



Polar Sea

Five Fast Facts:

1. The polar sea is made up of the Arctic Ocean and the southern part of the Southern Ocean, equaling approximately 15% of the world's oceans.
2. Polar bears exist only in the North Pole, while penguins only exist in the South Pole and southern hemisphere.
3. Polar environments experience drastic seasonal changes of available sunlight, and at times consecutive days of darkness. Because of this, the productivity of phytoplankton is greatly reduced during polar winters.
4. Although the *volume* of ice covering the polar waters fluctuates seasonally, the water *temperature* does not vary as much - no more than 7° in the Arctic and 12° in the Southern Ocean from summer to winter.
5. Relatively few fish species live in polar waters. White-blooded fish (so-called due to an absence of hemoglobin in their colorless blood) are only found in the Southern Ocean.

Food for Thought:

1. Where does the name "polar" come from anyway?

2. How is a polar sea distinctive from other types of ocean environments?



Activities to do with your kids:

- Create a model of a home that would fit your family and keep you warm as it floated in the polar seas.
- Create your own polar landscape. Use magazines to cut out images and colors that depict the polar seas and the creatures that live there.
 - Where are the polar seas found?
 - What lives there?