

The Bird in a Thick Coat

PASSAGE · NON-FICTION

SKILLS TRAINED

Working memory

Delayed recall

Comprehension

HOW TO USE THIS SHEET

About 10 minutes

- 1 Read the passage twice, slowly. Take about two minutes.
- 2 Turn to the next page and cover this one. No looking back.
- 3 Write what you remember, then mark it on the last page.

Antarctica is the coldest place on Earth. The wind is strong. Snow covers the ground all year.

One bird lives there all winter. It is the emperor penguin.

A penguin cannot fly. But it can swim very fast.

Its feathers are packed tight, like a thick coat. The cold water cannot get in.

When the wind blows, the penguins stand close together. They take turns standing in the middle, where it is warm.

That is how they keep each other safe.

Cover the passage before you start.

Looking back turns this into a copying exercise. Getting it slightly wrong from memory is what makes it work.

PART A Tell it back

Write down everything you can remember about emperor penguins.

PART B 3 questions

1 What is the coldest place on Earth?

2 A penguin cannot fly. What can it do very well?

3 Why do the penguins stand close together?

PART C Mark your own work

Now go back to the passage. Tick every answer you got right. You do not need the same words as the answer below — if you wrote the same idea in your own words, it counts.

- ☐ 1 • Antarctica.
- ☐ 2 • Swim very fast.
- ☐ 3 • To keep warm and keep each other safe. They take turns in the middle.

FACTS RECALLED IN PART A

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QUESTIONS CORRECT

— / 3

DATE

THE STRATEGY Count them on your fingers

Before you turn the page, count the things you want to remember on your fingers. Three fingers means three things to look for. Knowing how many you are hunting for helps you find them all.

WHERE YOU ALREADY DO THIS

When you get dressed to go outside on a cold day, how many things do you have to remember to put on?

FOR THE PARENT OR TEACHER · Read the passage aloud with your child the first time, then let them read it on their own the second time. During Part A, resist helping. A child who says “I forgot” and then remembers one more thing has done exactly the work this sheet is for.