



Nature Storybooks

Supports National Curriculum Key Stage 1 and 2

January 2008



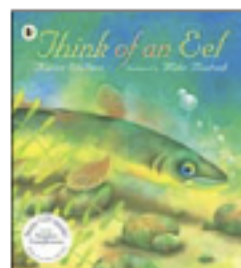
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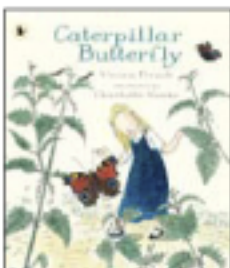


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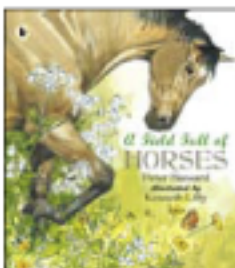
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Big Blue Whale
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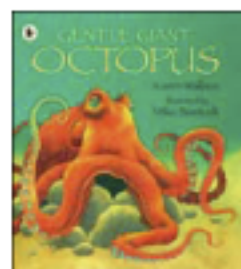
August 2008



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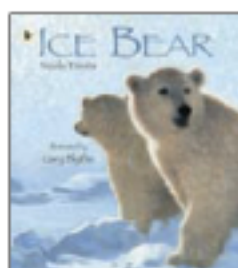


Gentle Giant Octopus
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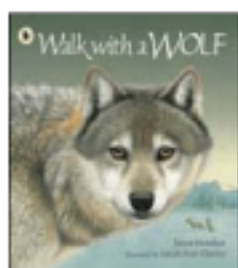


Tigress
9781406312959 • PB + CD • £6.99
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December 2008



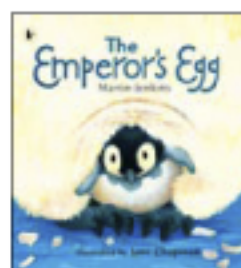
Ice Bear
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White Owl, Barn Owl
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The Emperor's Egg
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Introduction

This beautifully illustrated, award-winning collection of nature stories provides memorable reading experiences for children in Key Stages 1 and 2 (Years 1-4) and an opportunity for them to deepen their experience of the narrative information form.

The focus on animals has strong appeal for children, and the books provide many learning opportunities for exploring the topic, through both the written and visual elements. By working with the stories either individually or together, children can respond to the animal world and experience and develop their understanding through a variety of activities, including drawing and painting, small-world play and role play, talk and writing. The books provide a rich starting point for further research and for developing children's knowledge of information genres.

Nature Storybooks can support the literacy curriculum in a variety of ways. They can be:

- the focus for a whole class topic
- used as high quality texts for guided reading
- part of the class read-aloud programme
- included in the book provision for developing children's individual reading interests

The accompanying CDs provide further opportunities for children to explore the subject creatively through the additional information, poetry and songs.

Learning aims

To encourage children to:

- read and discuss an information book
- become familiar with the genre through talk, reading and writing
- develop a deeper understanding of the lives of animals through small-world play, role play and dance
- respond to the meanings through talk, writing and painting

To enable children to:

- read and write for purpose and meaning, using an information book
- read and write independently and creatively for a range of purposes on paper and on screen, combining words with images
- respond imaginatively using different strategies to engage with texts
- read independently for purpose, pleasure and learning



Primary National Strategy tables

Nature Storybooks support the following objectives:	
Year 1 core learning in literacy	Year 2 core learning in literacy
<p>Speaking</p> <p>1.1 Tell stories and describe incidents from their own experience in an audible voice</p> <p>1.2 Retell stories, ordering events using story language</p> <p>1.3 Interpret a text by reading aloud with some variety in pace and emphasis</p> <p>1.3 Experiment with and build new stores of words to communicate in different contexts</p>	<p>1.1 Speak with clarity and use appropriate intonation when reading and reciting texts</p> <p>1.3 Explain ideas and processes using imaginative and adventurous vocabulary and non-verbal gestures to support communication</p>
<p>Listening and responding</p> <p>2.1 Listen with sustained concentration, building new stores of words in different contexts</p> <p>2.2 Listen to and follow instructions accurately, asking for help and clarification if necessary</p> <p>2.3 Listen to tapes or videos and express views about how a story or information has been presented</p>	<p>2.1 Listen to others in class, ask relevant questions and follow instructions</p> <p>2.2 Listen to talk by an adult, remember some specific points and identify what they have learned</p>
<p>Group discussion and interaction</p> <p>3.1 Take turns to speak, listen to each other's suggestions and talk about what they are going to do</p> <p>3.2 Ask and answer questions, make relevant contributions, offer suggestions and take turns</p>	<p>3.1 Ensure that everyone contributes, allocate tasks, and consider alternatives and reach agreement</p> <p>3.2 Work effectively in groups by ensuring that each group member takes a turn challenging, supporting and moving on</p> <p>3.3 Listen to each other's views and preferences, agree the next steps to take and identify contributions by each group member</p>
<p>Drama</p> <p>4.1 Explore familiar themes and characters through improvisation and role-play</p>	<p>4.1 Adopt appropriate roles in small or large groups and consider alternative courses of action</p> <p>4.2 Present part of traditional stories, their own stories or work drawn from different parts of the curriculum for members of their own class</p> <p>4.3 Consider how mood and atmosphere are created in live or recorded performance</p>
<p>Understanding and interpreting texts</p> <p>7.1 Identify the main events and characters in stories, and find specific information in simple texts</p> <p>7.4 Recognise the main elements that shape different texts</p> <p>7.5 Explore the effect of patterns of language and repeated words and phrases</p>	<p>7.1 Draw together ideas and information from across a whole text, using simple signposts in the text</p> <p>7.2 Give some reasons why things happen or characters change</p> <p>7.3 Explain organisational features of texts, including alphabetical order, layout, diagrams, captions, hyperlinks and bullet points</p> <p>7.4 Use syntax and context to build their store of vocabulary when reading for meaning</p> <p>7.5 Explore how particular words are used, including words and expressions with similar meanings</p>
<p>Engaging with and responding to texts</p> <p>8.2 Visualise and comment on events, characters and ideas, making imaginative links to their own experiences</p> <p>8.3 Distinguish fiction and non-fiction texts and the different purposes for reading them</p>	<p>8.2 Engage with books through exploring and enacting interpretations</p> <p>8.3 Explain their reactions to texts, commenting on important aspects</p>



Primary National Strategy tables (continued)

Year 1 core learning in literacy	Year 2 core learning in literacy
<p>Creating and shaping text</p> <p>9.1 Independently choose what to write about, plan and follow it through</p> <p>9.2 Use key features of narrative in their own writing</p> <p>9.3 Convey information and ideas in simple non-narrative forms</p> <p>9.4 Find and use new and interesting words and phrases, including story language</p> <p>9.5 Create short simple texts on paper and screen that combine words with images (and sounds)</p>	<p>9.1 Draw on knowledge and experience of texts in deciding and planning what and how to write</p> <p>9.2 Sustain form in narrative, including use of person and time</p> <p>9.3 Maintain consistency in non-narrative, including purpose and tense</p> <p>9.4 Make adventurous word and language choices appropriate to the style and purpose of the text</p> <p>9.5 Select from different presentational features to suit particular writing purposes on paper and on screen</p>
<p>Text structure and organisation</p> <p>10.1 Write chronological and non-chronological texts using simple structures</p> <p>10.2 Group written sentences together in chunks of meaning or subject</p>	<p>10.1 Use planning to establish clear sections for writing</p> <p>10.2 Use appropriate language to make sections hang together</p>
<p>Sentence structure and punctuation</p> <p>11.1 Compose and write simple sentences independently to communicate meaning</p> <p>11.2 Use capital letters and full stops when punctuating simple sentences</p>	<p>11.2 Compose sentences using tense consistently (present and past)</p> <p>11.3 Use question marks, and use commas to separate items in a list</p>
<p>Presentation</p> <p>12.1 Write most letters, correctly formed and orientated, using a comfortable and efficient pencil grip</p> <p>12.2 Write with spaces between words accurately</p>	<p>12.1 Write legibly, using upper and lower case letters appropriately within words, and observing correct spacing within and between words</p> <p>12.3 Word process short narrative and non-narrative texts</p>

Year 3 core learning in literacy	Year 4 core learning in literacy
<p>Speaking</p> <p>1.2 Explain process or present information, ensuring that items are clearly sequenced, relevant details are included and accounts are ended effectively</p> <p>1.3 Sustain conversation, explain or give reasons for their views or choices</p>	<p>1.1 Offer reasons and evidence for their views, considering alternative opinions</p> <p>1.2 Respond appropriately to the contributions of others in the light of differing viewpoints</p> <p>1.3 Tell stories effectively and convey detailed information coherently for listeners</p>
<p>Listening and responding</p> <p>2.1 Follow up others' points and show whether they agree or disagree in whole-class discussion</p>	
<p>Group discussion and interaction</p> <p>3.1 Use talk to organise roles and action</p> <p>3.2 Actively include and respond to all members of the group</p> <p>3.3 Use the language of possibility to investigate and reflect on feelings, behaviour or relationships</p>	
<p>Drama</p> <p>4.2 Use some drama strategies to explore stories or issues</p>	



Primary National Strategy tables (continued)

Year 3 core learning in literacy	Year 4 core learning in literacy
<p>Understanding and interpreting texts</p> <p>7.1 Identify and make notes of the main points of section(s) of text</p> <p>7.2 Infer characters' feelings in fiction and consequences in logical explanations</p> <p>7.3 Identify how different texts are organised, including reference texts, magazines and leaflets, on paper and on screen</p> <p>7.4 Use syntax, context and word structure to build their store of vocabulary as they read for meaning</p> <p>7.5 Explore how different texts appeal to readers using varied sentence structures and descriptive language</p>	<p>7.1 Identify and summarise evidence from a text to support a hypothesis</p> <p>7.2 Deduce characters' reasons for behaviour from their actions and explain how ideas are developed in non-fiction texts</p> <p>7.3 Use knowledge of different organisational features of texts to find information effectively</p> <p>7.5 Explain how writers use figurative and expressive language to create images and atmosphere</p>
<p>Engaging with and responding to texts</p> <p>8.2 Empathise with characters and debate moral dilemmas portrayed in texts</p>	<p>8.2 Interrogate texts to deepen and clarify understanding and response</p>
<p>Creating and shaping text</p> <p>9.3 Write non-narrative texts using structures of different text-types</p> <p>9.4 Select and use a range of technical and descriptive vocabulary</p> <p>9.5 Use layout, format graphics and illustrations for different purposes</p>	<p>9.1 Develop and refine ideas in writing using planning and problem-solving strategies</p> <p>9.3 Summarise and shape material and ideas from different sources to write convincing and informative non-narrative texts</p> <p>9.4 Show imagination through the language used to create emphasis, humour, atmosphere or suspense</p> <p>9.5 Choose and combine words, images and other features for particular effects</p>
<p>Text structure and organisation</p> <p>10.1 Signal sequence, place and time to give coherence</p> <p>10.2 Group related material into paragraphs</p>	<p>10.1 Organise text into paragraphs to distinguish between different information, events or processes</p>
<p>Sentence structure and punctuation</p> <p>11.2 Compose sentences using adjectives, verbs and nouns for precision, clarity and impact</p>	<p>11.1 Clarify meaning and point of view by using varied sentence structure (phrases, clauses and adverbials)</p>
<p>Presentation</p>	<p>12.1 Write consistently with neat, legible and joined handwriting</p>



General activities

These can be selected as appropriate to the literacy and learning needs and experience of the class and the book chosen:

Activity 1: Talk and Visualizing

Before reading the book, talk with the children about what they already know about the animal you are focusing on. Ask them to tell the child sitting next to them and then to draw one quickly on a whiteboard.

Show them some images of the animal on the IWB or give laminated photos to groups to discuss. Do the images match their experience?

Make notes of children's responses and comments around the pictures or on a flip chart, e.g:

"I like the way the penguins snuggle up together to keep warm!" (see image A, page 8)

"I didn't know bats' wings were like hands." (see image B, page 9)

Introduce technical vocabulary as you talk together where useful (species, habitat, lifecycle, etc.)

As a class group, talk together about the animal and list the children's ideas under key headings on a large sheet of paper like this:

What do we know about (the focus animal)?

Where they live	What they look like	What they eat	Their life cycle	Other interesting facts we know

Explain that they can add anything else to the poster that they find out later, using Post-its placed under the right heading.

Ask children what they would like to know more about. Scribe their ideas as questions and display them as speech bubbles around the chart for further investigation, e.g:

"How do whales feed their babies?"

"How many eggs do frogs make?"

"Why do eels need to swim to the other side of the world?"

Homework:

Ask the children to see what they can find out at home.

Where in the world
do polar bears live?

What colour is
an octopus?

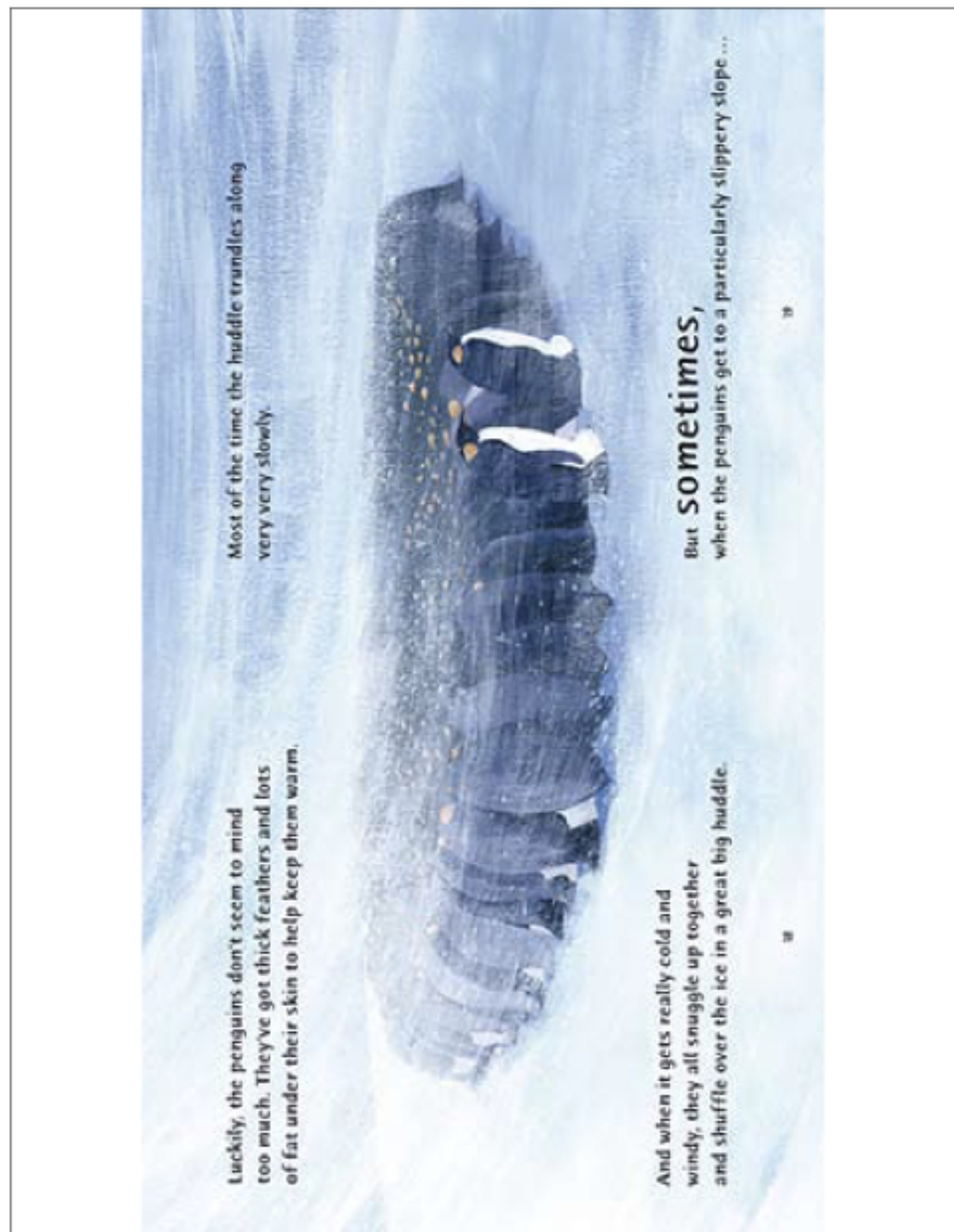
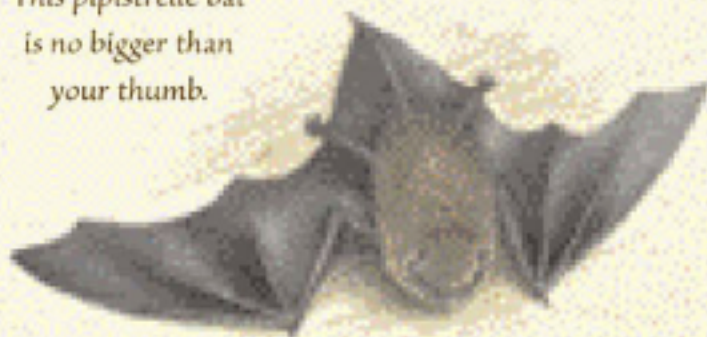


Image A: The Emperor's Egg • © 1999 Jane Chapman



She unfurls her wings,
made of skin so fine the finger bones
inside show through.

This pipistrelle bat
is no bigger than
your thumb.



A bat's wing is its
arm and hand.
Four extra-long fingers
support the skin of the wing.



Activity 2: Reading aloud and discussion: fact v. fiction

Read the book aloud and explain to the children that an animal expert helped to write it so they can be confident that what it says about the animal is factually accurate. Discuss with them their responses to the book.

Was there anything that surprised or puzzled you?

"Is that the real size?" (see image C, page 11)

"I don't understand why polar bears have black skin to soak up heat when they are covered in white fur."
(see image D, page 12)

Revisit the *What do we know about...?* chart to add to or amend the information it contains and to generate new questions to research.

Activity 3: Finding answers, making a poster

Organize the children into groups and ask each group to decide on a different question to research:

"What do barn owls eat? How do we know?"

"What eats barn owls?"

"How far can barn owls fly?"

"Where do owls live?"

"What does a barn owl do all day?"

(see image E, page 13)

They can find information using the internet, carefully chosen factual books and other information resources such as photographs and illustrations. Suggest children work in pairs and use drawing or writing to record what they find out. You can pair less experienced writers with more confident writers, or with an adult in a guided reading/writing group.

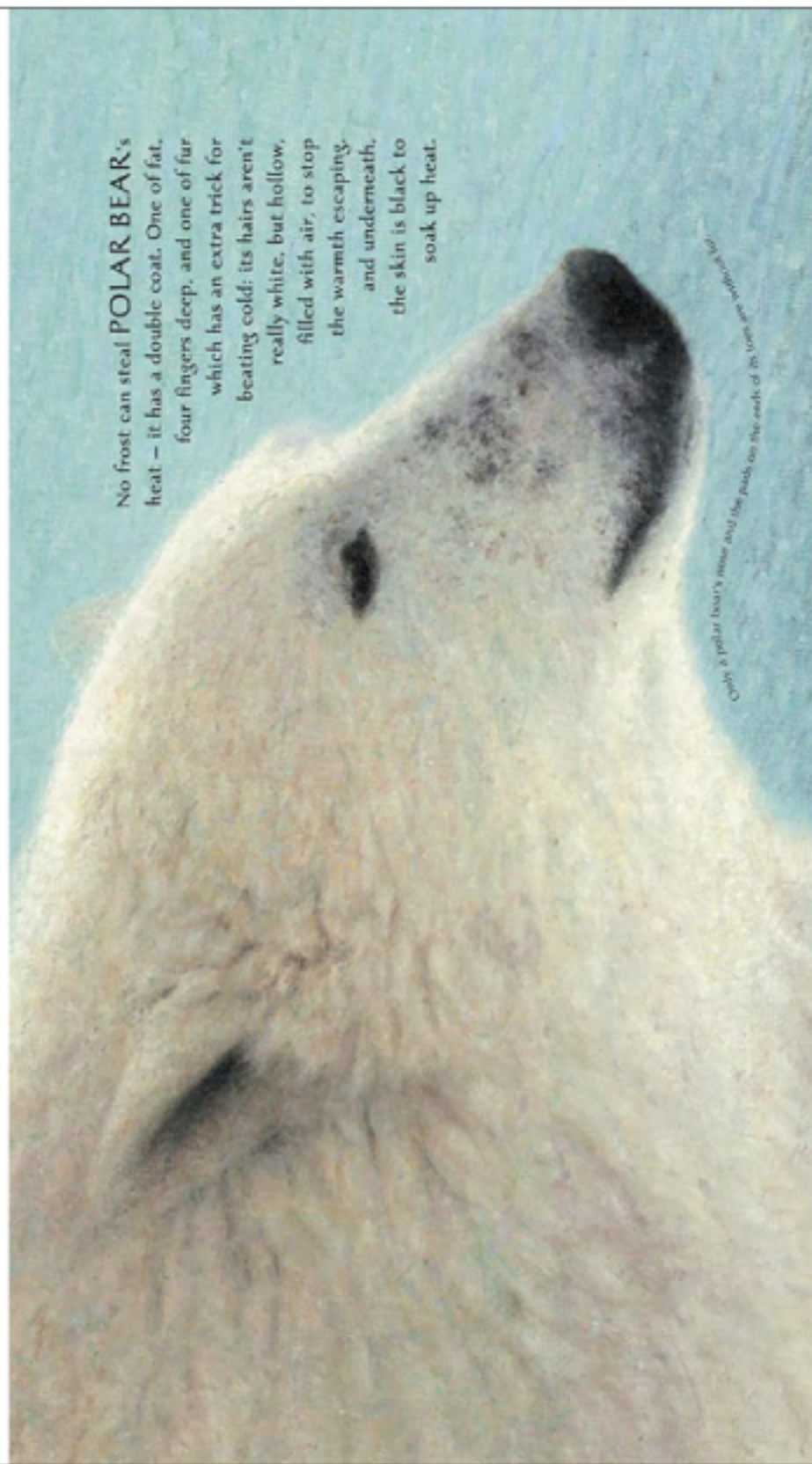
Each group should combine their findings to create a poster, with their question clearly visible as a heading, taking turns to present it to the other groups in the class.





No frost can steal **POLAR BEAR'S**
heat – it has a double coat. One of fat,
four fingers deep, and one of fur
which has an extra trick for
beating cold: its hairs aren't
really white, but hollow,
filled with air, to stop
the warmth escaping,
and underneath,
the skin is black to
soak up heat.

Only a polar bear's nose and the pads on the ends of its paws are black.





The owl flew back and forth over the field. Then another owl came to join it. "That's its mate,"

Grandpa whispered.

One owl dropped to the ground and came up again.

"Look! Look,

Grandpa! It's caught something!" I said.

23



*Two white owls, their prey
by pursuing with their long legs
and needle-sharp talons.*



Activity 4: Observing animals

Where possible, take a trip to an aquarium/zoo/nature reserve to see living animals in their natural/protected habitat. The children will already have questions that they want to explore more fully and could be challenged to find out answers to specific queries on the day.

Activity 5: Creating an animal's world in paint, collage, pastel

Turn one wall of the classroom into an underwater/landscape scene, drawing on the children's experience from the trip, as well as other information sources, to paint or draw the animals and the plants in their habitat accurately.

Where appropriate, challenge children to camouflage their animals within the scene.

They can go on to write a key to help onlookers identify the individual creatures in the scene, and display it alongside. This key will also act as a word bank for children to draw on when writing.

Activity 6: ICT: finding and saving photos

In the computer suite take children carefully through the process of making a photo file: searching for images, selecting, and saving. They will be able to draw on this later when presenting their work.

Activity 7: Making an information book

Make a class information book about an individual animal. Think together about what it should be about and make a list of the book's contents as a shared writing activity, e.g. habitat, a map showing where it lives, food, dangers, life cycle, a "did you know" section... Individuals or pairs of children can then go on to write and illustrate chapters together. It can be helpful to organize this into single or double page spreads.

Depending on the class' access to and capability in ICT, this book might first be handwritten and then word processed in ICT, using a format such as a preset table or a programme such as Publisher. It is helpful to first make a picture file using children's scanned illustrations, or images from the internet for them to draw on and insert into their own work.



Activity 8: Movement and dance; composing music

Read aloud pages of the book describing what it's like to be the animal and what its world is like, for example:

*A mother giant octopus
Slides over the seabed.
Her body stretches like toffee over the stones.
Her skin ripples like seaweed...*

(Taken from pages 16/17 of *Gentle Giant Octopus*: © 1998 Karen Wallace)

What are the important words or phrases that help the children to imagine this scene?

Re-read the text, this time asking children to move as if they were the animal, then organize them into groups to improvise a dance sequence to music (for example, for sea creatures use Handel's *Water Music* or Debussy's *La Mer*, inviting the children to dance as if they were seaweed, predatory fish such as the shark, or whales, penguins, octopi, turtles and eels).

Alternatively the children could compose their own music to accompany the dance using a variety of pitched and percussive instruments.

Activity 9: Writing poems

In this session, ask children to respond to the book by writing a poem using the following open structure. Write one poem together first, using shared writing; this will provide an opportunity to share ideas and to remind children that poems are often better if they don't rhyme, e.g.

*I am... I am the fiercest fish in the sea
I have... I have the scariest, sharpest teeth and a cavernous, smiling mouth
I like... I like swaggering in the ocean deep, like a big bully
I... I terrify everything in my path
I am... I am... SHARK!
I am shark, the fiercest fish in the sea.*

(see image F, page 16)

When they have finished their own poems, ask each child to join with another child, to read them aloud to each other and to work on them together to rehearse for presentation, as a pair, to the rest of the class.

When they are finished, each child can write a final draft of their poem, illustrate them and "publish" them in a class anthology or as part of a class display.



Image F: *Surprising Sharks* • © 2003 James Croft



Activity 10: Debate and argument

Choose one of the statements below most appropriate to the book:

- a) Many people, including scientists, believe that humans threaten the survival of a growing number of animals. For example, some are sold to exotic animal collectors for their particular properties (skin/ivory/oil/shell) or to zoos, and others die out because forests are destroyed for logging or mining. But animal collectors and zoos argue that they help to protect the animals.

or

- b) Many people believe that animals are badly used by humans for selfish reasons or commercial interests (food/medical experiments/cosmetics). On the other hand many others argue that this is necessary.

What do the children think?

As a shared writing activity, make a comparison chart to summarize both arguments. Then set up a "conscience alley" activity where a child role-plays finding an animal and has to decide whether to let it go free or to let farmers/scientists keep it. The rest of the class can take sides to persuade with their arguments as the child walks slowly along the "alley".

Arguments (some examples):

Let it go free	Keep it
a) Animals need to be in their natural habitat	It will be cared for in a zoo and can breed
It might die travelling in a crate	In a zoo it can be protected from hunters
It will be badly treated	When people see animals, then they will understand how important it is to protect them
b) Animals suffer in medical tests	Children's lives can be saved through animal experiments to cure diseases
Animals need to be with their own kind	Lots of people survive only because they eat these animals

Activity 11: Board game

Make a board game based on the book which includes both "Chance" cards, that use the **actual text** from the narrative strand of the book, and "True or false?" cards, that are based on the facts in the text. Players should pick up either a "Chance" card or a "True or false?" card depending on whether they throw an odd or even number. They pass it to the player next to them to read it out (answers are noted below the question).

For example:

True or false?	Frogs live most of their lives under water.	True or False? (Answer: False)	Move forward 1 space if right.
	Frogs' eggs hatch into tadpoles ten days after they are laid.	True or False? (Answer: True)	Move forward 2 spaces if right.
Chance card:	A hungry heron wants to eat you.	Stay still and miss a turn.	
	You slide off a stone back into the pond.	Move back 1 space.	
	You catch a juicy dragonfly for breakfast.	Move forward 2 spaces.	

Some cards can be written with the children during either shared or guided writing and a group can be asked to write "Instructions for play" for others to use when playing. These can be tried out by the players and redrafted where necessary.



Activity 12: Fiction links for independent reading

Collect together a box of storybooks and information books about the animals for children to browse, read and talk about together during independent reading time.

Activity 13: Using the Nature Storybook CDs

Each CD is read by the actor Stephen Tompkinson and is structured in four easy-to-use sections:

1. Reading aloud (the narrative text)
2. Music and song
3. Additional information
4. A read-along format, enabling children to follow the text on the page

The additional material enables children to revisit and explore the book in different ways:

- **Hearing the story read aloud** provides children with independent access to the book and a chance to hear it read in another voice with its own particular interpretation. Children are encouraged to listen attentively as individuals and may also listen as a group activity, recording what they have learnt on a large piece of paper. It will be interesting to see the different information that children tune into and recall.
- **Music and song** sections can be used as part of a dance and movement session, to support children's interpretations and expressions of the topic. Children can also join in with the song and go on to compose their own lyrics and music.
- **Additional information** also encourages concentrated listening skills. As part of a group activity, children can record information that they are interested in and remember. They can be shown how to record their interesting facts in diagrams, annotated drawings and lists.
- **The read-along format** supports children who are building independence as readers. A signal prompts page-turning and the reading is unhurried. Children can match the words they hear to those on the page and this enables them to develop fluency as readers.