

Penguin P.E.

OBJECTIVES

Students will imitate the locomotion styles of penguins and other antarctic animals.

MATERIALS

- ❑ large play area

BACKGROUND

Penguins use flippers to swim. On land they may walk, hop, or slide. Penguins, whales, fishes, and other ocean animals must swim to find food and escape from predators.



ACTION

1. Take students to an outdoor play area or large room. Have students spread out across the play area.
2. To begin this activity, have students pretend to be swimming penguins. Demonstrate how students' arms will become penguin wings, called flippers, and move in an up-and-down motion. To steer, penguins bend their tail and flippers. When they are ready to jump out of the water, penguins swim very fast, then jump out onto the ice. Have students role-play these motions (flap arms, wiggle body, jump).
3. Once all of the penguins have jumped ashore, describe how penguins walk to their nests. Emperor penguins walk slowly and regally. They may point beaks and eyes downward slightly. They have very short legs and take small steps. Have students walk like emperors.

Other penguins, like chinstraps, can walk much faster. They hold their wings out for balance and run to their nest sites. Their legs are still short but they can run almost as fast as people can. Have students hold out their arms and run in place.

Rockhopper penguins hop. They hold both feet together and hop from rock to rock up steep hills. Have students hop around. How far can the student penguins hop? Does hopping make them more tired?

4. Students should now sit down to catch their breath. While resting, describe how many types of animals live in antarctic seas. Some, like whales, move their tails up and down. To demonstrate, have students hook their thumbs together so hands look like a whale's tail. Move tails up and down. Now have students move their tails side to side like a fish.

Other animals have more than one set of legs to swim with. Introduce krill (page 5). To swim like a school of krill, have students lie on their backs and kick their legs and wave their arms in the air.

5. Have everyone sit up and take a few deep breaths. Talk about the animals they became. Do any students have a favorite? Do any students know of another animal and how it moves? As you end the activity, make sure legs and arms still work as you return to moving like people.