



A Lesson on Penguins by Giulia Balistreri

Grade Level: Grade 4

Subject Area: English Language Arts

Lesson Length: 2 hours 30 minutes

Lesson Keywords: <http://google.com/penguins>

Lesson Description: Students will gain new vocabulary skills and reading skills in this lesson. After discussing the passage, students will complete the vocabulary questions, discussion, and writing activity.

Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.1: Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1: Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2: Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.4: Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.4.3: Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.4.4: Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

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Lesson Content: Book/Story/Reading Passage

Instructions: Please read the following reading passage as many times as needed (aloud and silent) before starting to go through other lesson pages. Understanding the content of this passage is very important since the lesson activities will be all about this content. Feel free to print the passage if needed.

Penguins by

Content: The penguin is a bird, but it does not fly. Penguins are not like other birds. They are unique birds, and although they do have feathers, even their feathers are unusual. Other birds have rows of feathers that grow in a specific pattern. A penguin's feathers grow all over, like hair on a mammal. You will not see penguins in the air, and you will not see them in trees. You will see them in the water, in fact you will see them below the surface of the water if you have an underwater video camera.

The penguin is an ocean bird, living in and near the ocean. The penguin spends much time in the ocean, so much of its life is unknown. People only get to know penguins well when they are on land, and the penguin can be at sea for months at a time.

While the penguin is not a great flier as the eagle is, the penguin can out-swim most birds and probably out-swims some other aquatic animals. The penguin has thick strong wings and flippers instead of feet that it uses to push through the water. When the penguin is on land, it walks along slowly, and this limited mobility may be one reason the penguin spends more time in the water. The penguin's food source is in the water, the fish it catches. They have solid bones, while other birds have bones that are not solid.

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Task 1: Vocabulary

Instructions: Please complete the following vocabulary activity by choosing the correct meaning of each word selected from the passage and use of each word correctly in a sentence.

Q: 1 WordPhrase: Unique **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: What does the word "unique" mean in this sentence?

"They are unique birds, and although they do have feathers, even their feathers are unusual."

- A: Similar to other birds
- B: One of a kind
- C: The same as other birds
- D: All of the above

Question: Which one of the sentences below uses the word "unique" properly?

- A: The unique pear looked just like the other pears.
- B: The dog was unique because it had a heart-shaped spot.
- C: The flowers have unique smells; each slightly different from one another.
- D: The girl prized her unique hair because it stood out from everyone else's.

Q: 2 WordPhrase: Mobility **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: What does the word "mobility" mean in this sentence?

"When the penguin is on land, it walks along slowly, and its limited mobility may be one reason the penguin spends more time in the water."

- A: The ability to move
- B: The ability to fly
- C: The ability to run
- D: The ability to swim

Question: Which one of these sentences below uses the word "mobility" correctly?

- A: The cheetah has the mobility to run very fast.
- B: The limited mobility of the athlete allows him to win the race.
- C: The bird's limited mobility is why it can easily avoid predators.
- D: The mobility of the snail allows it to avoid predators with ease.

Q: 3 WordPhrase: Mammal **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: What does the word "mammal" mean in this sentence?

"A penguin's feathers grow all over, like hair on a mammal."

- A: A warm-blooded vertebrate animal that possesses hair or fur, secretion of milk by females, and delivers live young.
- B: An animal without fur or feathers, that cannot maintain their own body temperature.
- C: Any animal that can grow feathers all over
- D: An animal is nocturnal: stays awake at night

Question: In which sentence below is the word "mammal" used correctly?

- A: Dogs are mammals because they like treats.
- B: Humans are mammals because they give birth to live young.
- C: Frogs are mammals because they do not have fur.
- D: Mammals are only born in water.

Q: 4 WordPhrase: Flippers **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: What is the meaning of the word "flippers" in this sentence?

"The penguin has thick strong wings and flippers instead of feet that it uses to push through the water."

- A: A penguin body part that aids them through the water.
- B: A penguin body part that helps them fly.
- C: A penguin body part that is used for eating fish.
- D: A penguin body part that is used to cover their teeth.

Question: In which sentence below is the word "Flippers" used correctly?

- A: The penguins use their flippers to swim through the water.
- B: The penguins use their flippers to hold the fish they catch.
- C: Penguins have flippers so they can fly.
- D: Penguins use their flippers to climb trees.

Task 2: Forum Discussion

Instructions: This discussion forum will have questions for students to respond. Read the posted questions, and respond to each. Students are responsible for posting one initial and two peer responses for each topic.

1 - Why are penguins not like other birds?

Penguins grow feathers like mammals grow fur and cannot fly.? Why are penguins not like other birds?

2 - How do penguins catch their food?

The author says, The penguin spends much time in the ocean,? How would a penguin catch their food in the water?

3 - Why can't penguins fly?

The author says, you will not see penguins in the air.? Why can't penguins fly??

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Task 3: Writing Activity

Instructions: What did you learn from this story that you had not previously known? Give examples from the text and explain your thoughts on these new facts.?

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