



A Lesson on Penguins by Deidre Olenchak

Grade Level: Grade 4

Subject Area: English Language Arts

Lesson Length: 1 hour 30 minutes

Lesson Keywords: Reading, Vocabulary, Discussion, Writing

Lesson Description: Students will read a short passage about penguins. The goal of this lesson is to use their reading, writing and language skills for the three activities that relate to the passage. The students will review key vocabulary words within the text and within alternate sentences. Next, they will independently answer the Discussion Activity which will be followed by a group discussion. Finally, the students will complete a writing assignment.

Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

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

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

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

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

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.2d: Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

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.

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: "They are unique birds, and although they do have feathers..." What does the word "unique" mean in this sentence?

- A: Large
- B: Pretty
- C: Special
- D: Lonely

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

- A: The word unique means ordinary.
- B: The dog is unique, it is the same breed as the rest of the dogs in the group.
- C: Buying popcorn at the movie theater is unique.
- D: The pink cat is unique.

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

Question: "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: Speaking
- B: Movement
- C: Standing
- D: Thought

Question: Which sentence below uses the word "mobility" correctly?

- A: After the man's surgery, he has some mobility of his left arm.
- B: Mobility means an object does not have movement.
- C: A rock is not able to walk which means it has mobility.
- D: The chair with wheels does not have mobility.

Q: 3 WordPhrase: Aquatic **WordPhraseTier:** 3

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

- A: Sand
- B: Water
- C: Sky
- D: Sun

Question: Which sentence uses the word "aquatic" correctly?

- A: Scuba diving is not an aquatic activity.
- B: A whale is an aquatic animal.
- C: Baseball is an aquatic sport.
- D: Cats are aquatic animals.

Q: 4 WordPhrase: Push through **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: The penguin has thick strong wings and flippers instead of feet that it uses to push through the water. What does the author mean when they say "push through" in this sentence?

- A: Stop
- B: Turn around
- C: Force
- D: Clap

Question: Which one of the sentences uses the words "push through" correctly?

- A: The car will push through at the stop sign.
- B: The party began at 6pm and will push through at 9pm.
- C: The landscaper uses a push through to mow the yard.
- D: The senate will push through the bill this week.

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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 and two peer responses for each topic.

1 - Different from other birds

How are penquins different from other birds?

2 - Land-Ocean Animals

Name two other animals that walk on land and swim. ?Then give two characteristics?of each animal. ?Ex: Penguins are white and black and they have feathers.

3 - New Information

In sentence format, provide three new things that you learned about penguins.

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Task 3: Writing Activity

Instructions: Choose another animal and write two paragraphs about the animal including physical description, where they live, what they eat, if they are land or water animals,?etc. ?Then name two similarities and two differences between the penguin and your animal.

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