

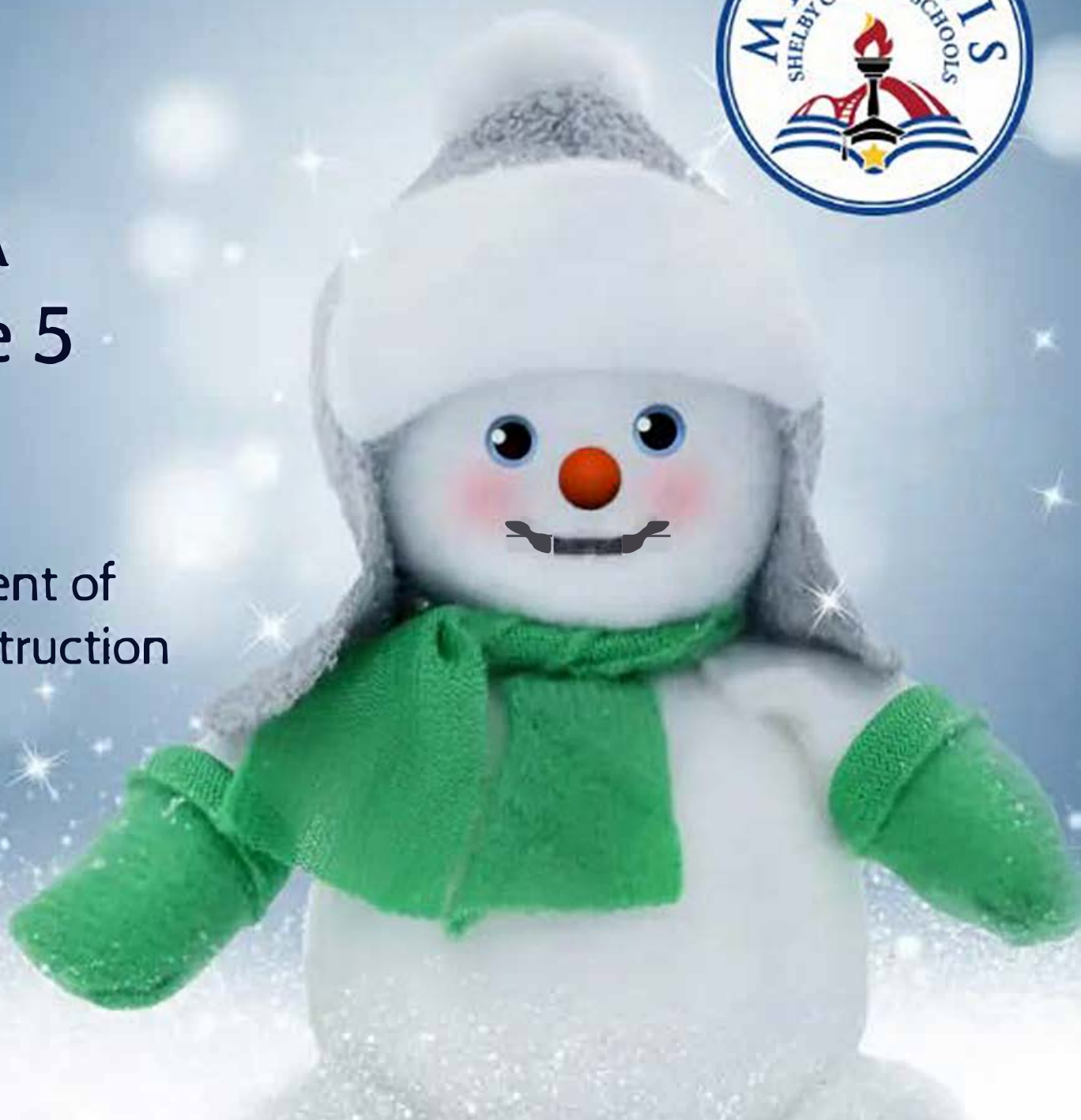
# Inclement Weather

# RESOURCES



ELA  
Grade 5

The Department of  
Curriculum & Instruction



# Inclement Weather Resource

## Pull of the Penguin

by Christy Mihaly 2021



*In this section of the Inclement Weather Support Guide, we're reading "The Pull of the Penguin" by Christy Mihaly. In "The Pull of the Penguin," Christy Mihaly tells the story of the day Elaine Parker ventured onto the Antarctic ice and was rescued by a penguin.*

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#### **Paired Text**

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#### **Ways to Support your Child**

1. Ask your child about the informational text, What was "Pull of the Penguin " and the paired literary text, "Ice Island" about?
2. **Parent Answer Keys**-Review written responses together.

#### **Related Media**

1. Watch the following clips with your child at home:
  - ['How To Signal With A Whistle- Prepping Emergency Survival Must Have Skill'](#)
  - ['Life In Antarctica: The Most Isolated Part Of The World'](#)
  - ['Penguin Science: Antarctic Penguins'](#)

# ANCHOR TEXT



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

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

# The Pull of the Penguin

By Christy Mihaly

2021

*McMurdo Station is the United States Antarctic research station, where scientists and volunteers come to learn more about this special part of the world. In this text, Christy Mihaly tells about Elaine Parker's experience working and living at this remote, or far away, location. As you read, take notes on details that describe the setting.*

[1] *There! A penguin! Elaine Parker stared out at the dark, distant dot on the ice.*

*The low autumn sun sat between sea and sky, splashing pink and violet across the craggy mountains. Elaine breathed in the pure, crisp air, enjoying her escape from McMurdo Station.*

## Work on the Ice

The past summer in Antarctica, Elaine had spent long hours inside the plain, practical<sup>1</sup> buildings of the McMurdo research station. Her job was to look after the fire extinguishers and fire alarms in the machine shops, sheds, boiler rooms, dorms, and warehouses of this remote outpost. But on her days off, Elaine loved to strap on skis and explore the sparkling ice and crystal caves beyond the station. Sometimes she was so filled with the wild beauty of Antarctica that she started to sing — or yodel!

With winter coming, she'd be heading home soon. But before she left there was one more thing Elaine wanted to do. She was determined<sup>2</sup> to see a penguin — up close. She'd heard tantalizing<sup>3</sup> tales from the biologists, about how penguins played and took care of one another, how they were curious and often approached people. She had spotted a few, but only from far away. But that night after dinner, someone said there was a lone penguin on the ice on the far side of the station. Elaine rushed out, hoping to get a closer look.



*"2007 Snow-Hill-Island Luyten-De-Hauwere-Emperor-Penguin-46" by Denis Luyten is in the public domain.*

1. **Practical (adjective)** useful; ordinary
2. **Determined (adjective)** showing that one will not back down from a choice
3. making one feel interested in something that is usually beyond their reach

## On the Ice

- [5] Now her neck tingled<sup>4</sup> with excitement...and cold. The day had been sunny and warm (for Antarctica, meaning around 20°F or -6°C, still below freezing). But a frosty wind circled, a warning. Elaine knew the weather could change in a heartbeat. A sudden storm could drop the temperature by 50° in just a few minutes.

She gazed across the icy plain. Although it looked solid, this ice sheet was in constant motion, squeezed and warped by the glacier — the vast<sup>5</sup> river of ice sliding slowly down the mountains toward the ocean. The glacier's tremendous pressure<sup>6</sup> created jagged cracks and zig-zagging ridges of ice. Crevasses — deep blue cracks in the ice — lurked<sup>7</sup> beneath the snowy surface. Rows of blue and red flags marked a safe path through this hazardous<sup>8</sup> zone.

A frosty gust of wind blasted, and she reached up to cover her bare earlobe. Oh no, where was her hat? Elaine had left her backpack—with her warm parka, hat, and emergency radio — back at McMurdo! Normally, she carried that orange pack everywhere. But hearing about the penguin, she'd dashed out without it. Her stinging ears were in danger of frostbite. This was trouble. She was out on the ice alone, without her gear.

Maybe the cold had slowed down her brain, but Elaine didn't consider the danger. All she could think of was the penguin. Watching the swaying bird shape coming closer, she spied a flash of yellow. It was an emperor penguin!

Elaine tried to ignore her ears and lowered herself to sit on the snow. It was against the rules to approach a penguin, she knew. So she had to wait and see if the bird would come to her. The bitter wind blew through her clothes. Elaine held her breath, concentrated on the penguin waddling toward her, and willed it to keep coming. Soon the bird stood right in front of her. Its eyes were level with hers, its beak almost touching her nose.

- [10] She admired the golden-orange stripes edging the bird's beak. She tried not to blink as the penguin eyed her closely. Then it reached out its beak, leaned in, and tapped her cheek.

Elaine's heart leapt with the thrill. The penguin bent forward, then dipped its beak inside her collar. It tickled! Elaine couldn't help it — she giggled.

Her laugh startled the penguin. Flipping onto its belly, the bird tobogganed away. It slid across

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4. **Tingled** (*verb*) to have a light stinging or prickly feeling
  5. **Vast** (*adjective*) a very large area
  6. **Pressure** (*noun*) a steady force upon a surface
  7. **Lurk** (*verb*) to be hidden, so as to cause harm
  8. having a great number of dangers

the ice into a billowing cloud of snowflakes. Elaine stood and stomped her feet, trying to warm her toes. Well, that was that. She'd lost her penguin, a storm was brewing, and it was past time to head back to McMurdo.

Just then the screen of snow parted. Elaine got a glimpse<sup>9</sup> of her bird friend, and felt the pull of the penguin. Surely she'd be safe out here just a little longer! She leaned into the blowing snow and followed the bird farther out on the ice, away from the base.

## A Friend in Need

Suddenly...*Whoosh!* A strong gust knocked her off her feet. She tumbled over and over, sliding like a hockey puck across the slippery plain and into the whirling snow. Then the wind picked her up and slammed her face-down onto the ice.

- [15] Elaine was pinned down by the wind and scared to move. She squinted through icy eyelashes, straight down into a neon-bright blue glow. Oh no! That beautiful blue was the color of danger. It came from a deep hole below her. She was lying on a thin skin of ice above a blue crevasse.

Elaine heard a *tink* as tiny cracks shot through the ice. Icy cold seeped<sup>10</sup> into her belly. Crunch! The crust gave way slightly, and she dropped a little lower. If she broke through, she'd drop into the crevasse, where nobody would ever find her. The storm swirled and Elaine's thoughts spun.

Then, as quickly as it began, the wind died. In the sudden quiet, Elaine felt someone near. She peeked up.

Her penguin stood peering down at her. Seeing Elaine move, the bird walked away, then stopped and looked back. It seemed to be inviting her to follow.

As Elaine tried to decide on her next move, she heard a snap. Cracks spiderwebbed around her. She made up her mind. She would trust this bird.

- [20] She spread her arms on the ice like wings, keeping her body flat and spreading her weight across the fragile<sup>11</sup> surface. She breathed out a steamy cloud and pushed forward on her belly, inching along. Ahead, the penguin wove a trail between the cracks. Elaine scraped along behind, slow-motion tobogganing. Icy shards collected along her arms and scratched her nose and cheeks. She lost track of time as she focused on following the penguin's path.

Finally, with one last pull of her arms, Elaine crawled after her penguin onto solid, white ice.

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9. **Glimpse** (*noun*) a quick look  
10. **Seep** (*verb*) to spread slowly  
11. not strong; easily breakable

Safety! Standing on quivery legs, she turned to look back. In the distance, an Elaine-shaped imprint marked the spot where she'd landed, right over a giant crack.

Phew. Elaine bent over, her hands on her knees. Once her heartbeat had slowed to normal, she turned toward the penguin. How could she thank her friend?

But the bird was already gone, retracing its steps across the maze of cracks. As Elaine watched, the penguin paused atop a ridge. It stood up on its toes, stretched its wings wide and pointed its beak skyward.

"EHEHEH-UHUUH-EHEH!" it trumpeted. The ecstatic<sup>12</sup> cry sent shivers up Elaine's spine.

[25] She threw back her head and yodeled her reply: "*Oh yoyodelayeeoheoheeoheeh!*"

The penguin waited until the last echo faded. It looked back at Elaine across the terrible, beautiful ice. Then it was gone.

Elaine pulled out her knife and cut a strip of fleece from the bottom of her jacket. Wrapping the fabric around her head, she sighed with relief, and turned at last toward McMurdo Station. She knew her way back from here.

Her penguin guide would rejoin its colony for the long winter ahead. Elaine, thanks to that bird, would head home with a story that she'd never forget.

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12. in a condition of delight or overpowering emotion

## Text-Dependent Questions

**Directions:** For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. Which alternate title best expresses the main idea of the passage?
  - A. Life at the McMurdo Research Station
  - B. Amazing Antarctic Animals
  - C. How to Stay Safe on Ice
  - D. Penguin to the Rescue
  
2. What is the meaning of the phrase "the pull of the penguin" as it is used throughout the text?
  - A. The penguin is leading Elaine to safety.
  - B. The penguin has taken hold of Elaine.
  - C. Elaine wants to help the penguin.
  - D. Elaine is amazed by the penguin.
  
3. How does the author introduce the story in paragraphs 1-2?
  - A. by telling details about the main character
  - B. by showing the solution to the problem
  - C. by giving a hint about what will happen
  - D. by describing the final outcome
  
4. Which TWO lines from the text shows that Elaine is unprepared to go out on the ice? SELECT TWO.
  - A. "The day had been sunny and warm (for Antarctica, meaning around 20 °F or -6 °C, still below freezing)." (Paragraph 5)
  - B. "Rows of blue and red flags marked a safe path through this hazardous zone." (Paragraph 6)
  - C. "Elaine had left her backpack—with her warm parka, hat, and emergency radio — back at McMurdo!" (Paragraph 7)
  - D. "The bitter wind blew through her clothes." (Paragraph 9)
  - E. "If she broke through, she'd drop into the crevasse, where nobody would ever find her." (Paragraph 16)
  - F. "Elaine pulled out her knife and cut a strip of fleece from the bottom of her jacket." (Paragraph 27)

5. Which sentence uses "bitter" in the same way as it is used in paragraph 9?
- A. My parents punished me for being bitter about not getting the gift I wanted.
  - B. Pamela was bitter that her teacher had not called on her more often.
  - C. The weather has been very bitter these past few weeks.
  - D. She scrunched up her face at the lemon's bitter taste.
6. How does the author help the reader picture the setting of "The Pull of the Penguin"?

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## Open Ended Written Response

**Directions:** Write your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas.

1. Elaine realizes that she has left her emergency backpack and hat behind in her hurry to see the penguin. Have you ever been in such a rush that you have forgotten something essential? What was it and how did not having it impact you? What are some ways you can be prepared in case you find yourself in a dangerous place?

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2. Elaine describes the ice as "terrible and beautiful." What is something in nature that you find "terrible and beautiful"? How can nature be both amazing and dangerous?

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3. Elaine must think quickly and not panic when she realizes she is in danger of falling through the ice. Have you ever been in danger? What happened? How did it make you feel? How did you get out of this dangerous situation?

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# PAIRED TEXT



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

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

## Ice Island

By Sherry Shahan

2019

*Sherry Shahan has traveled the world finding adventures to write about in her fiction and nonfiction books. In this story, a young girl goes to visit her aunt in St. Lawrence, Alaska. As you read, take notes on the details that explain the setting.*

- [1] Jodi stared out the window of the bush plane.<sup>1</sup> It was impossible to tell where the coast of Alaska left off and the Bering Sea began. The frozen whiteness went on and on, blurring<sup>2</sup> edges together.



*"Untitled" by David Miller is licensed under CC0.*

Last winter was the first time Jodi had visited her aunt out here. St. Lawrence Island might be part of Alaska, but it was only 36 miles from the coast of Russia. She'd met a Siberian Yupik<sup>3</sup> boy named A.J. He was the only person she knew who rode a snowmobile to school. This place was so different from her neighborhood in Portland.

Aunt Mel met Jodi at the airport. "Welcome!" she exclaimed, then hugged Jodi.

"Thank you!" Using a bungee, Jodi secured<sup>4</sup> her duffel onto the back of her aunt's all-terrain vehicle,<sup>5</sup> then climbed on.

- [5] They bounced over ice-encrusted ruts<sup>6</sup> and passed snowmobiles parked in front of the grocery store.

1. Bush planes are small planes that fly people to far off, hard to get to places.
2. **Blur (verb)** to become less clear and harder to see
3. The Siberian Yupik people are the indigenous, or first, people of western Alaska and the Russian Far East.
4. **Secure (verb)** to make tight
5. An all-terrain vehicle, or ATV, is a 4-wheeled, motorized bike that can drive where there is not a paved road.
6. a deep cut in the ground made by something such as cars going over the same spot again and again

"It's my shift at the community center," said Aunt Mel. "You can meet me there after you've rested at home. You remember where it is, right? Just down the main road."

"Yep, I remember."

Aunt Mel stopped in front of her double-wide trailer. "A.J. and his grandfather are coming over for dinner tonight. I saw A.J. earlier, walking toward his usual crabbing spot. That could mean fresh crab!"

She smiled at Jodi.

[10] Last year, Jodi had tagged along with A.J. when he'd gone crabbing. He'd cut a hole into the ice and dropped a line with a spark-plug sinker. Before long, he'd pulled up a king crab.

Aunt Mel led the way up icy steps. "Make yourself at home," she said, opening the door.

After unpacking, Jodi curled up on the bed for a nap. When she awoke, she put on her mukluks<sup>7</sup> with the muskox trim — a gift from her aunt when she'd turned 12 last year. A.J.'s grandfather had given her a whistle carved from a walrus tusk. She tucked it into the pocket of her parka and pulled on some mittens.

As Jodi walked to meet her aunt, the setting sun winked a fiery orange. *I should've brought a flashlight!* she thought. She knew it would be faster to cut behind the row of cinder-block houses than to stay on the road.

Jodi shivered against the polar wind, ducking behind a house with fish drying on a wooden rack. Looking between the houses, she spotted a large shadow near A.J.'s crabbing spot. Was that A.J.? She made her way toward the shadow, snaking between icy snarls<sup>8</sup> of driftwood.

[15] Finally, she shouted, "A.J.?"

No answer.

Jodi looked back toward the village. Lights twinkled like stars. She didn't realize she'd walked so far. Wind had blown snow away from this stretch of ground. The ice underneath was as black as onyx.

She followed a wind-blasted path alongshore. "A.J.!"

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7. Mukluks are soft, warm boots, usually made of reindeer or seal skin and are often worn by Arctic indigenous people.

8. **Snarl** (*noun*) a knot or mess of thread, wood, hair, etc.

The shadow didn't move. It was nothing but a rusty oil drum!<sup>9</sup>

[20] That's when she heard it: the ripping sound of cracking ice. A chunk caved in on itself. What was she going to do? Without realizing it, she'd ventured<sup>10</sup> onto sea ice. Such a rookie<sup>11</sup> move!

Jodi took a cautious step, shaking uncontrollably. She slipped, and her leg crashed through a fissure.<sup>12</sup> She fell back and landed hard on the ice. Icy water seeped<sup>13</sup> into her mukluk. Needles stabbed her foot.

*Don't panic!*<sup>14</sup> she told herself. *Think.* She remembered the whistle in her pocket. She blew the sound of the SOS distress signal.<sup>15</sup> *Dot. Dot. Dot. Dash. Dash. Dash. Dot. Dot. Dot.* She blew the signal again.

"Don't move!" she heard from behind her. It was A.J.'s voice.

Something hit her shoulder. "Tie the rope around your waist!"

[25] Jodi fumbled<sup>16</sup> with the line until it was secure.

"Scoot toward me! Slowly!"

She inched backward onto solid ground.

A.J. pulled a deerskin hide from his rucksack and spread it out. "Sit here."

Shaking with cold relief, Jodi struggled to take off her mukluk. Her wet sock was just as stubborn.

[30] "What are you doing out here alone?" A.J. asked, uncapping an insulated<sup>17</sup> bottle. "You're lucky I was on my way home."

"I thought I saw you fishing," Jodi said, embarrassed.<sup>18</sup>

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9. a large, usually metal, container made for holding liquid or cargo
  10. to do something that is dangerous or uncertain
  11. a beginner
  12. a small opening caused by splitting; a crack
  13. **Seep (verb)** to spread slowly
  14. **Panic (verb)** a sudden feeling of fear
  15. a way someone lets others know they are in trouble and need help, usually done with a whistle or flare
  16. **Fumble (verb)** to search for or handle something in a nervous or awkward way
  17. covered or lined with material that stops liquid from getting cold

"You know the dangers of sea ice." A.J. passed her the insulated bottle. "That's why we never cross — "

"Never cross a line of driftwood," she finished for him. "I should've stayed on the road." She sipped the warm fish-flavored drink he'd given her.

A.J. pulled a thick sock and a wad of dry grass from his sack. He stuffed the sock with grass and told her to put it on. "Insulation. You OK to walk?"

[35] Jodi nodded as she stood. "Thank you for saving me."

A.J. shrugged. "Of course."

"Any luck crabbing?" Jodi asked.

"Two giant kings."

"I'm starving. We'd better get back to the trailer and put a pot on the stove," Jodi said. "I'll call my aunt from there."

[40] A.J. smiled. "We can stop for Grandpa on the way."

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18. **Embarrassed** (*adjective*) feeling uncomfortable or ashamed

## Text-Dependent Questions

**Directions:** For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. What is the theme of the story?
  - A. Stay calm when faced with danger.
  - B. Living in cold places is very difficult.
  - C. Traveling helps you learn about the world.
  - D. Sometimes it is important to break the rules.
  
2. How does paragraph 14 add to the story?
  - A. It tells how cold it is in Alaska.
  - B. It shows how Jodi's problem begins.
  - C. It shows why Jodi and A.J. are friends.
  - D. It tells the reader how Jodi learns a lesson.
  
3. In paragraph 21, the word "cautious" most closely means —
  - A. brave
  - B. careful
  - C. hopeful
  - D. quick
  
4. Which line from the story best shows that A.J. is a helpful friend?
  - A. "He was the only person she knew who rode a snowmobile to school." (Paragraph 2)
  - B. "Last year, Jodi had tagged along with A.J. when he'd gone crabbing." (Paragraph 10)
  - C. "Something hit her shoulder. 'Tie the rope around your waist!'" (Paragraph 24)
  - D. "Shaking with cold relief, Jodi struggled to take off her mukluk." (Paragraph 29)

5. Describe what it is like to live on "Ice Island."

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## Open Ended Written Response

**Directions:** Write your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas.

1. When Jodi leaves her aunt's house, she wishes that she would have brought a flashlight. What are some ways you can be prepared in case you find yourself in a dangerous place?

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2. Jodi thinks quickly to solve her problem. Have you ever been in danger? What happened? How did it make you feel? How did you get out of the dangerous situation?

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3. Would you want to live in a place like "Ice Island"? Why or why not?

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# ANSWER KEYS



# Answer key > The Pull of the Penguin

by Christy Mihaly ● 2021

1. Which alternate title best expresses the main idea of the passage?

5.RI.KID.2

Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize a text.

- A. Life at the McMurdo Research Station
- B. Amazing Antarctic Animals
- C. How to Stay Safe on Ice
- D. Penguin to the Rescue**

2. What is the meaning of the phrase "the pull of the penguin" as it is used throughout the text?

5.RI.CS.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.

- A. The penguin is leading Elaine to safety.
- B. The penguin has taken hold of Elaine.
- C. Elaine wants to help the penguin.
- D. Elaine is amazed by the penguin.**

3. How does the author introduce the story in paragraphs 1-2?

5.RI.CS.5

Describe the overall structure of events, ideas, and concepts of information in a text or part of a text.

- A. by telling details about the main character
- B. by showing the solution to the problem
- C. by giving a hint about what will happen**
- D. by describing the final outcome

4. Which TWO lines from the text shows that Elaine is unprepared to go out on the ice? SELECT TWO.

5.RI.KID.1

Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly; to details and examples in the text when drawing inferences from the text.

- A. "The day had been sunny and warm (for Antarctica, meaning around 20 °F or -6 °C, still below freezing)." (Paragraph 5)
- B. "Rows of blue and red flags marked a safe path through this hazardous zone." (Paragraph 6)
- C. "Elaine had left her backpack—with her warm parka, hat, and emergency radio — back at McMurdo!" (Paragraph 7)
- D. "The bitter wind blew through her clothes." (Paragraph 9)
- E. "If she broke through, she'd drop into the crevasse, where nobody would ever find her." (Paragraph 16)
- F. "Elaine pulled out her knife and cut a strip of fleece from the bottom of her jacket." (Paragraph 27)

5. Which sentence uses "bitter" in the same way as it is used in paragraph 9? 5.RI.CS.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.

- A. My parents punished me for being bitter about not getting the gift I wanted.
- B. Pamela was bitter that her teacher had not called on her more often.
- C. **The weather has been very bitter these past few weeks.**
- D. She scrunched up her face at the lemon's bitter taste.

6. How does the author help the reader picture the setting of "The Pull of the Penguin"? 5.RI.KID.3

Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in a text.

Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.

Answers will vary. Students should explain that the author gives details about what Antarctica sounds and feels like to help the reader picture the setting. The author includes sounds that Elaine hears while she is on the ice like "*tink*" and "Crunch!" (Paragraph 16). These words help the reader picture how scary it is to be on the cracking ice with no one around. The author also includes details about the weather like "billowing cloud of snowflakes" (Paragraph 12) and "the wind picked her up and slammed her face-down onto the ice" (Paragraph 14). These details help the reader understand how cold it is in Antarctica by including details that show how cold it feels to be out on the ice.

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# Answer key > Ice Island

by Sherry Shahan ● 2019

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1. What is the theme of the story?

5.RL.KID.2

Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem and explain how it is conveyed through details in the text; summarize the text.

- A. **Stay calm when faced with danger.**
- B. Living in cold places is very difficult.
- C. Traveling helps you learn about the world.
- D. Sometimes it is important to break the rules.

2. How does paragraph 14 add to the story?

5.RL.CS.5

Explain major differences between poems, drama, and stories, and refer to the structural elements when writing or speaking about a text.

- A. It tells how cold it is in Alaska.
- B. **It shows how Jodi's problem begins.**
- C. It shows why Jodi and A.J. are friends.
- D. It tells the reader how Jodi learns a lesson.

3. In paragraph 21, the word "cautious" most closely means —

5.RL.CS.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that refer to significant characters and situations found in literature and history.

- A. brave
- B. **careful**
- C. hopeful
- D. quick

4. Which line from the story best shows that A.J. is a helpful friend?

5.RL.KID.3

Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in a text, such as a character's thoughts, words, or actions.

- A. "He was the only person she knew who rode a snowmobile to school." (Paragraph 2)

- B. "Last year, Jodi had tagged along with A.J. when he'd gone crabbing." (Paragraph 10)
- C. **"Something hit her shoulder. 'Tie the rope around your waist!'"** (Paragraph 24)
- D. "Shaking with cold relief, Jodi struggled to take off her mukluk." (Paragraph 29)

5. Describe what it is like to live on "Ice Island."

5.RL.KID.3

Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in a text, such as a character's thoughts, words, or actions.

Answers will vary. Students should explain that living on "Ice Island" in St. Lawrence, Alaska, is difficult because it is a very cold place where not many people live. In the story, Jodi travels by bush plane to go visit her aunt: "St. Lawrence Island might be part of Alaska, but it was only 36 miles from the coast of Russia" (Paragraph 2). It is very different from where she lives normally. Because it is so cold, people ride their snowmobiles to school and drive all-terrain vehicles around the village. In the village, people wear parkas, mittens, and mukluks with fur linings to stay warm. Because the village has so much snow and is right on the frozen water, it is important to be careful. There are lines of driftwood that show where it is unsafe to cross. If you cross the driftwood, you could be in danger of falling through the ice: "'You know the dangers of sea ice.' A.J. passed her the insulated bottle. 'That's why we never cross — '" (Paragraph 32). This shows that living on "Ice Island" is difficult and sometimes even dangerous because of its cold weather and far off location.