topic: The Report is about the Atacama Desert. It gives information about the people who live there, the landscape, and the Llano de Chajnantor Observatory.

Preparation: Ask some questions *Have you ever heard of the Atacama Desert? Do you know where it is? Do you think there are many towns and villages there? How do you think people survive in the desert?*

Check students understand these words: *antennae, geyser, lagoons, observatory, telescope, volcano*

Background: The Atacama Desert is known as the driest place in the world. The average rainfall is only about 15 millimeters a year, although places like Arica and Iquique, cities in the desert, receive much less than that, between only 1 and 3 millimeters a year. Some places in the Atacama Desert have never had any rain at all! In spite of the harsh conditions, over 500 species of plants have been found within the desert, but some parts of the desert are so dry that nothing can survive there at all.

Before You Watch

Read the questions with the class and elicit answers from individual students. Encourage students to guess the answers they don't know and use their suggestions to start a class discussion.

ANSWER

Students' own answers.

Comprehension Check

- Watch the Report. Choose the correct answers.
Pre-watching: Go through the questions with the students.
 - What is the name of the river in the Atacama Desert?
 - What is the village of Toconao famous for?
 - What is ALMA in the Llano de Chajnantor Observatory?



Play the whole Report. Students choose the correct answers. Check their answers with the Comprehension Check.

ANSWERS

2. b 3. b

- Watch the Report again. Put the statements in the order you hear them.

Pre-watching: Ask students to order the statements if they can before watching the Report again.



Play the Report to check answers.

ANSWERS

- In fact, some parts of the Atacama Desert haven't had any rain for hundreds of years.
 - Today, about 5,000 people live here and it's very popular with tourists.
 - They visit El Tatio, a huge geyser field.
 - This beautiful village is in the middle of the desert and it is famous for its church tower.
 - There are now 66 large antennae here and the project cost over US \$1 billion.
 - The Atacama Desert is a hot, dry, and sometimes, dangerous place.
- Watch the Report again. Complete the statements with the correct words.
Pre-watching: Ask students to read the statements carefully and then circle the correct words in each answer.



Play the Report to check answers.

ANSWERS

- Chile 3. thousands 4. landscape 5. 1750
- Watch the Report again. Circle T (true) or F (false).
Pre-watching: Ask students to read the statements and circle T (True) or F (False) before watching the Report again.



Play the Report again to check answers. Pause after each statement.

ANSWERS

2. F 3. F 4. F 5. T 6. F

Language Check

- Look at the chart.
Then watch the Language Check.

The present perfect

Affirmative

People **have** always **found** a way to survive.

Negative

In fact, some parts of the Atacama Desert **haven't had** any rain for hundreds of years.

yes / no questions

Have you ever heard of the Atacama Desert?

Information questions with *How long*

How long have they lived here for?

for and since

They have lived here **for** hundreds of years.

It is famous for its church tower. It is made from volcanic stone and **has been** here **since** 1750.

Pre-watching: Revise the grammar points by brainstorming some verbs on the board and eliciting the past participles from the class. Practice pronunciation and spelling as an open class activity.

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Remind students that we use the present perfect tense to talk about actions or events that occurred at an indefinite time in the past, e.g. *I've been to Ecuador. My friends haven't seen that movie.* Remind them that we can talk about a period of time in the past using *for* and *since*, e.g. *I've been here for ten minutes. We've had our car since September.* Remember to explain that we use *for* when talking about a length of time (*ten minutes, half an hour, three months, a year*, etc) and *since* for talking about a specific date or time (*Tuesday, 1998, four o'clock, yesterday*, etc).

Remind students that we often use *ever* in *yes / no* questions to talk about a life experience, e.g. *Have you ever ridden an elephant? Has John ever been to San Salvador?* Practice with more statements.

Revise the rules for making information questions using *How long*. Write a present perfect statement on the board and elicit the correct question, e.g. *They've had their cat for six years. (How long have they had their cat?)* Practice with more statements.



Play the Language Check and pause when examples of the language appear. Ask students to listen and repeat.

6. Write complete present perfect questions.

Ask students to write complete present perfect questions using the prompts.

Go through the answers with the class.

ANSWERS

2. Have your friends ever climbed a volcano?
3. Has your mom ever swum in a lagoon?
4. Have your parents ever seen a geyser?
5. Has your dad ever gone to the Atacama Desert?
6. Have you ever looked through a telescope?

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY Divide the class into pairs. Students take turns to ask each other the questions from Exercise 6 and to answer truthfully. When they have finished ask them to write six different questions to ask each other.

7. Match the questions (1–6) with the answers (a–f).

Ask students to match the questions and answers.

Go through the answers with the class.

ANSWERS

2. e 3. a 4. c 5. b

About You!

8. Answer the questions.

Read the questions with the class and elicit answers from individual students.

ANSWER

Students' own answers.

SCRIPT

Have you ever heard of the Atacama Desert? It is the driest desert in the world. Most of the desert is in northern Chile, but it stretches into Bolivia, Peru, and Argentina, too. Most of the time, there isn't any rain here. In fact, some parts of the Atacama desert haven't had any rain for hundreds of years.

But is there any life here? Surprisingly, in an area that receives almost no rain, there is some water. There are a few lagoons, and some rivers, such as the San Pedro.

Where there is water, there is life, and the desert is home to some plants, animals, and people.

In fact, people lived here thousands of years ago in forts – or *pukarás* – such as this one.

But today, they live in towns and villages, such as San Pedro de Atacama. How long have people lived here for? They have lived here for hundreds of years. Today, about 5,000 people live here and it's very popular with tourists.

There are a few sights in the town – there's the Archaeological Museum and the Church of San Pedro – but most people come to explore the amazing landscape outside the town.

They visit El Tatio, a huge geyser field; Licancabur, a volcano near the town; and the Valle de la Luna, or Valley of the Moon, a strange but beautiful place that looks like another planet!

Some tourists also travel to a small village 38 kilometers south of San Pedro, called Toconao. This beautiful village is in the middle of the desert and it is famous for its church tower. It's made from volcanic stone, and has been here since 1750.

The Atacama Desert is also well-known for the Llano de Chajnantor Observatory. It has been home to ALMA – the largest and most expensive telescope project in the world – for about ten years. There are now 66 large antennae here, and the project cost over 1 billion U.S. dollars. It is an international partnership between Europe, East Asia, the United States, Canada, and Chile.

The Atacama Desert is a hot, dry, and sometimes, dangerous place. But all of these towns, villages, and observatories show that even in very difficult conditions, people have always found a way to survive.