

Antarctic Food Chain Song



Objective

Students describe an antarctic food chain.

Materials

- illustrations of plankton, krill, leopard seal, penguin, and killer whale on page 2: 200% enlarged photocopy or transparency
- song sheet for each student

Background

Food chains are helpful in understanding the relationships and interconnections of the animals in an ecosystem. In this activity, students explore a simple antarctic food chain that includes plankton, krill, a leopard seal, a penguin, and a killer whale.

A food web includes many food chains that are linked together through various members of the ecosystem. For instance, in addition to the plants and animals in this food chain, a food web might include blue whales, minke whales, various fishes, and other seals.

Action

1. Make a 200% enlarged photocopy or transparency of the illustrations on page 2.
2. Ask students what they think the penguin might eat. (Adelie penguins eat fish and krill.)
3. Show students the krill. Explain that antarctic krill can be about the size of a child's little finger. Ask students what they think a little animal like krill might eat. (Krill eat plankton.)
4. Show the plankton. Explain that these kinds of plankton are microscopic plants that drift in the sea. Like plants on earth, plant plankton gets energy from the sun.
5. Ask students what might eat a penguin. (Killer whales, sharks, various kinds of sea lions, and leopard seals eat penguins.) Show students the illustration of the leopard seal.
6. Can your students name a predator that might eat a leopard seal? (Killer whales might eat leopard seals.)
7. Teach students the song on the song sheet.

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Itsy bitsy plankton,
drifting in the sea.
Along comes the krill,
and eats it easily.



plankton

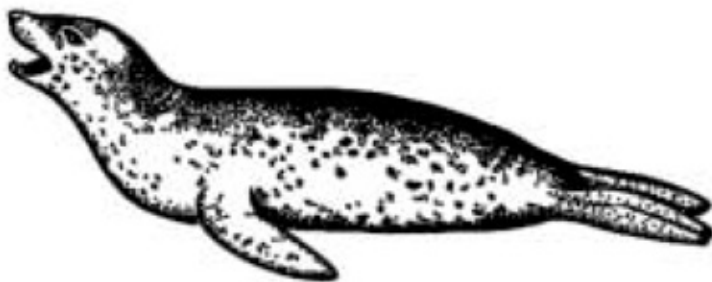
Next come the penguins,
and the leopard seals.
The antarctic killer whale
finishes up the meal!



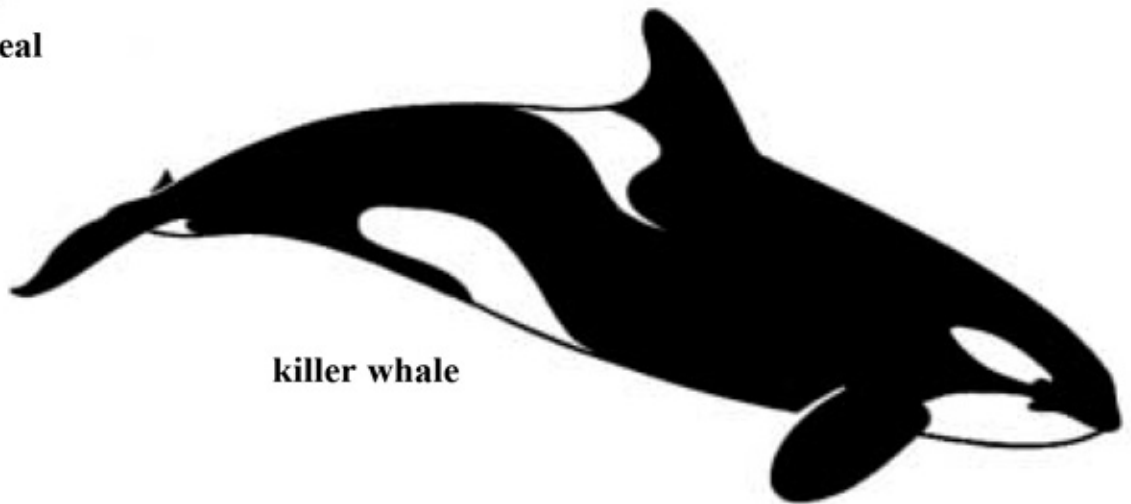
krill



penguin



leopard seal



killer whale

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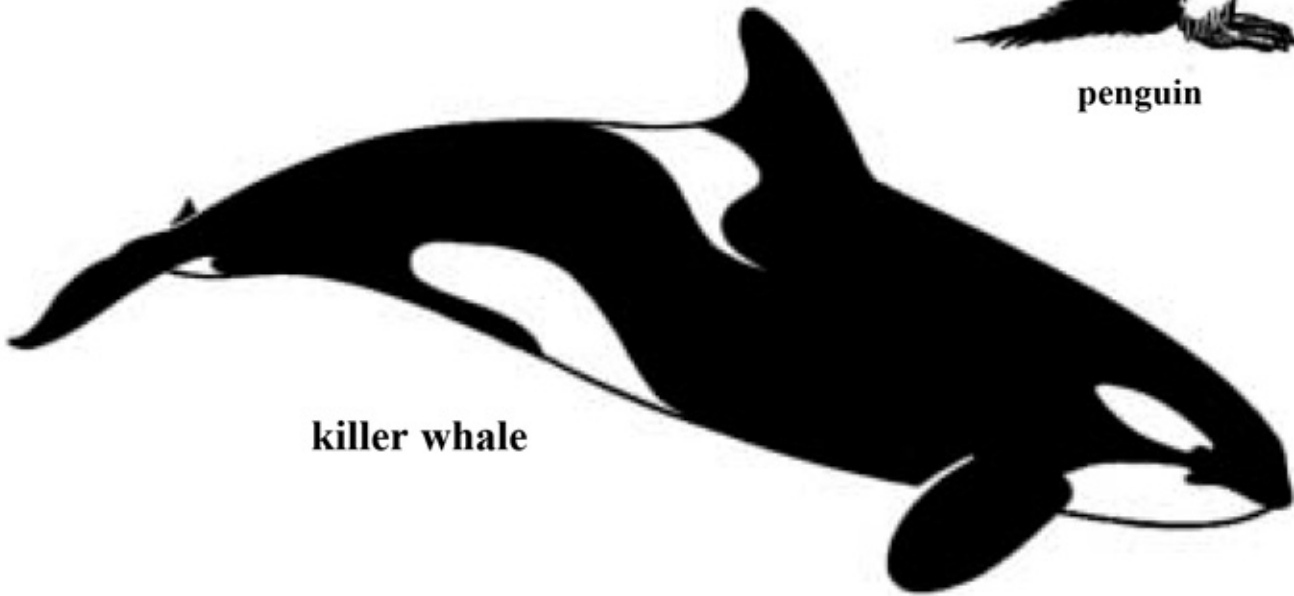
krill



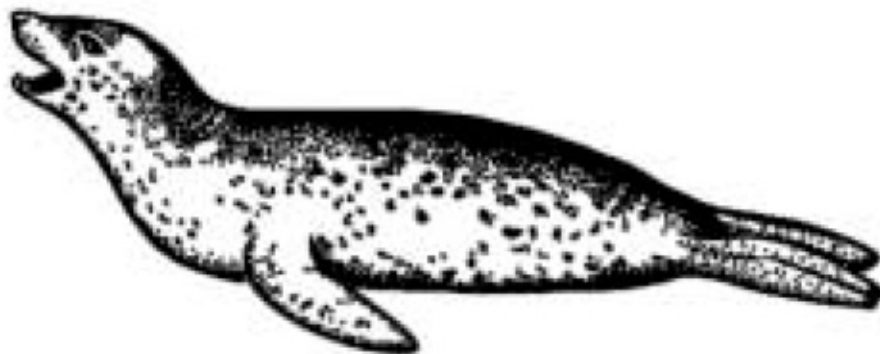
plankton



penguin



killer whale



leopard seal