

Going on Expedition



Objective

Students will use a variety of reference materials to research a subject and will relate the results of their research orally and in writing. They will describe the accomplishments of antarctic explorers and scientists.

Materials

- reference materials (Use your library and a computer with Internet access.)
- paper
- pencils or pens

Background

The ability to use the Internet and library references to do research is a critical skill for students. This activity gives students practice using these investigative skills. Antarctica is a continent without any native human inhabitants. At least for now, Antarctica is protected by the Antarctic Treaty. This Treaty bans military activity, nuclear testing, and radioactive waste dumping in Antarctica. It protects the continent's plant and animal species. Antarctica is open to all nations for scientific investigation. The antarctic ecosystem is a strong and healthy one, but it is extremely sensitive to outside disturbance. Life has adapted to survive in one of the world's harshest environments.

Action

Individually or in groups, students use reference materials and the Internet to research the accomplishments of an antarctic explorer or scientist. Ask students to create written "logs" of the explorer's trip, and to present verbal news accounts. Invite students to relate their findings to the class as if they were the explorers.

Roald Amundsen	Norway	first man to reach the south pole, 1911
Richard E. Byrd	USA	first to use aircraft in the Antarctic, 1929
Jules Dumont D'Urville	France	traveled closest to magnetic south pole, 1840
Douglas Mawson	Australia	geographic and scientific discoveries, 1909–1929
Nathaniel Palmer	USA	discovered mainland of Antarctica, 1820
James Clark Ross	England	antarctic expeditions, 1841
Robert Falcon Scott	England	second man to reach the south pole, 1911
Ernest Shackleton	Ireland	attempted to cross Antarctica, 1914–1916
Charles Wilkes	USA	led first American expedition to Antarctica, 1838

Deeper Depths

Research the work of penguin scientists such as David Ainley, Gerald Kooyman, Frank Todd, Bernard Stonehouse, or Wayne Trivelpiece. Can students find other penguin researchers?