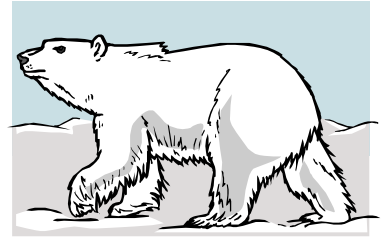


Arctic Research Paper

Dear Parents/Guardians:



For language arts this week, we will be focusing on writing a research report. Children are fascinated with the Arctic and its unique ecosystem. Our science unit on the Arctic lends itself well to inquiry, and provides a great opportunity to write a research report. Your child has chosen an Arctic animal to write about. He or she will have the opportunity to check out books and search on the Internet.

Much of our language arts time this week will be spent writing research papers. While most of it will be done in class, the majority of the “research” and note taking needs to be done at home so students are prepared to write their paragraphs in class. Students are responsible for taking good Cornell Notes at home each night and forming the topic sentence for each paragraph topic. Each page of Cornell Notes represents the information need to form each paragraph of the report excluding the introduction and concluding paragraph. The topic sentence is the “heart” of the paragraph, so it is very important that students stay focused on “what the paragraph is about” when writing them. A common error students make, is putting details about the topic in the topic sentence. The topic sentence introduces the main idea. The body of the paragraph should have supporting details. Please see your child’s writing binder for more information on topic sentences. Cornell Notes will be graded each day on a 10 point scale; 5 for good notes, and 5 for well written topic sentences.

It is extremely important that students take Cornell Notes at home every day and bring them back to school each day to construct the paragraphs of their reports. My goal is for them to have their rough drafts completed this week. I have dedicated enough time at school for them to be successful at this, but if they don’t do the research and have enough facts (Cornell Notes) to draw from, it will greatly slow down the writing process.

At some point they will bring their rough drafts home for editing. As you can imagine it is a daunting task assisting 30 kids with writing and editing. Please help your child to stay focused on the topic sentences and help them to write supporting facts for each topic. Please assist your child in editing their paper by checking for meaning, spelling, grammar, etc.

Students need to include pictures or diagrams with their reports.

If you have any questions or need more information about your child's topic, please send a note or give me a call.

Arctic Animal Research Paper

Your paper must have a paragraph for each of the following:



Paragraph #1

- **Introductory Paragraph**

This introduces your report and tells the reader what the report is about.

Example: The ermine is a fascinating animal that lives in a place like no other on earth, the Arctic. This furry little mammal is part of the weasel family and lives in the tundra biome.

Paragraph #2

- **What does it look like and what special features does your animal have to help it survive in the chilly Arctic?**

Does it have special structures or adaptations that help it survive?

Does it have special features/structures that help protect it from predators?

Paragraph #3

- **What is its habitat like?**

If it lives in the sea, describe that environment. If it lives on the pack ice or tundra describe that environment in detail. Think about living and nonliving things in the Arctic: climate, plants, soil, pack ice, ice floes, and animals.

Paragraph #4

- **What does it eat and how does it find or catch its food?**

Paragraph #5

- **Why is it important to the ecosystem of the Arctic?**

Think about the food chain. What would happen if your research animal was not a part of the Arctic ecosystem? What is its prey or what preys on it? If your research animal were to become extinct, how would this affect the other animals in the Arctic?

Paragraph #6

- **Conclusion that sums up your research report at the end of your paper**

*You will need to write a paragraph for each of the topics above. Each paragraph must have a topic sentence, 3-4 supporting facts, details with explanations, and a conclusion that restates the topic sentence in a different way..



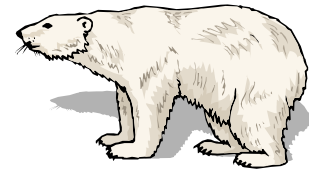
Topic Sentences and Supporting Facts

Tips

- Topic sentences should be clear and to the point. This tells the reader what the paragraph is about. A topic sentence is the “heart” of the paragraph and is very focused.
- Supporting facts may include any kind of evidence that supports the main idea of the paragraph. Don’t forget the E’s! Explain, elaborate, give examples and evidence.
- Supporting facts should work together as a group.
- Facts that do not support the topic sentence should be deleted



Grading Criteria



Students will be graded using the attached scoring rubric and the evaluation criteria listed below:

- Research Report must include pictures/graphics, diagrams, or charts. Students may draw their own graphics, or get them from other sources; such as the Internet.
- Research Report must be neatly presented in a folder.
- Students may get materials to make a folder from school if they wish.
- Students need to cite their sources. This will be very informal, but help them to write down book titles, articles sources, and internet websites.
- Students need to complete their report in a timely manner.



Arctic Research Paper Scoring Rubric

- 5
- Great introductory paragraph that tells the reader what your report is about
 - Paragraphs begin with topic sentences, include 3-4 supporting details, & a conclusion
 - Great conclusion that sums up the report
 - Report is written neatly & presented in a folder.
 - Report contains creative pictures, diagrams, & charts (graphics)
 - Report has almost no errors. Correct spelling and punctuation is used
- 4
- Good introductory paragraph that tells the reader what your report is about
 - Paragraphs begin with topic sentences, include 3-4 supporting details, & a conclusion
 - Good conclusion that sums up the report
 - Report is written neatly & presented in a folder.
 - Report contains creative pictures, diagrams, & charts (graphics)
 - Report has few errors. Correct spelling and punctuation is used most of the time
- 3
- Introductory paragraph demonstrates effort, and includes a topic sentence
 - Paragraphs begin with topic sentences, include some supporting details, & a conclusion
 - Effort is made to include a conclusion
 - Report is written neatly & presented in a folder.
 - Some pictures/graphics, diagrams, charts are included
 - Report has some errors. Correct spelling and punctuation is used most of the time
- 2
- Introductory paragraph is not developed, and topic sentence is vague
 - Paragraphs are poorly organized and are not developed well
 - Conclusion is weak or completely missing
 - Report is incomplete, fractured, vague, and unorganized
 - Final draft may be incomplete and/or contain numerous errors
 - May lack pictures/graphics, diagrams, charts
- 1
- No attempt to do assignment



G-r-r-r.... reports turned in late will result in a grade/point reduction