



## Fact or Fiction?

Polar bears usually eat penguins.



a	w	l	p	n	e	d	r	c	i	n	a	r	h	p
c	i	c	e	j	e	b	e	s	w	i	m	f	i	a
y	l	a	b	w	a	p	o	x	d	c	w	t	h	w
f	h	r	o	d	r	m	d	s	f	m	c	g	e	u
o	g	n	u	a	c	s	l	n	s	q	o	e	r	i
d	s	i	a	c	t	e	e	t	h	a	l	t	o	c
n	e	v	x	o	i	b	y	a	w	t	d	p	t	v
d	y	o	j	d	c	s	e	o	l	g	b	i	a	c
i	a	r	s	w	o	e	k	v	r	e	m	r	d	a
f	b	e	e	c	a	m	o	u	f	l	a	g	e	m
u	s	a	z	r	l	w	c	u	b	a	n	o	r	u
r	i	s	a	m	h	n	p	a	o	t	l	e	p	k

## Word Bank

- |            |      |          |      |
|------------|------|----------|------|
| Ice        | Cold | Teeth    | Snow |
| Camouflage | Fur  | Den      | Swim |
| Arctic     | Paw  | Predator |      |
| Carnivore  | Cub  | Seal     |      |



## Be a Conservation Hero

Help save the polar bears' habitat by being energy smart! When we use lots of energy we put out, or emit, greenhouse gasses. Greenhouse gasses trap heat on Earth, like a blanket (or a greenhouse of course)! As the Earth's air or atmosphere gets warmer sea ice, the polar bears' home, melts. Make smart choices like riding your bike to school with your parents, turning off lights when you aren't in a room, and keeping your heaters and air conditioners off as much as possible to save energy and help save polar bears.

## Talk about it!

Did you know that polar bears have black skin under their white fur? Why might this be?



# Polar Bear Facts

**Polar bears are the largest bear species.**

Although some Kodiak (brown) bears are as large as individual polar bears, the polar bear is generally thought to be the largest bear species. Polar bears are 8-11 feet tall and can weigh about 1,700 pounds, although according to Discovery.com, the largest polar bear ever measured weighed 2,200 pounds.

**Polar bears have clear fur and black skin.**

Polar bears have a coat that appears white, but is actually made up of clear, hollow hairs that reflect light. These give the bear a white appearance and also help to camouflage it in its snowy, icy habitat. Although polar bears have a light coat, they have black skin underneath. Polar bears may also appear yellow, especially close to molting, which occurs in summer. The yellow coloration comes from the oils in the seals that they eat. Polar bears in zoos may also look green due to algae growth on their fur.

**Polar bears eat other marine mammals.**

The polar bear's preferred prey are seals - particularly ringed (their primary seal prey) and bearded seals. Polar bears will patiently wait at the edge of the ice or at seal breathing holes for a seal to appear. Unless food is scarce, the bear will eat mostly the seal's energy-rich skin and blubber, leaving the carcass (including meat) for other Arctic animals to scavenge

**Polar bears have powerful noses.**

Polar bears have a strong sense of smell. It is thought polar bear can smell a seal from about .6 mile away and 3 feet under the snow. Polar bears may also feed on carcasses of seals, whales and walrus, and can smell these carcasses from miles away.

**Polar bears keep warm with a thick layer of fat.**

Polar bears have a layer of fat under their skin that is 2-4" thick. But the main way they keep warm is through their thick fur, which has a dense under coat covered with longer guard hairs that protect the polar bear's skin from moisture. The fat and fur keep the bear so warm that they need to move slowly to avoid overheating.

\* Adapted from <http://marinelife.about.com/od/vertebrates/tp/Polar-Bear-Facts.htm>

