

The Weight of the Sleigh (a semi-factual report)

Relentless snowfalls and below-zero temperatures can have a huge effect on daily life for some people. Travelling to work and school is impossible, particularly in rural locations. Some places get a little snow, whilst other places get so much snow, normal life comes to a standstill. Would you like to know how people who live in the most remote locations on the entire planet adapt to such conditions? This report contains some amazing facts about human beings who have to cope with approximately two metres of snow every year.

Neighbours

Neighbours are, without doubt, the main source of support for all those living within the coldest conditions. Stuck indoors during the bleak, grey evenings means that life can become a bit boring. Neighbours often get together to play board games and chat away late into the night. They can also share food and water (if they have any left). This is particularly important when there is a power cut that has been caused by freezing conditions. Good neighbours normally have a supply of candles that provide light and warmth ... great neighbours may also share some energy-rich chocolate or cake!

Surveys

Because the snow is so deep, cars cannot be driven easily, so the best way of getting around is by sleigh. Approximately one month before the snow comes, a survey is conducted within these communities. The aim of the survey is to find out the exact weight of each person so that a sleigh can be built. It needs to be strong enough to convey at least twelve people at a time. The weight of the people on a sleigh at any one time will determine the number of huskies that are needed to pull it. The sleigh needs to be booked in advance of any journey and it is quite straightforward to reserve it by phone or email. The sleigh company holds the details of each individual's weight, so that the amount of huskies needed to pull it can be calculated.

The huskies

Before jumping onto the sleigh, each person must sign a code of conduct. This includes rules that must be obeyed before travelling on the sleigh. If any person fails to obey the rules, they will not be able to book the sleigh again. The main reason for this is that huskies are very sensitive dogs and respond well to human kindness. They are intelligent and are bred to pull sleds for extremely long distances, in the freezing cold. Often, locals show how much they appreciate these animals by donating money towards the cost of the equipment, such as new reins and small bags of treats for them.