

Penguin Life Cycle

Play-based learning is a developmentally appropriate best-practice for young children. Through the **Penguin Life Cycle** unit, students get to know more about living things and life cycles. From understanding how an egg hatches to discovering why penguins cannot fly, this guide shares an array of ways that children can have fun learning about different types of penguins while enhancing their literacy skills. Follow these suggestions to create penguin-themed centers in your early childhood classroom.

ANTARCTICA PENGUIN RESEARCH STATION DRAMATIC PLAY CENTER

Dramatic play inspires imagination, develops speaking and listening skills, fosters social skills such as sharing and turn taking, and supports children to acquire new vocabulary. A dramatic play center should include a theme, props, and adult guidance to enhance language development. Also include environmental print such as signs, labels, and authentic writing opportunities.

SUGGESTED PROPS

- Igloo blocks
- Giant penguin
- Scientist costume
- Explorer/science kit
- Snow hat

RIF PRINTABLES

- Jobs Around the Station poster
- Antarctica Penguin Research Station banner
- Lifecycle of a Penguin poster
- Penguin Exam sheet
- Penguin Observation sheet



ADULT GUIDANCE: Use these suggested leveled questions and narrations to support children's play.

- **Level 1:** "Did you see a penguin today? Point to it."
- **Level 2:** "Did you see a penguin or a penguin chick?"
- **Level 3:** "What behavior did you see the penguin do?"
- **Level 4:** "Why do you think the penguins are whistling to each other?"
- "They are using binoculars to spot the baby penguins in the distance. Great observation!"
- "Oh no! The penguin is hurt! You are giving it an exam to see what's wrong."
- "This Arctic team is learning so much and helping to protect penguins. What important work!"
- "Great teamwork today! Real researchers work together and ask questions."

WRITING CENTER

Young children benefit from exposure to different styles and purposes for writing. At your writing center include different types of paper and writing materials, a sound-spelling chart, and vocabulary cards. Help children see that writing has different purposes by providing examples of different types of writing such as friendly letters, storybooks, party invitations, and more.

RIF PRINTABLES

- Penguins border sheet (with and without lines)
- Ice block alphabet tracing
- Postcard



Sending a postcard is a wonderful way to make someone smile and let them know you're thinking of them while you are traveling! Write a postcard to a friend or family member. As a class, discuss some joyful messages you could include to make the person receiving the postcard feel appreciated. Have students practice writing their postcard using RIF's Sound-Spelling Chart and Picture Vocabulary Cards.

NURSERY RHYME CENTER



Singing nursery rhymes help children develop phonological awareness which is important for developing phonics. Set up a center for children to sing their favorite nursery rhymes. Include the nursery rhyme, hand-made or printed displays, and puppets or props related to the nursery rhyme.

RIF PRINTABLES

- "I'm a Little Penguin" nursery rhyme
- "I'm a Little Penguin" puppets