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## Reading: The deepest mines in the world!

Mines and quarries are places where people dig into the Earth's bedrock to extract valuable materials, like stone and precious metals. People have been mining and quarrying around the globe for thousands of years. Today, advanced technology has allowed people to develop mines that go deeper beneath the Earth's surface than ever before.

The deepest mines in the world are almost all located in South Africa. Many of these mines are gold mines. Though gold can also be found on Earth's surface, most of the easiest-to-find gold has already been gathered by miners. Because gold remains a valuable commodity, digging very deep into the Earth to extract more gold remains profitable despite the challenges of operating a super deep mine.

The Mponeng Gold Mine, located southwest of Johannesburg, reaches over 4 kilometers (nearly 2.5 miles) below the surface of the Earth. Temperatures at such depths reach 150 °C (over 300 °F), so an ice-slurry must be continuously pumped into the operating part of the mine so that the environment remains tolerable for workers.

Over 5,400 tonnes of rock (only some of which contains gold) are removed from this mine every day. At the bottom of all super-deep mines, bedrock and high temperatures are the most noticeable features. No materials other than bedrock have been observed in any of these super deep mines, which are the deepest places into Earth that people have been.

Source: General Kinematics. "The Largest And Deepest Mines In The World". June 7, 2018.  
<https://www.generalkinematics.com/blog/the-largest-and-deepest-mines-in-the-world/>