

FUN FACTS ABOUT PENGUINS

Directions: Read the article below and use close reading strategies as often as possible: highlight, underline, and take notes.

Penguins are fascinating creatures that inhabit the icy lands of Antarctica and other parts of the Southern Hemisphere. They have captured the hearts of many with their waddling walk and adorable appearance. Storytellers and environmentalists have created many documentaries and movies about these very loveable and interesting creatures. Let's dive, or waddle, into some interesting facts about penguins that will make you fall in love with them even more.

Penguins are classified as birds even though they are unable to fly. Despite their wings and lack of access to the sky above, penguins can use their wings for swimming, which they're quite good at. Therefore, their wings have evolved into flippers, which help them navigate water with incredible agility. They can dive deep into the ocean in search of food— going as far as 1,800 feet. The views (and food sources) must be interesting.

Penguins come in different shapes and sizes. The smallest penguin species is the Little Blue Penguin, also known as the Fairy Penguin, standing at just around 13 inches tall. That's just a little taller than a sheet of paper or a ruler. On the other hand, Emperor Penguins live up to the name. Emperor Penguins is the largest penguin species, towering over three feet tall.

One other interesting fact about penguins is that they have a unique way of keeping warm in the cold Antarctic weather. They have a thick layer of blubber, or fat, underneath their skin that acts as insulation. Cozy! They also huddle together in large groups to share body heat. This snuggling strategy helps colonies survive arctic conditions and protects their organs.

When it comes to parenting, penguins take their responsibilities very seriously. If you think your parents are on top of *you*, listen to this! After laying their eggs, female penguins leave them with the males and go on long journeys to the sea to find food. The males then protect the eggs and keep them warm by balancing them on their feet and covering them with a special pouch of skin. They essentially hold the egg with the top of their feet and sandwich the egg between their toes and bellies.

Penguins are also excellent communicators. They use a variety of sounds and body movements to communicate with each other. Some penguins even have unique calls, which help them recognize their mates or chicks in a large colony. It's like having your own secret language. Overall, there's much to know and love about penguins— it's no wonder they've captured the hearts of many!

FUN FACTS ABOUT PENGUINS MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. What helps penguins swim underwater?

- a) flippers
- b) wings
- c) fins
- d) legs

2. The article reads, “They also huddle together in large groups to share body heat. This snuggling strategy helps colonies survive arctic conditions and protects their organs.”

The word “colonies” refers to:

- a) their homes
- b) baby penguins
- c) the whole group of penguins
- d) their bellies

3. How do penguins stay warm in cold weather?

- a) with their wings
- b) by diving
- c) with their blubber
- d) hugging each other

4. Who takes care of the penguin eggs after they are laid?

- a) male penguins
- b) the ocean
- c) female penguins
- d) other animals

5. How do penguins communicate with each other?

- a) through dance
- b) by singing
- c) by using unique calls and body movements
- d) by flapping their wings

FUN FACTS ABOUT PENGUINS MULTIPLE CHOICE ANSWER KEY

Answer Key:

1.B

2.C

3.C

4.A

5.C

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Writing Task: Imagine you are a penguin living in Antarctica. Write a diary entry describing a day in your life, including your adventures in the water, interactions with other penguins, and the importance of the ocean for your survival.

Comic Strip/ Cartoon Creation: Design a mini-story or comic strip featuring a penguin superhero whose mission is to protect marine life and habitats from pollution and overfishing. Use your creativity to showcase the superhero penguin's special abilities.

3D Model: Build a model of a penguin habitat using recycled materials. Research the different elements that make up a penguin's home, such as ice, rocks, and water. Use cardboard, paper, and other recyclable materials to construct a miniature diorama that represents a safe and healthy environment for penguins to thrive in. Include one human made element in the habitat that you'd add that could in some way aid the penguin colony that lives there.

CONNECTION TO THE UNITED NATIONS' SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)

The United Nations (UN) is an international organization composed of countries working together to address global issues. One important focus of the UN is sustainability, which means taking actions to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. To promote sustainability, the UN developed "The 17 Goals," also known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals will help us create a better world by the year 2030. These goals are essential for all people because they address the challenges our planet and people face.

Penguins can be connected to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14: Life Below Water

Penguins are incredible creatures that rely on the health of our oceans and marine life to survive.

Task: Take the perspective of a marine conservationist and create a school wide initiative (project, challenge, etc.) to raise awareness about the importance of protecting marine habitats for penguins and other marine animals. Your initiative should highlight the impact of human activities on oceans and suggest ways we can all help protect or even clean up these vital ecosystems.

DIGITAL LITERACY: SOCIAL MEDIA AND PENGUIN AWARENESS CONTENT PLANNER

In pairs or small groups, create a five-day social media campaign to educate others about penguins and their habitat. Make a content calendar below. For each day, plan to make one post (an image, graphic, or video) and write a caption for each. Use hashtags to enhance your proposed posts and educate your audience.

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