The Frozen Continent: Antarctica

Genre Comprehension Skills and Strategy

Expository nonfiction
- Main Idea and Details
- Generalize
- Monitor and Clarify

Text Features
- Map
- Captions
- Diagram

Suggested levels for Guided Reading, DRA™, Lexile®, and Reading Recovery™ are provided in the Pearson Scott Foresman Leveling Guide.
Vocabulary

cuddles
flippers
frozen
hatch
pecks
preen
snuggles

Word count: 334

Note: The total word count includes words in the running text and headings only. Numerals and words in chapter titles, captions, labels, diagrams, charts, graphs, sidebars, and extra features are not included.
Antarctica is the coldest place on Earth. It is a frozen continent covered in ice. The South Pole is on Antarctica. The South Pole is the farthest south that you can go!
Antarctica is very windy. It is also very dry. Antarctica is so dry that scientists call it a desert. The small amount of snow that falls there never melts. It is moved around by the wind until it freezes into ice.

Few people other than scientists have been to Antarctica. It costs a lot of money to send food and supplies there. But penguins, seals, fish, and whales live there year-round.
Scientists study the weather in Antarctica. They use a radio called an acoustic sounder. It sends beeping sounds high up into the air. The beeping sounds make an echo that tells scientists the wind's speed and direction.

Satellites help scientists study the weather in Antarctica. Weather information from the satellites is sent down to Earth.
Scientists in Antarctica also study the weather with balloons. Each day, they launch the balloons into the air. Radios attached to the balloons record information about the air.

Scientists are learning about global warming on Antarctica. Global warming happens when air pollution traps heat inside the Earth’s atmosphere. Some parts of Antarctica have become warmer. Other parts are growing colder.

A model showing how air pollution traps heat from the sun. Warmer air could cause the ice to melt.
Emperor penguins spend their whole lives in Antarctica. Penguins cannot fly. But they are very good swimmers. They use their feet and flippers to swim. Penguins use their bills to preen, or clean and smooth their feathers.

Female emperor penguins lay one egg. The male emperor penguin takes care of the egg. He snuggles and cuddles the egg with his feet. Soon the chick is ready to hatch. It pecks at the shell until it breaks.
For emperor penguins, seals, fish, and whales, the climate in Antarctica is just right. Scientists will continue to study Antarctica’s climate and watch for signs of change. In this way they are protecting the animals that make their home there.

Reader Response

1. What is the main idea of this book? List two details that support the main idea.

Main Idea

Detail

Detail

2. What problems did you have as you read? Did anything confuse you? What did you do about it?

3. Find the word preen on page 10. How did you know what it means?

4. A model is a drawing that helps you understand an idea. What are you able to learn from the model of global warming on page 9?