



## A Lesson on Penguins by Carly Faller

**Grade Level:** Grade 4

**Subject Area:** English Language Arts

**Lesson Length:** 1 hour 30 minutes

**Lesson Keywords:** Penguins, Reading, Writing

**Lesson Description:** The purpose of this lesson is to allow the students to demonstrate reading and writing skills that have been previously taught to them and practiced multiple times. By reading and analyzing the text closely the student will draw facts and concepts about penguins and their lifestyle, and they will be encouraged to think through the author's reasoning for writing this text. This lesson facilitates the process of pulling information from the text in order to construct a cohesive essay on the topic.

### 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.4.3: Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.8: Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.

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

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.4a: Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).

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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:** Solid **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** The author in the story says, "They have solid bones, while other birds have bones that are not solid." What does the word "solid" mean in this sentence?

- A: empty
- B: hard
- C: jagged
- D: flimsy

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

- A: The solid flower finally bloomed at the peak of Springtime.
- B: Please go get me a solid glass of Orange Juice.
- C: She fell down and hit her arm on a solid chunk of wood.
- D: When Aaron did not win the game, he felt very solid.

**Q: 2 WordPhrase:** Out-Swim **WordPhraseTier:** 2

**Question:** The author in the story says, "the penguin can out-swim most birds." What does the phrase "out-swim" mean in this sentence?

- A: can swim faster
- B: cannot swim
- C: can swim slower
- D: can sink

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

- A: I know that I can swim faster than Tommy, so he is able to out-swim me.
- B: Because the otter lives in the water and the mouse lives on land we know that the mouse can out-swim the otter.
- C: Jenny likes to out-swim at the beach.
- D: If I win this race, then that means I can out-swim everyone in the race.

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

**Question:** The author in the story 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: climate
- B: being able to move
- C: distance
- D: amount of land

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

- A: The mobility of the raccoon allowed for it to gather enough food for the winter.
- B: When the bear got its foot caught in the tree, it gained mobility.
- C: The mobility of the room provided a comfortable environment for the class.
- D: The man built his new home on the mobility.

**Q: 4 WordPhrase:** Mammal **WordPhraseTier:** 3

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

- A: rug
- B: human or animal
- C: bird
- D: lizard

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

- A: The dog had to mammal the ball back to his owner.
- B: The plant has grown to be very mammal.
- C: Some say that dinosaurs are considered as mammals while others say they were reptiles.
- D: The comfiest place to sit was the couch because it was mammal.

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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 - For what purpose do you think the author wrote this story?

The first sentence of the passage states The penguin is a bird, but it does not fly.? Why did the author choose to open the passage with this statement? Why do you think the author chose to write this story?

### 2 - Why do you think the penguins feathers grow differently than other birds? feathers?

The passage states, 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 penguins 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. Why do you think penguins feathers grow differently? How do you think it helps them?

### 3 - Why did the author take time to describe the different features of the penguin that helps it swim?

In the last paragraph, the author describes the many features that allow the penguin to swim fast. The author also explains that the penguin is slower on land due to its limited mobility. Why was it important for the author to mention this? What information does it provide to the reader?

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Task 3: Writing Activity

**Instructions:** Reflect on the story that you have read about penguins. Imagine you were a penguin and you lived on land and in the ocean. Describe what a day in that life would look like. What tasks would you need to complete? Is there anything that a penguin would need to worry about? Write 2 paragraphs (minimum of 200 words) explaining the different activities and tasks you would have to carry out each day. Make sure to include in your essay at least two (2) of the four new vocabulary words/phrases defined earlier in this lesson (Solid, Out-Swim, Mammal, Mobility).

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