

Antarctic animals inquiry planning

Achievement AO: Living world - *Students will:* Life processes: Recognise that all living things have certain requirements so they can stay alive. Ecology: Recognise that living things are suited to their particular habitat.

We are learning to: identify different animals that live in Antarctica and the characteristics that help them to survive in those conditions.

Success criteria: Children will know they have achieved when they can name an animal that lives in antarctica and identify some of its characteristics.

Lesson 1

Discussion: What animals live in antarctica?

Show a picture of the crabeater seal [800 × 566](#) (teeth) [4024 × 2670](#) (seal)

Ask - what and how do they eat? (they eat [krill](#) 6cm long/1 gram and they have special teeth to sieve out the water) Model using sieve/strainer to pick up the krill (sponges out of the bucket) and then the water falls out.

Children then have turns in groups pretending to be a crabeater seal and scoop up krill and squeeze out water. Listen to children discussions and jot down any questions they have.

Discussion: How long is a crabeater seal? Show photo again [4024 × 2670](#) (seal). Do they think they will be bigger or smaller than it? (use a metre ruler and measure how long a crabeater seal is on the floor in chalk (2.5m). The children can then lie next to it and see how tall they are.

Resources: crabeater seal pictures, sieves, sponges, containers, chalk and water (take photos please)

Lesson 2

Discussion: recap what happened the lesson before (crabeater seal eats and length)

How heavy is a crabeater seal? Show pictures

https://www.coolantarctica.com/Antarctica%20fact%20file/wildlife/crabeater_seals.php

Use scales to weigh a child or something in the class. Relate it to the crabeater seals weight (200-300kg and pups 20 or 30kg)

Where do they live? They live on free-floating pack ice. They even have their pups (babies) on the ice.

Watch [crab eater seal video](#) What do you think it would be like living on the ice floating around? What would happen if too many seals were sitting on one side of the ice? Teacher puts pieces of foam shapes in a container of water and two cubes (seals) on one end and one cube (seal) on the other. Make it tip over. Get children to experiment with this. Get the pieces to float around with their cubes on it (Crabeater seals move with the ice).

Discuss - do you think it would be easy for other things to eat the crabeater seal if it is on ice? What does a seal floating on ice remind you of? (surfing....) what things might eat a crabeater seal???? (orcas and Leopard seals)

Resources: scales, container, foam puzzle pieces and cubes or something heavy and water

Lesson 3

Discussion: recap what happened the lesson before

What things eat seals????

Show pictures of the leopard seal

<https://www.coolantarctica.com/Antarctica%20fact%20file/wildlife/leopard-seal.php>

Explain that these animals eat Crabeater seals which is why crabeater seals often have scratches on them. What does a leopard seal look like? (spots) Do you think it is bigger or smaller than the Crabeater seal or weddell seal? (bigger) (500kg and 2.9 - 3.3m long)

They will eat fish, squid, penguins, other birds and the pups of other seal species. They are the weight of five or more men, twice as heavy as a lion or as much as a bear. They are the second largest seal in Antarctica behind the elephant seal. Show a picture of their teeth.

<https://marinebio.org/species/leopard-seals/hydrurga-leptonyx/>

Activity: Children make the teeth of a leopard seal using playdough

If time: talk about the Orca/killer whale

They are very intelligent. Hunt in packs. They are related to dolphins (and sound like them under water) but are very dangerous, hence the name!!! They make waves around the ice so the ice so the seals fall off and they eat them.

Watch an orca whale video

Resources: TV and playdough

Lesson 4

Recap what happened in the last lesson

Another seal is the Weddell seal.

pictures https://www.coolantarctica.com/Antarctica%20fact%20file/wildlife/weddell_seals.php

Watch the movie https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vo_ds7LqpE

They are impressive divers, they can reach 600m in depth and spend as long as 82 minutes, the longest dives are undertaken when swimming under ice searching for new breathing holes.

Activity: Get the children to have a competition to see who can hold their breath the longest. Time them and relate this back to the weddell seal.

Explain: Weddell seals use a breathing hole in the ice to get in and out of the sea. The male guards the hole. These holes are fine to begin with, but when temperatures are well below freezing, they begin to freeze up again - quickly. The seals keep the holes open by rasping them with their teeth.

Drama activity: Get children to pretend they are weddell seals trying to make a hole and then jump into it. Pretend to be their favourite animal in antarctica.

Draw a picture of their favourite animal

Quiz - pictures of animals - call out what you think they are.

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/15_MLbO-1U0Sx2CUiXc1AeBE9eC8GZdT1YR59nd3M4/edit#slide=id.g652514417b_0_38

Resources: timer, TV, paper