Animals and birds survive in the icy, cold Arctic weather because they have ways of stopping heat escaping from their bodies.

Polar bears and Arctic hare have thick fur or feathers to trap warm air against their skin.

People don't grow layers of fur to keep out the cold so how do the people who live in the Arctic keep themselves warm?

The Inuit people live in parts of the Arctic Circle where it is very, very cold. They invented parkas and parka coats with hoods and fur inside to keep out the wind to keep them warm.

Some clothes are still made at home in the traditional old way rather than bought in a shop. This parka was made from the skin and hair of caribou that had been hunted for food.

Children are still sometimes dressed in caribou skin clothing trimmed with wolf fur to keep the wind off their faces.

Whether they wear traditional clothes or more modern clothes, people who live in the Arctic wear lots of layers of clothes in the winter.

The only way to keep warm if you want to stay outside for long in the winter is to wear lots of layers.

Clothes work in the same way that double glazing works.

Air is trapped between each layer of clothes that you wear. The more layers you wear the more air you trap between the layers and the warmer you feel.

An air gap between two panes of glass

Warm air inside

Cold air outside

Padded waterproof trousers help keep out the wet, the wind and the cold.

In winter, if people are out too long without warm gloves and boots their fingers and toes begin to freeze.

Hands and feet would freeze if they weren't protected against the freezing cold so people wear boots and mittens which have fur inside them.

Mittens are long enough to pull up inside coat sleeves to keep cold air out.

Boots (kamiks) for winter are also made of caribou skin. Hunters wear two layers of boots.

The first layer has the fur facing inwards. The second boot (which goes on top of the first boot) has the fur facing out and goes from the foot to the knee.
The bottom of the second boot is made of two layers of sheepskin which is bought from the shop. The wool of the sheepskin faces inwards.

Sometimes a third ‘overshoe’ is worn. This is made of seal skin and is waterproof.

The local store sells ready-made clothes and boots. These boots would be used in summer. Winter boots and clothes are still made at home.

At the end of winter, when the weather begins to warm up, the Inuit children can take off their many layers of winter clothes and play in the sunshine.