

## Ice Planet comprehension

1. Where is this story taking place?

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2. Which character speaks first?

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3. Has anyone been to the planet before? Which word tells us this?

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4. 5-4-3-2-1...do you think this is a good opening? Why?

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5. What is meant by 'The ship shuddered to a halt'? Gemma thinks it's because the ship is scared or cold...what do you think?

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6. What is the 'blue and green marble' mentioned in paragraph 3?

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7. What different noises can Gemma and Simon hear before they hear a scream?

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8. A simile is a phrase that is used to liken something to something else (i.e. as good as gold). What simile has been used in this piece of writing?

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9. The scream is described as 'piercing'...what does this mean?

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10. It says the ice is groaning. What does this mean?

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# Ice Planet

**Five** – Begin landing space shuttle

**Four** – Fasten safety belts

**Three** – Lower landing legs

**Two** – Fire braking rockets

**One** – Shut main engines off

Touchdown! 'Mission control, we have landed.'

The ship shuddered to a halt. Gemma smiled to herself. Was the ship shuddering because it was scared of landing on this mysterious planet or because it felt cold as its feet touched the frozen surface?

It had taken over eight months to get here and the blue and green marble they called home was a million miles away. Yet here they were, after a long and tiring journey, about to be the first humans to set foot on this unexplored world.

Simon held Gemma's hand. 'Are you ready?' Gemma nodded and soon they were putting on their space helmets and stepping out into the unknown.

There was no sun to warm this frost-bitten planet and the only light came from the glittering sky above.

Magnificent chunks of ice groaned in the far distance as the snow crunched under their feet.

Crystals, like frozen trees, towered above them, growing high into the blackness of space. Smaller crystals sprang from the ground like the sharp teeth of a guard dog trying to bite any newcomer that walked on his land.

'Be careful not to step too close to those crystals,' Simon warned.

Suddenly there was a piercing scream.

The astronauts looked at each other.

'Did you hear that?' Gemma asked.

'It's probably nothing. The wind perhaps, or our imagination.'

Simon slowly reached for his laser gun. And for the first time since leaving Earth, both of them realised they were not alone.

