



## WILD CLASSROOM

WWF's Wild Classroom connects educators and parents with the tools and resources they need to help kids explore and understand the world around them. Visit [wildclassroom.org](http://wildclassroom.org) to choose from a growing library of animal- and nature-related teacher's guides, fact sheets, and activity plans that you can use to enhance your science, writing, art, and other lessons.

Together we can inspire the next generation to build a future where people and nature thrive!



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# POLAR BEARS

## ● Polar Bear Fun Facts

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- The Latin name for polar bear is *Ursus maritimus*, which means "sea bear." Polar bears are classified as marine mammals because they spend most of their lives on the sea ice of the Arctic Ocean.
- Polar bears keep their fur clean to help insulate them against the cold. Dirty, matted, and/or wet fur is not as effective an insulator.
- Although polar bear fur appears white, it is actually clear. The hairs are hollow and contain no pigment. Reflection of the sun's light causes them to appear white.
- Polar bears have a thick layer of body fat, to help protect them from the cold air and water of the Arctic. Underneath the fur, their skin is black.
- Despite the extreme cold conditions of their environment, polar bears sometimes overheat. When this happens, they lie down in the snow to cool off.
- In addition to an upper and lower eyelid, polar bears have a third eyelid that helps protect their eyes from the glare of snow and ice.
- Adult polar bear paws are about 12 inches wide, the size of a dinner plate. These large paws help evenly distribute their weight so they don't fall through the sea ice.
- Polar bears can swim up to six miles per hour by paddling with their front paws and holding their hind legs flat like a rudder.
- Polar bears spend over 50% of their time hunting for food. They store energy when sea ice and food are plentiful so that when food sources are scarce (usually during the summer and autumn), they can survive on fat reserves.
- Because they need large amounts of fat to survive, the polar bear's diet consists mainly of seals. They may catch only one or two out of every 10 seals they hunt. When sea ice and food are scarce, they may travel to land to prey on smaller animals, scavenge for animal remains, or eat things like eggs and berries.

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WILD CLASSROOM

# POLAR BEARS



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## POLAR BEAR WORD PUZZLE

Complete the puzzle with words related to polar bears. Use your polar bear fact sheet to help you.

- |  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| 1. Polar bears keep their fur clean to help _____ heat.                  | _____ <b>S</b> _____ |
| 2. Polar bears are classified as marine _____.                           | _____ <b>A</b> _____ |
| 3. The extinction status of polar bears.                                 | _____ <b>V</b> _____ |
| 4. Polar bear fur is actually _____ in color.                            | _____ <b>E</b> _____ |
| 5. Polar bears spend over 50% of their time _____.                       | _____ <b>T</b> _____ |
| 6. Climate _____ is the cause of the disappearing sea ice in the Arctic. | _____ <b>H</b> _____ |
| 7. Shrinking sea _____ is threatening the survival of polar bears.       | _____ <b>E</b> _____ |
| 8. An adult polar bear paw is about the size of a dinner _____!          | _____ <b>P</b> _____ |
| 9. Despite extremely cold conditions, polar bears sometimes _____.       | _____ <b>O</b> _____ |
| 10. Polar bears have an excellent sense of _____.                        | _____ <b>L</b> _____ |
| 11. The color of polar bear skin.  | _____ <b>A</b> _____ |
| 12. Polar bear fur appears white because it _____ sunlight.              | _____ <b>R</b> _____ |
| 13. When polar bears are first _____, they're the size of a guinea pig.  | _____ <b>B</b> _____ |
| 14. Polar bears have a third _____, which is used for protection.        | _____ <b>E</b> _____ |
| 15. Polar bears' favorite food.  | _____ <b>A</b> _____ |
| 16. The region where polar bears live.                                   | _____ <b>R</b> _____ |
| 17. Polar bears can detect seals in the water under three feet of _____. | _____ <b>S</b> _____ |



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# POLAR BEARS



## POLAR BEAR WORD PUZZLE | ANSWER KEY

Complete the puzzle with words related to polar bears. Use your polar bear fact sheet to help you.

1. Polar bears keep their fur clean to help \_\_\_\_\_ heat.
2. Polar bears are classified as marine \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The extinction status of polar bears.
4. Polar bear fur is actually \_\_\_\_\_ in color.
5. Polar bears spend over 50% of their time \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Climate \_\_\_\_\_ is the cause of the disappearing sea ice in the Arctic.
7. Shrinking sea \_\_\_\_\_ is threatening the survival of polar bears.
8. An adult polar bear paw is about the size of a dinner \_\_\_\_\_!
9. Despite extremely cold conditions, polar bears sometimes \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Polar bears have an excellent sense of \_\_\_\_\_.
11. The color of polar bear skin.
12. Polar bear fur appears white because it \_\_\_\_\_ sunlight.
13. When polar bears are first \_\_\_\_\_, they're the size of a guinea pig.
14. Polar bears have a third \_\_\_\_\_, which is used for protection.
15. Polar bears' favorite food.
16. The region where polar bears live.
17. Polar bears can detect seals in the water under three feet of \_\_\_\_\_.

I N S U L A T E

M A M M A L S

V U L N E R A B L E

C L E A R

H U N T I N G

C H A N G E

I C E

P L A T E

O V E R H E A T

S M E L L

B L A C K

R E F L E C T S

B O R N

E Y E L I D

S E A L S

A R C T I C

S N O W