



wild dog

**Wild Dog Books  
Teachers' Notes**

The Big Book of Antarctica

## Synopsis

Antarctica is the southernmost continent on Earth. It is nearly twice the size of Australia, and it is the coldest, driest and windiest of all the continents. Despite the harsh desert landscape, Antarctica is home to a surprising amount of animal, plant and fungal life, along with a small scientific research population that lives there throughout the year. Welcome to *The Big Book Of Antarctica!*

## Writing style

*The Big Book of Antarctica* has been designed with the needs of both early and more advanced readers in mind. Simple and succinct language is used throughout the book, with a small amount of text on each page. Large-sized, colourful font breaks up the text on every page, to indicate the subject matter being discussed and to further engage reluctant, more visual readers. The large format images relate directly to the text, so young readers have multiple entry points to engage with the information. There is also a brief glossary and index in the back of the book, which will aid young readers in developing the tools of research and analysis.

## Photographic/Design style

*The Big Book of Antarctica* uses dynamic images to capture the imagination of the reader. They are colourful, evocative images that clearly convey the dynamic nature of the varied life forms that live in Antarctica. The photographs bring the viewer close to the subject that is being discussed, and also have the advantage of being static, giving the reader the opportunity to explore the image and look at the subject matter and its features in detail. The photographs are also strongly composed and clearly printed with bright strong colours to increase the appeal to visual readers. Readers can explore how photographs are used to convey messages.

## Study notes

Themes:

- Descriptive words
- Continents
- Landscape
- Ecosystem
- Life finds a way
- Human exploration and discovery
- Whaling
- Scientific research
- Changing nature of Antarctica and its size
- The notion of living things adapting to suit and survive their environment
- Antarctica and tourism / transport
- The impact of global warming

## Curriculum link: Literacy

Before reading *The Big Book of Antarctica*:

- Brainstorm what students understand about Antarctica.
- What is their first response when they look at the cover of the book?
- Where do they think it is? What might it be like to live there? What else might live there? Would it be similar to where they live?

While reading *The Big Book of Antarctica*:

- Ask the students to take turns reading a paragraph aloud to the rest of the class. Where appropriate, ask the students what they think certain words may mean.

After reading *The Big Book of Antarctica*:

- Ask the students to reflect on the words they would use to describe Antarctica, and the words that have been used in the book. Ask them to draw up a list of words that can be used to describe Antarctica.

## Curriculum Theme: Critical and Creative Thinking

After reading *The Big Book of Antarctica* ask the students the following questions:

- Is Antarctica a continent?
- Where is it?
- Which countries are closest to it?
- When was it discovered, and by whom?
- Who are some famous explorers of Antarctica?
- What are the main reasons people went there in the past?
- What are the main reasons people go there today?
- Do people live there? If so, what do they do?
- What are some examples of plants and animals that can be found there?
- What are the special features of these living things that help them to survive in such a hostile environment?
- Why is Antarctica important to the rest of the world?
- How are humans affecting Antarctica? Is this a good or bad thing?

## Curriculum link: ICT Capability

After reading *The Big Book of Antarctica*:

- Organise the class into small groups. Assign each group an animal from the book. Ask each group to research their assigned animal and to answer the following questions: what type of animal is it? Are there other species like it that live in Antarctica? What does it eat? What eats it? Is it a prey or predator animal, or both? Where does it live in Antarctica? Does it live in this environment its whole life? How does it breed? Can it do this at any time of the year?
- Ask the children to look for and print images relating to their animal e.g. as a baby, as an adult, types of food it eats, types of animals that eat them, physical features that help it to survive in Antarctica etc.
- Ask each group to create a poster collage. Ask them to attach the images they found online and to write a short sentence detailing what that image means in

relation to their animal. All members of the group then take turns presenting their findings to the rest of the class.

## Curriculum Theme: Personal and Social Capability

After reading *The Big Book of Antarctica*:

- Organise the class into three groups. In one group, ask the students to work as a team to construct a word finder puzzle. Ask each student to suggest an appropriate word taken from the book (e.g. predator, ice shelf, harpoon etc.). Once completed, print copies for the other group to complete.
- In the second group, students should work as a team to create a trivia bingo game. Ask each student to suggest a fact they found surprising or interesting. Combine these bingo words into a game for the whole class.
- In the third group, ask the students to work as a team to construct a food web using the animals from the book (a simple step-by-step guide can be found at <http://www.wikihow.com/Draw-a-Food-Web>).

## Find out more

- <http://www.antarctica.gov.au/>
- <http://www.antarcticanz.govt.nz/>
- [http://www.coolantarctica.com/Antarctica%20fact%20file/fun\\_facts\\_about\\_antarctica.php](http://www.coolantarctica.com/Antarctica%20fact%20file/fun_facts_about_antarctica.php)
- <http://www.timeforkids.com/minisite/antarctica>
- <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:HAzWvq9eXgUJ:kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/games/geographygames/crittercamantarctic/+&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=au&client=firefox-b>
- <http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/topics/wildlife/2011/03/video-antarctic-wildlife/>

## Marketing and promotion

*The Big Book of Antarctica* is a one-off title, though it shares elements with the *Going To*, *Continents of the World* and *CloseUp* series', along with one-off title *The Coral Reef Book* (all by Wild Dog Books). Future one-off titles are planned, such as *Community*, *Maps and More Maps* and *The Big Book of Weather*.