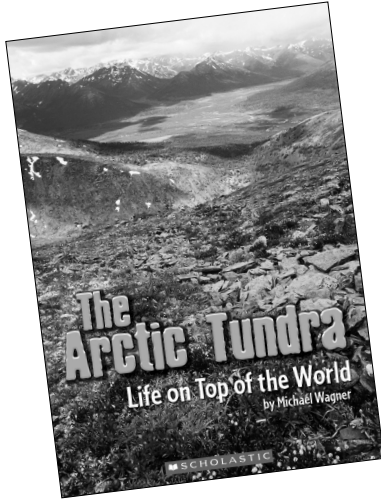


THE ARCTIC TUNDRA LIFE ON TOP OF THE WORLD

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TEXT TYPE: Non-fiction: Description—Report
GUIDED READING LEVEL: P

SUMMARY: The Arctic tundra is a unique environment that covers parts of eight countries. Despite the harsh and extremely frigid conditions that prevail, plants, animals, birds, and people are able to live on this land that circles the North Pole.

Note: You may want to focus only on a spread or a specific feature of the text rather than covering this non-fiction text in its entirety.

TEXT FEATURES

- table of contents
- index
- glossary
- text boxes
- chapters

VISUAL LITERACY

- maps and keys
- graph
- colour photographs
- chart

TEXT SUPPORTS

- page layout
- pronunciation instructions
- some definitions given in parentheses

POSSIBLE TEXT CHALLENGES

- maps
- page headings
- scientific vocabulary
- graph
- wildlife names

FOCUS COMPREHENSION STRATEGY

- analyzing

FURTHER COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

- predicting
- making connections: text to text

ORAL LANGUAGE OPPORTUNITIES

- Place Mat strategy
- Think-Pair-Share strategy
- oral presentation of a television or radio advertisement on the Arctic tundra (option 3 in Focused Rereading)

WORKING WITH WORDS

- word solving and building: using chunking and syllabication to solve scientific vocabulary
- word solving and building: incorporates silent letters appropriately into some spellings
- language predictability: uses context (text and visual literacy features) and some basic strategies (background knowledge and rereading surrounding sentences) to solve word meanings

ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Observe each student's ability to:

- find information in the text, photographs, maps, and captions
- locate main ideas
- make predictions
- make connections to previously read text

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Select from the following:

- Analyzing Strategy Checklist
- Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record

First Session (pages 4–11)

BEFORE READING

Predicting

Activate and build prior knowledge

- Display the front cover and read the title. Ask students: *What kind of book will this be—fiction or non-fiction? What do you think 'Life on Top of the World' means?* Read the back of the book aloud and instruct students, *I want you to think about the information the front and back covers give to help you figure out what life on the top of the world is like. After you have thought about this, I would like you to share your ideas with a partner.*

Introduce supports and challenges

ESL NOTE:

Some vocabulary may be unfamiliar to students and need to be introduced for the first reading. Choose some difficult words (e.g. 'mythical,' 'oasis,' 'immense,' 'dominant,' 'plummeting,' 'bulging,' 'penetrate,' 'thrive,' 'grazing,' 'deceptive,' 'camouflage,' 'teem,' and so on) and write the meanings of the new words on chart paper, or provide each student with an individual copy. The students can refer to the definitions during reading.

Language Predictability and Word Solving and Building

- Ask students to turn to page 5 and read it independently. After students have read the page direct their attention to the word 'barren.' Ask students how they could figure out the meaning of the word. Identify strategies such as using background knowledge, and considering the rest of the sentence by paying attention to the words 'but' and 'also.' Students can also look at the word 'vegetation,' looking for the familiar word within it.

Visual Literacy Features

- As a group, look at the text to find a variety of visual literacy features, including maps, captions, and photographs. Ask, *Why has the author used these features?* Explain the importance of the information in these features and that they are just as important as the text.

Analyzing

Set a purpose for reading

- Tell students they are reading to find more information on the Arctic tundra—where it is, what it is, and some of the features of its geography and climate.

Provide for early finishers

- Any students who finish early can discuss with a partner what information they would place in the centre of a Place Mat (see Oral Language Strategies in the *Grade 4 Literacy Support Guide*).

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- Ask each student to read independently to the end of page 11. Listen to individual students read aloud to you. Assist students in solving the meaning of unfamiliar words by reminding them of the supports and strategies such as breaking words apart, rereading, and using the glossary and other visual aids.

Observe

- Make observations regarding the student's ability to form predictions from the headings. Ask them if their predictions were correct, and if not, why they think that was.

AFTER READING

Revisit the purpose for reading

- Allow students to share any new information they learned about the Arctic tundra. List these on a new Place Mat that will be completed as a whole group. Students discuss with a partner what they think are the most important facts and share with the group.

Check on outstanding challenges

- Review and discuss any challenges students experienced. Did chunking help students solve challenging words? Do the maps and graph help, or do they provide additional challenges?

Note successful strategy use

- Highlight a student who successfully solved the meaning of a word, e.g., *I liked the way Ben figured out the meaning of the word 'radically.' He tried replacing it with other words until it made sense. He decided on 'greatly.'*

Analyzing

Optional Approach

Analyzing

You may wish to have students read the rest of the text independently. Set a purpose for reading and choose a date to come back together to discuss and work with the text using the Optional After Reading session (see page 7). It is recommended that you do some diagnostic work with students or hold a book discussion halfway through to check their comprehension of the text.

Setting a Purpose

Students are to find the text's main and supporting details of life in the Tundra.

Second Session (pages 12–23)

BEFORE READING

Analyzing

Activate and build prior knowledge

- Direct students' attention to the group Place Mat activity from the first session. As a Think-Pair-Share activity (see the *Grade 4 Literacy Support Guide*), have students now choose one fact they found interesting and share it with a partner. A few students can share with the group.

Language Predictability

Introduce supports and challenges

- Have students find the word 'sedges' on page 12. Note that it is in bold print. Ask the students, *Why do you think the word is in bold print? Where do you think we can find the meaning of the word?* Have everyone turn to the glossary. Ask, *Why would we use the glossary instead of a dictionary?*

Analyzing

Set a purpose for reading

- Tell students they are reading to find out what plants and animals live in the Arctic tundra.

Provide for early finishers

- With a partner, students can discuss which plant and/or animal they found the most surprising or unlikely to live in the Arctic.

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- Have students read portions of the text to you and provide them with comprehension prompts, e.g., *What are lichens? What do they remind you of? What do reindeer eat? Where did you find that information?*

Observe

- Make observations on your assessment tools. (See the Analyzing Strategy Checklist and the Comprehension Strategies Anecdotal Record in the *Grade 4 Literacy Support Guide*.)
- Encourage students to explain how they use a strategy to solve new or difficult words.

Third Session (pages 24–32)

Analyzing

AFTER READING

Revisit the purpose for reading

- Ask students to talk about the plants and animals that live in the tundra. List these on chart paper and have students give you one supporting characteristic for each.

Check on outstanding challenges

- Use your observations to discuss any challenges students are experiencing.

Note successful strategy use

- Highlight a student who figured out the meaning of a word by making connections to previous pages in the book or using background knowledge. Note, *Keith was able to figure out what ‘predators’ are on page 17 because he referred back to the predators chart on page 7.*

Analyzing

BEFORE READING

Activate and build prior knowledge

- Review what living things have already been described—plants and animals. Make reference to the chart completed in the last session. Ask, *What other living things are we still going to find out about?*

Introduce supports and challenges

- Direct students to page 24 and the word ‘ptarmigans.’ Tell the students how the word is pronounced and ask them how this is known. Ask them if they know other words with silent letters and if they are aware of any other words with a silent ‘p.’

Word Solving and Building and Visual Literacy Features

Analyzing

Set a purpose for reading

- Tell students, *We are going to continue reading to find out what other living things are in the Arctic tundra so we can add to our chart.*

Provide for early finishers

- Students who finish early can discuss with a partner whether they would like to visit or live in the Arctic.

DURING READING

Monitor reading

- Have students read portions of the text to you and provide them with comprehension prompts, e.g., *Tell me more about Snowy owls. What details does it give you about blackflies? Where does it say that?*

Observe

- Continue to give feedback on any successful use of strategies you observe.
- Encourage students to explain how they use a strategy to solve new or difficult words.

AFTER READING

Revisit the purpose for reading

- Ask students to share what else lives in the Arctic tundra that can be added to the chart, i.e., birds, insects, and people. Have students give one supporting detail for each new living thing listed on the chart.

Check on outstanding challenges

- Have the visual literacy features been helpful in aiding understanding? What about the chart and graph? Have they helped students, or have they challenged them?

Note successful strategy use

- Have students share and explain their strategy use. If possible, have students who solved a particular word using different strategies share their thinking. It is important to point out there is more than one way to solve both word and comprehension problems. Students should use whatever strategies they are most comfortable with or have had previous success with.

Analyzing

Optional After Reading

Analyzing

If students have completed the text independently, use the following After Reading Discussion and activity suggestions to support comprehension, word solving, and good reader strategies.

Have students share one example of how people in the tundra are continuing long-held traditions and one example of how life is becoming more modern.

Evaluating

Explain if you agree with the author that the Arctic tundra is ‘one of the most remote, breathtaking environments on Earth.’

Making Connections: Text to Text

Does this book remind you of other books that you have read about different environments? What would you have included that you think is missing?

FOCUSED REREADING

Three options are provided for focused rereading in the next Guided Reading lesson. Choose an activity that meets the needs of your students, or you might select a Reader Response activity from the *Grade 4 Literacy Support Guide*.

Written

Analyzing

- Instruct students to create a two-column chart for taking notes on what they’ve learned. Students can choose mammals, birds, or insects of the tundra to complete the chart, while providing supporting details. The complexity will come via the number of mammals, birds, or insects chosen. This allows for various ability levels. Students may use the Internet and other reference tools for assistance.

Inferring

- Students should imagine they have suddenly been transported to the Arctic tundra. Have them write a description of what they see, what they hear, and what they might even smell. Their choice of words should be chosen carefully to best describe the sights, sounds, and even the smells they think they would find in the tundra. You can model an example of how their choice of words, including well-chosen adjectives, will achieve the sensory effects they are to work towards. For example, ‘The crackling crunch of the frozen ground.’

Synthesizing**Artistic**

- Students can create a poster showing the food chain that is involved in the Arctic tundra. Illustrations and/or photographs of the mammals, birds, insects, and plants would be included along with symbols. Some further research may need to be completed on this topic. Ensure that students provide a unique interpretation, not merely a carbon copy of the chart on page 7.

Evaluating**Oral/dramatic**

- Have students write and then present a television or radio advertisement to promote travel to the Arctic tundra. Students are to use persuasive language and vocal expressions to entice as many travellers to the area as possible. Students might wish to highlight words and phrases found in the book and within their broader vocabulary that will engage an audience's interest in traveling to the Arctic tundra. Descriptive words such as 'breathtaking,' 'mythical,' 'brimming with colour and life,' and 'spectacular oasis' is some of the descriptive language students can use to persuade would-be travellers to visit to the tundra.