

Surviving in Antarctica

Time: 1 hour

Introduction This activity celebrates how well penguins are adapted to surviving in their polar world.

Learning Objective:

To understand how penguins survive in and around Antarctica and to design a penguin fact-file that highlights how well suited they are to this Antarctic life .

Resources

1. Pictures of different penguin species from the 2041 image bank or Google Images or video clips from 'Life in the Freezer' or 'March of the Penguins'
2. Penguin fact-file sheet (available on www.2041.com)

- 1 Show the children images of penguins and video clips from 'Life in the Freezer' or 'March of the Penguins'.

Ask the children what they notice about the way the penguin is adapted for life in a very cold climate. Think about its body shape, its flippers, its face, its feet and its eyes. Children should discuss what they think are the most important features for survival in Antarctica and come up with their top three.

- 2 Ask the class to sketch and draw the penguin in full and then to focus on particular features such as its feet or beak or flippers.

- 3 Penguins have evolved over millions of years to be adapted to their life on the frozen ice shelf and waters of Antarctica. Their adaptations suit them perfectly for life at sea, but perhaps less so for life on the land, where they spend time breeding and rearing their young.

Ask the children to create their own penguin fact-files that celebrate this amazing animal.

Can the children then describe a penguin using a Kenning - a Kenning uses two ways to describe something without actually saying what it is. Here are some examples:

1. Ocean flipper-flier
2. Underwater acrobat
3. White-fronted waddler
4. Noisy neighbour
5. Leopard seal's snack
6. Tummy toboggan-er
7. Deep sea diver

Their Kenning descriptions can be used to border their annotated drawings.

Differentiation

Discussing adaptation to habitat and drawing close observational sketches of penguins will allow the children to each engage at their own level.

The next stage of creating their own fact-files will allow those children who want to go into more detail to do so, but the less able children can simply write five statements to explain what makes a penguin so well suited to its environment. Look at shape, feet, flippers, beak and colouring. Typing up the fact-files and adding images will be a good motivator for this activity.

Success Criteria

The children are able to explain how a penguin is so well adapted to its environment.

