

Arctic Life

Life in the Arctic

Many different animals live in the Arctic.

Welcome to the Arctic! That is the cold, windy area around the North Pole. It includes the Arctic Ocean and the land near it. Snow and ice cover the ground for much of the year.

The Arctic is a **habitat**, or place in nature where many animals live. The walrus, polar bear, and snowy owl are a few of those animals. They have different ways to survive the cold.

Walrus



Sue Flood/Getty Images

A walrus spends most of its time in the icy water. This marine animal has a thick layer of **blubber**, or fat, under its skin to keep it warm.

When a walrus swims, its body works in a special way to stay warm. Blood flows away from its skin to important **organs** inside its body. They include the heart and brain. That keeps heat from leaving the walrus's body, and the animal's skin turns white. When the walrus is warm again, its skin turns a pink color.

Polar Bear



James Urbach/SuperStock

A polar bear has special fur to keep it warm. Each hair is shaped like a straw. The shape helps direct sunlight toward the bear's black skin. The black skin collects and holds in heat. Polar bears also have a layer of blubber under their skin.

Snowy Owl



Gerry Ellis/Getty Images

How does a snowy owl stay warm? It has two layers of feathers. They cover the owl's entire body, including its legs and feet. The bottom layer of feathers, called **down**, is soft and fluffy. The outer layer of feathers is thick. In strong wind, the snowy owl may hide on the ground behind a pile of snow or rocks to block the wind.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Answer the following four questions based on the information in the passage.

1. What is the weather like in the Arctic?

2. How many layers of feathers does a snowy owl have?

3. If you are searching for a snowy owl during a windstorm, where should you look?

4. What is this passage mostly about?

Directions: Please read the sentence below and then write the word or phrase that best answers the questions. The first answer has been provided for you.

The snowy owl hides on the ground behind a pile of snow when it is windy.

What? the snowy owl

5. (does) What?

6. Where?

7. When?

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

Polar bear fur directs sunlight toward the skin below, _____ the bear stays warm.

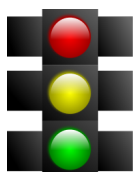
- A but
- B because
- C so

Directions: Read the vocabulary word and definition below. Then answer questions 9 and 10.

Vocabulary Word: **direct** (di · rect): to act as a guide; moving from one place to another in a straight line or by the shortest way.

9. Read the sentences below and underline all forms of the word **direct**.
- a. Using a funnel can help direct liquid into a container without spilling.
 - b. The police officer stood in the street to direct traffic so that drivers would know where to go when the traffic lights went out.
 - c. We took a direct train from New York to Boston without stopping between the two cities.
 - d. My mom told me to take the direct path home without stopping at the park, because I had to finish my homework.
 - e. I was hot in our car, so I asked my mom to direct the air conditioning vent towards me.

10. What is NOT used to direct traffic?



Teacher Guide and Answer Key

Passage Reading Level: Lexile 720

Featured Text Structure: Enumerative – the writer includes a list, giving examples of something. This text structure is often combined with cause/effect or problem/solution.

Passage Summary: “Arctic Life” describes how three different Arctic animals, the walrus, the polar bear, and the snowy owl, survive the cold.

To the Teacher: Read the passage aloud to the class [TIP: while reading aloud, show the passage on a whiteboard or give students a copy of the passage so that they can follow along].

Then, use the text-dependent questions 1-8 to facilitate a whole class discussion to ensure students comprehend the key details from the passage.

Finally, use questions 9-10 to deep teach one important vocabulary word [TIP: you can use the model provided for teaching additional vocabulary].

1. What is the weather like in the Arctic? [Important Detail]

Suggested answer: It is cold and windy in the Arctic. [paragraph 1]

2. How many layers of feathers does a snowy owl have? [Important Detail]

Suggested answer: A snowy owl has two layers of feathers. [paragraph 6]

3. If you are searching for a snowy owl during a windstorm, where should you look? [Inferential]

Suggested answer: You should look close to the ground, behind piles of snow or rocks. That is where snowy owls hide to protect themselves from strong wind. [paragraph 6]

4. What is this passage mostly about? [Main Idea]

Suggested answer: The passage is mostly about how different animals survive the cold of the Arctic.

Directions: Please read the sentence below and then write the word or phrase that best answers the questions. The first answer has been provided for you.

The snowy owl hides on the ground behind a pile of snow when it is windy.

What? the snowy owl

5. (does) What? **hides**

6. Where? **on the ground behind a pile of snow**

7. When? **when it is windy**

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

Polar bear fur directs sunlight toward the skin below, _____ the bear stays warm.

A but

B because

C so

To the Teacher: ReadWorks recommends that you teach this vocabulary word to the whole class out loud using the four steps listed below.

Vocabulary Word: **direct** (di · rect): to act as a guide; moving from one place to another in a straight line or by the shortest way.

Step 1: Introduce the word

- Teacher writes the word on the board and divides it into syllables: (di · rect)
- Teacher says: "This word is direct. What is the word?" [All students reply together out loud: "direct."]

Step 2: Provide a child-friendly definition

- Teacher says: "Direct means to act as a guide. Direct can also mean moving from one place to another in a straight line or by the shortest way."
- Teacher says: "The passage describes how polar bears stay warm. Each hair is shaped like a straw, which guides the sunlight toward the bear's black skin, so this

shape helps to direct the sunlight to the skin.”

- c. Teacher says: “What is the word?” All students reply together out loud: “direct.”

Step 3: Practice the word

Teacher provides examples and additional opportunities to repeat the word. Read the first sentence out loud to your students. Begin reading it again and when you come to the vocabulary word prompt students to say the vocabulary word out loud. Then, finish reading the sentence out loud to your students.

Directions: Read the vocabulary word and definition below. Then answer questions 9 and 10.

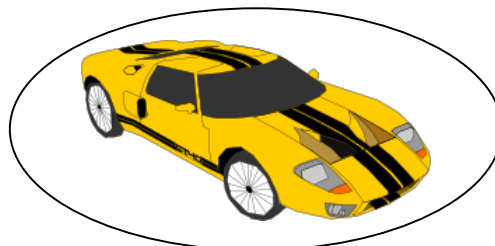
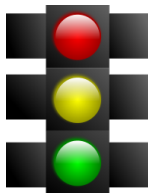
Vocabulary Word: **direct** (di · rect): to act as a guide; moving from one place to another in a straight line or by the shortest way.

9. Read the sentences below and underline all forms of the word **direct**.
- a. Using a funnel can help direct liquid into a container without spilling.
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 - e. I was hot in our car, so I asked my mom to direct the air conditioning vent towards me.

Step 4: Check for student understanding

To the Teacher: This step can be completed as a whole class activity or as an independent practice.

10. What is NOT used to direct traffic?



Suggested Additional Vocabulary: habitat, organs, collect, layers, down