



# VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY 2

What Color is a Polar Bear?

Supports Lesson Three: Adaptations

Activity Type: Craft (Make a sock puppet)

Grades 2-5

Time: 1 hour prep including purchase of materials/ 30 mins. in class

Cost: \$, Low

## Materials

- **Black sock for each student (youth size)**
- **Cotton balls (enough to cover each sock)**  
Approximately 15 bags
- **Recycled cardstock legs and head**
- **Glue ( 4 bottles)**
- **Arctic Polar Bears DVD**
- **Polar Card Activity Guide for Educators**
- **Polar Cards (pack for each student)**
- **Small craft shopping bags**

## Before Your Visit:

Review Volunteer Presenter Checklist, "Talking To Students About Global Warming" Online Presentation, and the set of Polar Cards.

Download and print out pattern of polar bear head and feet on recycled cardstock.

Purchase and prepare materials into bags for each student. Each bag should contain sock, 30 cotton balls, cardstock legs and head. Remember to use recycled plastic shopping bags or brown bags.

Take extra materials with you to the classroom in case you run out.

## In the Classroom:

Have the DVD playing as you are getting ready. (Remember to stop the DVD before you talk since it is on a loop.)

Introduce yourself:

"Good morning students, I am very excited to be here today. My name is Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_ and today you are going to learn something fun about polar bears."

## Instructions:

Introduce activity:

Ask the student, "What color do you think a polar bear is?" Explain how a polar bear has black skin and fur which appears white.

1. Glue cotton on to the sock- cover it completely
2. Attach head and legs cardstock cut-outs to sock
3. During the activity, walk around and talk with students about why polar bears are white.

Use the talking points below:

- In the Arctic environment, the dominant color is white.
- Animals have adapted to camouflage themselves from predators and prey in the snow and ice.
- The polar bear's outer fur is actually transparent, hollow hair shafts.
- There is a dense 'wooly' coat underneath.
- The hollow hairs reflect light so the color of the bear looks white.
- Polar bear hair does not mat so ice and water can shake off easily instead of freezing.
- Polar bears also have a thick layer (up to 4 inches) of blubber under their skin to insulate them from the extremely cold temperatures.
- Polar bear skin is actually black which is believed to absorb heat from the sun.

## Wrap Up:

Ask the students to discuss what they learned about polar bears.

"I am leaving your teacher materials and information about polar bears, the Arctic and global warming. You will be learning more about these topics and I hope that you will share what you learn with others. Thank you for letting me come to your class today to tell you about polar bears."

## Clean Up Materials:

Provide shopping bags to the students so they can take their polar bears home. remind them to recycle the bag after they use it.



Front Left



Back Left



Back Right



Front right



**Sample of Completed Sock Puppet**