



Some are shy, some are curious and some are grumpy enough to give you a slap as you walk by, but all penguins are amazing.

Rationale

These teacher notes have been written to send students back to the text and other sources, actively engage in learning and provide a creative learning experience, where possible.

How to use

The learning activities suggested in one Key Learning Area may also be applicable to other subject areas.

About

Interesting information and layout introduce us to penguins from a range of countries and habitats. There is general information about penguins, such as penguins having spikes on their tongues, and there is specific information about species, such as King Penguins not eating for five months. Penguin species are similar and different from each other and some are endangered.

Penguin Themes

Species

Habitats and breeding

Food and predators

Risk of endangerment

The Penguin Book: Birds in Suits

By Dr Mark Norman

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Readership: Lower – Upper
Primary (also of interest and
value for older students)

Class study, Independent
reading

Genre: Written and visual
overview of penguins



SCIENCE

Habitat

1. **Maps** Penguins live in a wide range of countries and environments, but these are all in the southern half of the world. There is a map on page 5 showing where penguins live. After looking at this and at the other maps throughout the book, label these countries on a large world map.
2. **Landscape models** In small groups, make models of the environments where penguins live. These could be constructed on strong pieces of board. Plaster of paris could be used and salt flakes, sugar or other materials could be glued on to represent snow and ice. The groups also compile a written description of the landscape conditions and features, including temperatures, land height compared to sea level, flora and other fauna.
3. **Destruction** Toward the end of the book in particular, we find out more about penguin habitats being destroyed. Each student makes a chart showing which penguins' habitats are at risk, the location of these habitats and the cause or risk. Then the class discusses what, if any, action could be taken to protect these habitats and species.

Trivia Game

After reading through the book once, go back and make trivia question cards. These could then be used for a whole class (or group) quiz or as the basis of a board game about penguins. A penguin-shaped template could be made for the cards, and board games may be in the shape of a penguin as well.

Unusual features or adaptations

Find unusual features or adaptations in penguins, such as wings for swimming. List these as a 2-columned chart with the headings 'Feature' and 'Function'.

Then research other creatures with unusual features or adaptations such as platypuses. Each student can discover one and write a brief description and include an illustration on one page, to form a class book.



Food Quickly skim the book again to discover what different foods penguins eat, and related interesting information, such as the Adelie penguin eating krill, which turns their poo red. Compile this information as a visual and written flow chart or food chain.

Sample

Adelie penguin
eats krill
red poo

Scale and size Use the visual charts and diagrams in the book as a guide to plot the penguins' sizes on a wall chart so that they can be compared to each other, and with the height of an average-sized class member. Use actual sizes. Measure students' heights, then find the average height.

Nests The Gentoo penguin makes nests using stones, bones and feathers. Read the description on page 12. Find out what these nests look like and construct replicas, using actual or substitute materials. (Chicken bones or bones made of modelling clay, and faux feathers from a craft shop could be possible substitutes.)

Field Trip Schools located in the south of Australia may be able to go on a field trip to observe, photograph, video, draw and/or write about penguins.

SOSE/HSIE

Antarctica and the Arctic

Compare and contrast the Arctic and Antarctica – location, composition/contour maps, temperatures, wildlife, plants, exploration, scientific research, current human inhabitants, dangers there, threats to the area... There is a webcam at Australia's Mawson Station – www.aad.gov.au/asset/webcams/maswon/default.asp



ENGLISH

Reading and Writing

Rogues' Gallery Read the descriptions of different penguins to find out more about their characteristics or personality types. The Adelie penguin, for example, steals and fights. Then write a narrative about some of these penguins and how they may relate to each other and others when something unexpected happens.

Penguins' Conversations On the back cover of the book, three penguins are speaking. What type of penguins are they? (You'll find them inside the book). After reading what they say, write your own captions. Then turn this conversation into a one page comic.

Book Features and Format

The Penguin Book has many features that are important in factual texts:

- Table of Contents (note the interesting headings)
- Photos, maps and diagrams (note the visual graphs, beginning page 7, on each double page on the right hand side)
- Break-out boxes (information inside a box)
- Glossary
- Index
- Page numbers
- Websites and further reading

1. Locate each of the above features in the book.
2. Visual graphs – If multiple copies are available, students can compare the information given in these graphs by opening books at different pages. Then students analyse what makes these graphs different from other graphs. What features make them useful and appealing?
3. Break-out boxes - Read the information in all the break-out boxes. How is this information (generally, but not always) different from the other information on the page.



4. Glossary – In many books words that are explained in the glossary are bolded (written in bold). In this book they aren't. Why may this be?
5. White space – A feature of this book is the amount of 'white space' on each page, where there is no written or visual text. Students explain why this can be helpful then identify sections of the book where white space is used well.
6. Page numbers – These are at the top of the page (for much of the book on the left hand page only). Why do you think this is? Is this an effective place or not for page numbers?

VISUAL LITERACY

Fonts On any sample double page, count how many different fonts are used. Which ones can you identify?

Photographs Do you learn more about penguins from the photos or writing? Explain.

Find the photo that:

1. you learned something new from
2. you thought was the funniest
3. could be improved
4. is your favourite

Talk about why you've selected these photos.

CREATIVE ARTS

Dance / Movement

Create an action or movement for some of the penguin species described in *The Penguin Book*. Read the descriptions to discover how they move, such as the Rockhopper hopping and the Adelie sliding. Also view penguins moving on film. Movies such as *March of the Penguins* or *Happy Feet* may be useful. The teacher can model the first movement as an example.

Extension Make a sequence or routine using combinations of different penguin movements. Some movements may be repeated to extend the sequence.



Music

Trumpets Emperor penguins are described as sounding like three trumpets playing at once on page 6. Try to find a recording of this sound. Ask three students who play trumpet to play their interpretation of how an Emperor Penguin may sound.

AUTHOR



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He has published extensively and his publications include 'A guide to squid, cuttlefish and octopuses of Australasia' and 'Cephalopods: a world guide'.

His research and projects with documentary makers including BBC, National Geographic and Discovery Channel has covered giant squid, poisonous blue-ringed octopuses, huge aggregations of southern giant cuttlefish and diving surveys of remote Indo-Pacific coral reefs.