

Polar habitats are located at the very top and very bottom of the Earth. They are cold, windy and have a lot of snow and ice. It's even too cold for trees to grow.

Tundra takes up a lot of the area of polar habitats. It's the only place where any plants can grow, but the ground only thaws just enough for short grasses and moss – tree roots can't go as far down into the ground as they need to because it's frozen. Animals who live in polar regions have adapted by having thick fur or feathers, and hunting fish or each other rather than relying on plants for food.

1. Polar habitats are located in the very north and very south of the globe – the two pole ends of the Earth.
2. **The northern polar region is called the Arctic, and in the south the polar region is the continent of Antarctica.**
3. Polar habitats have just two seasons – summer and winter (but even summer is normally very cold). In the summer, it is light for 24 hours a day (right at the north and south Poles, the sun doesn't set for six whole months when it is summer) and in the winter it is dark for 24 hours a day.
4. **Polar habitats have tundra, which is ground that is nearly always frozen.** The very top of it will thaw in the summer months so grasses and mosses can grow, but there isn't enough room for tree roots in the non-frozen soil.
5. Because it is too cold for trees to grow in arctic habitats, animals find other places to live such as holes in the ground, or in caves made from snow.
6. Animals in the arctic also can't rely too much on eating plants. Most are carnivores (they eat meat) and hunt for fish as well as smaller animals.
7. Polar habitats get very, very cold – it can get as cold as -50°C in the Arctic, and temperatures in Antarctica have been as cold as -89°C .
8. Animals in polar regions have adapted to survive in these extreme conditions. They have thick fur or feathers, blend in with the white snow, or hibernate during the coldest winter months.
9. The mass of ice at the very tip of the north and south Poles is called the polar ice cap. It is always frozen, although the size of the ice cap changes when bits on the edge of it melt during the summer months.

Animals and fish that you'll find in arctic habitats include:

- Arctic fox
- Arctic hare
- Beluga whale
- Caribou
- Elk
- Lemming
- Polar bear
- Pika
- Marmot
- Muskox
- Reindeer
- Snowy owl
- Walrus

Animals you'll find in Antarctica include:

- Albatross
- Krill (food for sea animals)
- Orca

- Penguins
- Seals

Good websites with information about the Polar areas (Arctic and Antarctica)

<http://www.activewild.com/arctic-animals-list/>

<http://www.ngkids.co.uk/places/ten-facts-about-the-arctic>

SOCIAL:

Arctic introduction

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kA-aro3II>

Target: peer interaction

Antarctica Introduction

http://www.coolantarctica.com/Antarctica%20fact%20file/arctic_animal.php

Target: sharing ideas

Polar Animals Discussion

Read through the list of animals at the top of the activity plan information. Download a picture of each animal and as you show the children the animals explain to the children briefly the characteristics of each animal. Before you show the children the pictures asked each child what they think they would see in the Arctic/Antarctica or what they think these areas are. **Target:** Sharing ideas (use the above video links to educate yourself on the arctic)

Watch video of different Polar Animals

There are several different video links on this website and link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kA-aro3II>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t3StWheKtq8>

Target: group discussion

Pass the Ice

Played just like hot potato only with an ice cube. Have the children sit in a circle and then pass the ice cube around the circle. As you play music. When the music stops have the child drop the ice cube in a bowl of water in the center of the circle. Have the next child pick the ice cube out of the water and start the game again until ice cube melts. Discuss what is happening with ice as it melts.

Target: taking turns

Hibernation Party

Let the children hibernate one day. They can come to the Day Home in their pajamas (tell them to bring their teddy bears). You can make dens out of pillows and blankets.

Target: teamwork

PHYSICAL

Fine motor

Play dough

Add plastic polar animals to your play dough materials. **Target:** grasping

Painting

Give the children plastic polar animals to paint with. **Target:** eye hand coordination

Ice Fishing:

Cut and laminate fish shapes from poster board; put a paper clip on its mouth end. Tie a string to a stick or ruler and tie a magnet (I used one with a hole in the middle) to the string. Place the fish in a large box **Target:** hand manipulation

Snowball counting and transfer game (snowballs are mini marshmallows)

<http://stayathomeeducator.com/eight-arctic-themed-preschool-activities/>

Target: grasping

Gross motor

Polar Bear Paw Walk

<https://growingbookbybook.com/preschool-alphabet-games-polar-bear-paw-walk/>

Target: coordination

Polar Bear, Polar Bear Turn Around

Recite this rhyme and make the movements together:

Polar bear, Polar bear,
Turn around,
Polar bear, Polar bear,
Make no sound.

Polar bear, Polar bear,
Dance on your toes,
Polar bear, Polar bear.
Touch your nose.

Polar bear, Polar bear,
Show your paws.
Polar bear, Polar bear,
Hide your claws.

Polar bear, Polar bear,
Reach up high
Polar bear, Polar bear,
Wink one eye.

Polar bear, Polar bear,
Say good-night,
Polar bear, Polar bear,

Shut your eyes tight.

Polar bear, Polar bear,
Wake up now,
Polar bear, Polar bear,
Take a bow.

Target: Coordination

Feed the Leopard Seal

Draw a large seal shape on poster board. Cut a fairly big size opening for the mouth. Place it on the floor and use bean bags or plastic fish to "feed" the seal. Just toss the bean bag or fish to try to land it on the seal. A polar bear shape also works.

Target: large muscle coordination

Snowflake Dance

(Sung To: "Are you Sleeping")

Dance like snowflakes, Dance like snowflakes
In the air, In the air
Whirling, Twirling snowflakes, Whirling, Twirling snowflakes
Here and there, Here and there

Play music softly in the background for the children to move and dance like snowflakes. You can add different speeds and beats of music and have the children move faster and slower to the beat of the music.

Target: balance

What animal am I?

Show the children different pictures of polar animals and have the children act out the characteristics of different arctic animals.

Target: movement

Penguin Movement Match

http://wanitamalas.com/30-great-penguin-craft-preschool-designs/6_penguin-craft-preschool-ideas/#main

Target: balance

INTELECTUAL:

Language

Read a book about the arctic or Antarctica

Target: vocabulary

Little Bear

Are you sleeping?

Are you sleeping little bear
You will sleep all winter
Through the cold, cold winter, little bear

Are you sleeping, are you sleeping, little bear
You will wake in springtime, in the warm, warm springtime, little bear, little bear
(Have the children lay down and pretend to sleep/hibernate)

Target: repetition

Polar Bear (Tune: *My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean*)

The polar bear lives in the Arctic
He never gets cold in a storm
He swims in cold icy water
His heavy coat keeps him warm
Warm, warm, warm, warm
His heavy coat keeps him warm
Warm, warm, warm, warm
His heavy coat keeps him warm

Target: rhythm

Time for Sleeping

Now, its time for sleeping
The bears go in their caves
It Keeps them warm and cozy
Time for lazy days
When the snow is gone & the sun comes out to play
The bears will wake up from their sleep
and then go on to play.

Target: rhyming

Cognitive

Penguin Clothes color match

<https://www.totschooling.net/2016/12/penguin-winter-clothes-color-matching.html>

Target: matching

Polar Animal Flash cards

Go to this website to print off the Arctic animal flash cards to create a matching game.

http://www.kids-pages.com/folders/flashcards/Animals_1/page1.htm

Target: matching

Matching Animal Tracks in Play Dough

<http://stayathomeeducator.com/eight-arctic-themed-preschool-activities/>

Target: matching

Melting Iceberg Matching Game

<http://stayathomeeducator.com/eight-arctic-themed-preschool-activities/>

Target: counting

Blubber Experiment:

This will show the children how animals keep warm in cold weather

MATERIALS

- Plastic Ziploc Bags
- Shortening
- Bin full of Ice Water

After a discussion about blubber, what it is, and its purpose, I placed a bin full of ice water on the table. I also passed a bag of “blubber” to each student. The blubber was made in advance by putting shortening inside a Ziploc bag (to save on clean up, add another bag after the shortening). Each student put one hand inside their blubber bag. I invited the students to first place their bare hand into the ice water and describe how it feels. After the bare hand felt the water, the blubber hand can go in, and again the students describe what they feel. Which hand was colder in the ice water? **Target:** cause and effect

Examining Snow

Put a black piece of construction paper in the freezer. When it snows get your children bundled up and take them out. Have them catch the snow on the paper and then examine the snowflakes with a magnifying glass.

Target: comparing

Sticky Ice

Put several ice cubes in a bowl of water (should float on the top) give your children a string and have them try to pick up the ice. They will not be able to do this. Then have them lay the string gently across the ice and shake salt over the ice cubes. Slowly count to 10 and presto the ice will stick to the string.

Target: cause and effect

Quick Melt

Fill several different size containers with water and freeze them. Take them outside and pour a lot of table salt on some and not on the others. Ask your children which one they think will melt first. For added fun, add food coloring on the top of each. The one with the salt will melt away into a neat pattern.

Target: cause and effect

Five Fat Walruses

Five fat walruses were at the North Pole.

One climbed on the ice and fell into a hole.

Four fat walruses swam toward the ice.

One bumped an iceberg which wasn't very nice.

Three fat walruses had whiskers on their faces,

One got bored and went to sleep; he didn't like the places.

Two fat walruses went to look for food.

One swam far, far away; he wasn't in the mood.

One fat walrus was tired of the play.

She flipped a good-bye with her tail and then she swam away.

Target: number recognition

CREATIVE:

Color the Snow

Give your children squirt bottles filled with water and food coloring and let them color the snow. (You may want to cut a head hole and 2 arm holes in a plastic garbage bag and put it over the children to protect their clothing)

Target: decision making

Arctic sensory bin

<http://www.giftofcuriosity.com/arctic-animals-9-learning-activities/>

Target: sensory

Penguin Sensory Bins

<https://teachingmama.org/penguin-sensory-sink/>

Target: sensory

Arctic sensory bin

<http://stayathomeeducator.com/eight-arctic-themed-preschool-activities/>

Target: sensory

Antarctica sensory bin

<https://www.keepcalmandmommyon.com/antarctica-sensory-bin/>

Target: sensory

Paper Plate Penguin

<https://ourpotluckfamily.com/paper-plate-penguin/>

Target: creativity

EMOTIONAL:

Torn paper snow storm/snowballs: kids love to tear paper. Give your children some paper (flyers will work as well). Have the children place the torn pieces of paper into a box. The shredded paper will represent snow. When the children are done filling the box stand over the children and dump the “snow” down on them. The children can also crumble the paper or flyers into ball. These can be snowballs and the children can try to throw “the snowballs” onto a container.

Target: self expression

Polar Bear Hand

Materials:

- light blue construction paper
- white paint
- black marker



Directions:

1. Brush hand with white paint and press onto light blue paper. Allow to dry.
2. Draw details of the face and feet with a black marker.
3. Add a snowy background if you like.

Target: independence

Ink Blot Penguin

<https://artsymomma.com/penguin-ink-blot-painting.html>

Target: independence

Winter Animals Snacks

Edible Polar Bear

Make a polar bear face by using an English muffin or bagel as the base. Cover the base with cream cheese to create the white fur. Add two banana slices at the top for the ears. Use raisins to create the eyes, nose and mouth of the edible polar bear.

Target: self confidence

Banana Penguins

<http://www.mommatoldmeblog.com/2014/04/bananguins-and-penanas-oh-my-simple.html>

Target: independence

*****Remember to add food items to meet the snack requirements

