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A Lesson on Penguins by Yvette Dixon

Grade Level: Grade 4

Subject Area: English Language Arts

Lesson Length: 1 hour 30 minutes

Lesson Keywords: penguins, aquatic, mammals, animals

Lesson Description: The purpose of this lesson is to give students additional information about penguins. After reading the passage, students will complete vocabulary questions, discussion posts and a writing activity to demonstrate reading and writing skills.

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.

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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.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.4.4a: Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.4.4c: Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1: Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1b: Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details.

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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: The author of the passage says "Penguins are not like other birds. They are unique birds..." What does the word "unique" mean in this sentence?

- A: Good
- B: Unlike anything else
- C: Strange
- D: Boring

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

- A: There is a unique chance that it will rain today.
- B: When I come home, my dog is unique.
- C: People are born with unique talents
- D: I slept unique last night.

Q: 2 WordPhrase: Mammal **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: The author of the passage says "A penguin's feathers grow all over, like hair on a mammal." What does the word "mammal" mean in this sentence?

- A: A tree.
- B: An imaginary friend.
- C: A fairytale creature.
- D: A warm-blooded animal who has a spine and fur.

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

- A: A jaguar is a mammal that lives in the rainforest.
- B: Mammals are cold-blooded.
- C: When I was a mammal, I liked to play catch.
- D: Is it quite mammal outside.

Q: 3 WordPhrase: Out-swim **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: The author of the passage says "... the penguin can out-swim most birds and probably out-swims some other aquatic animals." What does the word "out-swim" mean in this sentence?

- A: To pass.
- B: To cry.
- C: To swim faster, farther, or better than.
- D: To dance.

Question: Which one of the sentences below uses the word "out-swim" correctly?

- A: I asked my mom if I could visit the out-swim after school.
- B: Dolphins can out-swim most shark species.
- C: I can finally out-swim after a long day.
- D: My cat likes the out-swim.

Q: 4 WordPhrase: Mobility **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: The author of the passage says "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." What does the word "mobility" mean in this sentence?

- A: The ability to breathe.
- B: The ability to play.
- C: The ability to talk.
- D: The ability to move.

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

- A: She has a special mobility that allows her to fly.
- B: There is mobility in the classroom.
- C: He has limited mobility in his left leg.
- D: Mobility is the desire to sing.

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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 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 - Penguin Characteristics

What are some characteristics that help penguins live in and near the ocean? Use examples from the text to support your answer.?

2 - Why are penguins classified as birds and not mammals?

In the passage, the author says A penguin's feathers grow all over, like hair on a mammal. Explain why penguins are birds and not mammals. Use what you already know and what you learned from the passage to answer this question.?

3 - How are penguins different from other birds?

The first sentence of the passage says The penguin is a bird, but it does not fly. Explain what is meant by this sentence and why penguins are different from other birds.?

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Task 3: Writing Activity

Instructions: When it comes to writing, there are four main styles: expository, descriptive, persuasive, and narrative. Each writing style is used for a specific purpose. You are to write and post an essay on what you think the author's writing style of the passage is. Do you think the author is trying to persuade the reader or give a certain narrative? Your essay must be at least 400-500 words. Make sure to provide specific examples from the passage to support your claim.

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