

Name: _____

Talking About Penguins

by Guy Belleranti

Penguins are one of the world's most interesting birds. They waddle when they walk, and have flippers instead of wings. The bones in a penguin's flippers are heavier and more solid than those in the wings of a flying bird. This helps the penguin "fly" through the water.

The penguin's black back and white front has an important function, too -- camouflage in the water. Penguins blend in with the sea from above and with the sky from below. This makes it harder for predatory birds, leopard seals, sea lions, orcas and sharks to see them.

Many people think all penguins live in the cold and ice of Antarctica. However, only 6 of the 17 species or types of penguins live in Antarctica. The others live in parts of New Zealand, Australia, South Africa and South America and on the Falkland and Galapagos Islands.

Let's talk about two of the penguin species – the Emperor penguin of Antarctica and the Galapagos penguin of the Galapagos Islands.



Emperor Penguin with Chick

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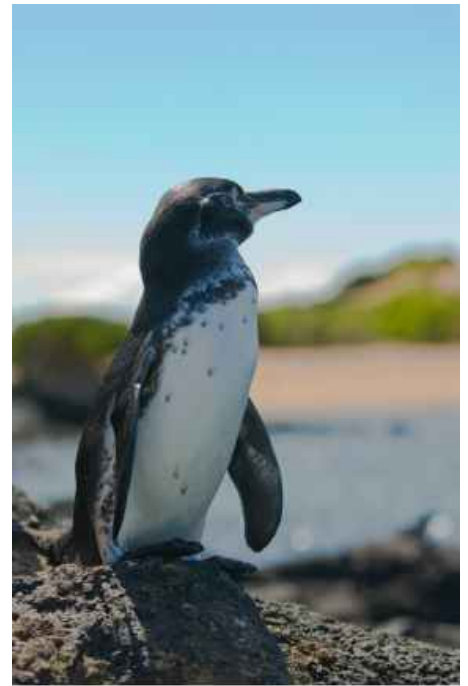
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balancing it on his feet and covering it with feathered skin called a brood pouch. The mother returns two months later, regurgitates food for the newly hatched chick, then stays with it while the father goes out to sea to feed.

The Galapagos penguin lives in an area much warmer than Antarctica. The Galapagos Islands are on the Equator, 600 miles west of the South American country of Ecuador. This is as far north as any penguin lives in the wild. The Galapagos penguin is one of the smallest and also one of the most endangered of all penguins. It shares the Galapagos Islands with many other unusual animals including the giant Galapagos tortoise and the blue-footed booby. Instead of having to stay warm the Galapagos penguin must find ways to stay cool. The best way is to spend the heat of day in cool water currents hunting small fish and krill. When a Galapagos penguin does get out of the water it often spreads its flippers to cool off. It might also pant like a dog. And it shades its feet by standing with its body hunched forward.



Galapagos Penguin

This has just been a peek at penguins. To find out more visit your school and public libraries.



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Guy Bel
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1. Most wild penguins live...

- a. in South Africa
- b. near the North Pole
- c. in the Southern Hemisphere
- d. near the Equator

2. The father Emperor penguin keeps the egg warm and hatches the chick. Where is the mother penguin during this time?

3. How are a penguin's flipper bones different from the bones in other birds' wings?

4. A sea lion might have a hard time seeing a penguin swimming in the water. Why?

c. Sea lions cannot see the color black very well because it blends in with the snow and ice.

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Fill in the missing letters to create a vocabulary word from the article. Then write the full word on the line. Be sure you spell each word correctly.

1. ____ u a t ____ _____

hint: imaginary line around the center of the Earth

2. ____ n d a ____ e ____ d _____

hint: nearly extinct

3. ____ r c ____ s _____

hint: killer whales

4. c _____

r



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5. _____

r

6. ____ a n ____ _____

hint: take heavy breaths to cool off

7. ____ e g ____ r ____ i t a t ____ s _____

hint: spits up food that has been partly digested

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In the article, "Talking About Penguins", you learned many interesting facts about Emperor penguins and Galapagos penguins.

Even though they don't fly, penguins are actually birds. Write a short paragraph in which you describe why penguins are birds. Be sure to mention several traits that are unique to birds.



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ANSWER KEY

Talking About Penguins

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1. Most wild penguins live...
 - a. in South Africa
 - b. near the North Pole
 - c. **in the Southern Hemisphere**
 - d. near the Equator
2. The father Emperor penguin keeps the egg warm and hatches the chick. Where is the mother penguin during this time?

The mother lays the egg, then leaves for two months to go hunt for food.

3.



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4. As

- a. Sea lions cannot see the color black very well because it blends in with the snow and ice.
 - b. **When the sea lion looks up, the penguin's white belly blends in with the bright colors of the sky.**
 - c. Penguins swim very fast and they look like a streak zooming through the water.
 - d. A penguin becomes invisible when it swims in cold water.
5. According to the information in the article, what two things does a Galapagos penguin do to cool off when it is too warm?

It pants and spreads its wings.

ANSWER KEY

Talking About Penguins

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Fill in the missing letters to create a vocabulary word from the article. Then write the full word on the line. Be sure you spell each word correctly.

1. Equator Equator

hint: imaginary line around the center of the Earth

2. endangered endangered

hint: nearly extinct

3. arcas arcas

4.

c
r



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5. balancing balancing

hint: keeping something steady so it does not fall

6. pant pant

hint: take heavy breaths to cool off

7. regurgitates regurgitates

hint: spits up food that has been partly digested