

Reading Comprehension Worksheet: Compare and Contrast

Read the short story. Then answer each question.



Penguins in the Cold

Maya read a book about animals in the snow and was excited to learn about penguins. Penguins are birds, but they can't fly. Instead, they swim through icy water to find food like fish and squid.

Penguins live in very cold places, like Antarctica. They stay warm because they have thick feathers and a layer of fat under their skin. Some penguins huddle together in big groups to stay warm during freezing storms.

Penguins are great parents. The dad penguin often watches the egg while the mom goes to get food. They work as a team to keep the baby safe and warm.



Polar Bears in the Snow

Miles saw a polar bear on a nature show. Polar bears live in cold places, too—mostly around the North Pole. They have thick fur and fat that help them stay warm, just like penguins.

Polar bears are not birds—they are mammals. They walk on ice and swim in freezing water to catch seals, which are their main food.

Polar bears are also good parents. A mother polar bear digs a den in the snow to keep her babies warm. She takes care of her cubs until they are big enough to live on their own.



Name:

Penguins in the Cold & Polar Bears in the Snow

1. How are penguins and polar bears alike?

- A. They both fly in the sky.
- B. They both live in hot places.
- C. They both stay warm with fat and thick covering.
- D. They both eat plants.

2. What is one big difference between penguins and polar bears?

- A. Penguins are birds, polar bears are mammals.
- B. Penguins live in trees, polar bears live in water.
- C. Penguins eat seals, polar bears eat fish.
- D. Penguins live in the North Pole, polar bears live in the South Pole.

3. Fill in the blank:

Penguins huddle together in a _____ to stay warm.

4. What are two ways penguins and polar bears are the same and two ways they are different?

5. Why do you think the author wrote about both animals in cold places? How does that help you compare them?



Parent and Teacher Guide

Guide Reading Level: J

Lexile Level: 290L-440L

Grade Level: 2nd Grade, Beginning of the Year

Introducing the Text

"Today we're going to read two short nonfiction texts about animals that live in cold places—penguins and polar bears. After reading, we'll talk about how the texts are alike and how they are different. You'll learn how authors present facts in different ways while talking about the same topic."

Vocabulary: penguin, polar bear, huddle, mammal, Antarctica

Discussion Questions Before Reading

1. What do you already know about animals that live in cold places?
 2. Have you seen a penguin or polar bear before? Where?
 3. What do you think animals need to survive in icy places?
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Discussion Questions During Reading

1. What helps penguins and polar bears stay warm?
 2. How do penguins and polar bears take care of their babies?
 3. What foods do these animals eat?
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Discussion Questions After Reading

1. What are some ways these animals are the same?
 2. How does knowing the differences between birds and mammals help you understand the texts?
 3. Why is it useful to compare texts that are about the same topic?
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Activity Idea

Provide students with a double Venn diagram. Have them work in pairs to sort facts from both texts into the correct section—one circle for penguins, one for polar bears, and the middle for things they share. Then, challenge students to write 2 sentences using comparison words like "both," "but," or "while" to explain what they learned.

