



My Antarctic Diary

Join our scientist in Antarctica to learn more about the life cycle of emperor penguins. Could you live and work in the coldest place on Earth? Let's find out!

More books
in the series



Non-fiction recount

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My Antarctic Diary

Isabel Thomas





Reading Planet Notes

In this book

Your child may need help with these words:

windiest	equipment
scientists	vehicles
opposite	emergency
colonies	sheepskin
research	barbecues
location	pyramid
windproof	information
sunburned	

Say them out loud and talk about the meanings together before you start reading.

Reading tip

Make reading with your child part of your daily routine. Mix up the types of reading material you share with your child to include fiction and non-fiction. Reading widely and regularly will give your child confidence to tackle less familiar vocabulary and discover a variety of different subjects to explore themselves.

Before reading

Look at the front and back cover together. Ask your child: *What type of information do you think you would find in a diary? Would you like to visit the coldest place on Earth? Why/why not?*

While reading

- ★ Can your child tell you what the word *huddle* means on page 12? Can they use this word in a sentence of their own?
- ★ Pause after reading page 15. Can your child tell you why the scientists use special vehicles to move around Antarctica? Which vehicle do they think would be the most fun to drive?
- ★ When talking about the book, ask your child questions that begin *Why ...*, *How ...*, *Which ...*, *Where ...*, *When ...*, to make your child think and talk more about what they have read.

After reading, encourage your child to talk about what they have read. You'll find ideas for questions and activities at the back of this book. →

AFTER READING

Try these activities with your child:

- ★ Create a snowy Antarctic scene in an old shoebox using cotton wool for the mountains and tin foil for the sea. Add some modelling clay penguins playing and huddling together!
- ★ Imagine you are off to the Halley Research Station for four months. What would you miss most about home?
- ★ Role play camping out during a storm in Antarctica. What noises would you be able to hear? How would you keep warm?

Find out more

Use books or the Internet to help you find out more about visiting Antarctica. When are the best times to visit Antarctica? How can you get there? What would you need to take with you?

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MY ANTARCTIC DIARY

White

GUIDED GROUP READING

BEFORE READING

Book introduction:

- Look together at the cover image, title and blurb of the book. Ask: *What do you know about the Antarctic? What do you know about penguins?*
- Look at the maps and photographs, and turn to the glossary and index at the back of the book. Point out that these are common features of information books.
- Point to the section headings and main text, and the dates and diary entries.
- Tell the children they will be using their phonics skills (segmenting, blending) to read any unfamiliar words.
- Introduce the spellings: **ski, skis, skiing**.
- Practise sounding out the tricky words in the book.

Strategy check:

Recap with the children how to use a range of comprehension strategies to help them understand the text.

- Remind them to be 'book detectives' by using clues in the text (inference skills) and by finding evidence to support their ideas (deduction skills).
- Tell them that the punctuation in the text will help them know how to read with expression.
- Encourage the children to use phonics skills to decode any new words. If they struggle, remind them to use other reading strategies: recognising sounds and spelling patterns, reading root words before endings, breaking words into syllables, checking that a text makes sense, picture cues, etc.

DURING READING

Independent reading:

- Encourage the children to read independently while you listen to each child in the group in turn.
- Ask questions, e.g. on page 10: *What does 'the Sun never sets' mean?*
- Pause occasionally to re-read the sentence, check for understanding and study the illustrations. Ask: *Can you name any of the animals in the photos (pages 2–3)? Why don't penguins build nests (page 5)? What can you see inside the red module (pages 10–11)? What do the scientists do in the winter months (page 28)?*

AFTER READING

Return to the text:

- Share any words that caused difficulty with decoding, pronunciation or understanding, e.g. *What is 'skijoring'? How can you find out?*
- Look at the index. Ask: *On which page will we find out what a caboose is?*
- Encourage the children to reflect on their learning. Ask: *According to the text, why do scientists study penguins in the Antarctic? (page 27)*
- Use the comprehension questions at the end of the book to talk about the text.
- Ask some of the following additional questions to check understanding of the text and explore the themes. *Do people have homes in the Antarctic? What are the scientists doing there? Why does the module have legs with skis? What is a 'caboose'? What do penguin chicks eat? How do penguins move quickly over the ice? Why do the scientists have to wear sunglasses? Is 'global warming' a problem for penguins? Would you like to be a scientist in the Antarctic?*

Follow-up activities:

1. Using the PCM provided, ask the children to complete the crossword, using the given clues. One answer is completed to get them started. Suggest that the children look back at the text if they are unsure.
2. Ask the children: *Are penguins well suited to life in Antarctica?* Discuss how the penguin has adapted to life on the coldest and windiest continent on Earth.
3. Ask the children to research and gather facts about another Antarctic penguin, e.g. the Adélie penguin. With the facts they collect, the children could create a penguins poster. Ask: *How are Adélie and Emperor penguins the same and/or different?*

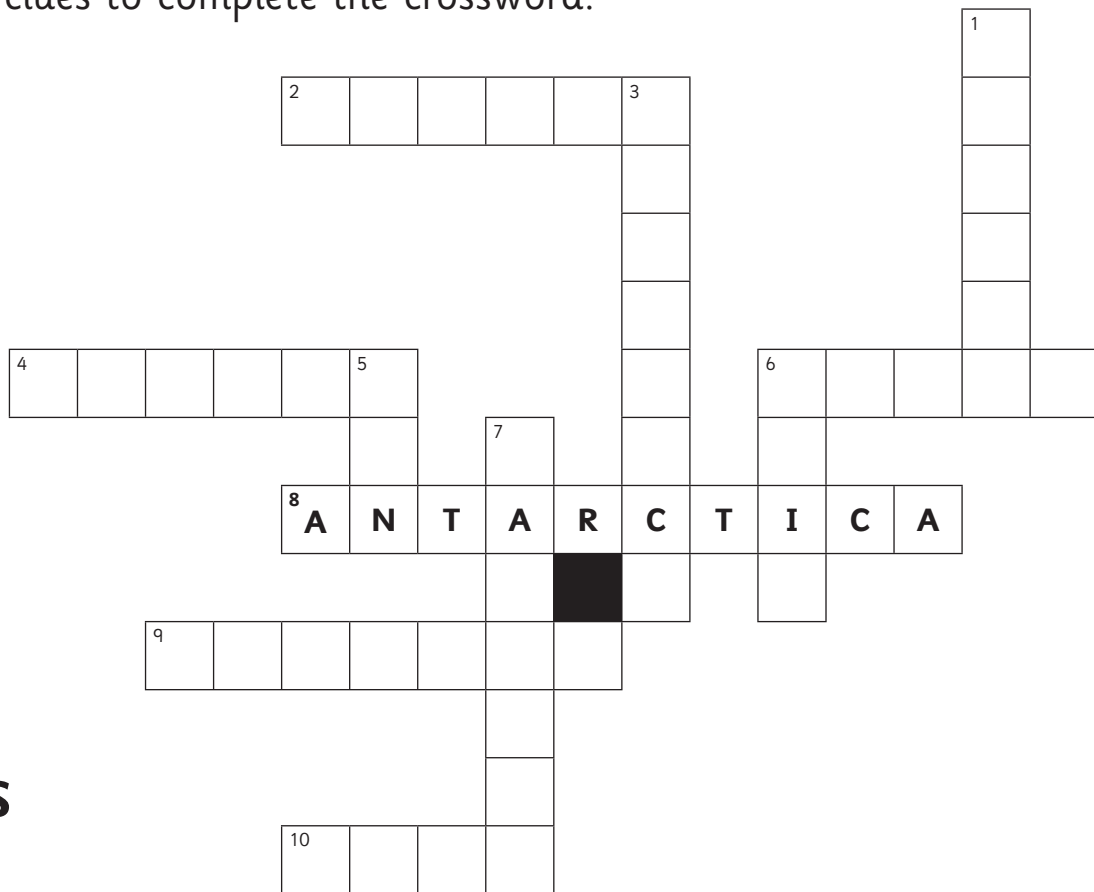
BOOK OVERVIEW

This information book is about Antarctica and the Emperor penguin. Through their diary entries, it describes what life is like for scientists who work there, and draws comparisons with the Emperor penguins. It describes the behaviour and life cycle of the penguin. Penguins are photographed feeding their chicks, huddling together to keep warm, and gathering in colonies on the ice shelf. There are photographs and illustrations of research stations, snow trucks and snowmobiles, and of scientists at work. The book includes a glossary and index.

My Antarctic Diary

Name: _____ Date: _____

Use the clues to complete the crossword.



CLUES

Across

2. In Antarctica, August is the middle of _____. (6)
4. Penguin babies are called _____. (6)
6. The scientists abseil down an ice _____. (5)
8. The coldest, windiest continent on Earth is _____. (10)
9. The scientists are studying _____ penguins. (7)
10. The _____ penguins look after the eggs. (4)

Down

1. Scientists want to find out how penguins are affected by _____ warming. (6)
3. The scientists live in a _____ Station. (8)
5. The _____ never sets during the summer months. (3)
6. The module's legs are fitted with huge _____. (4)
7. The scientists stay in a small emergency shelter called a _____. (7)