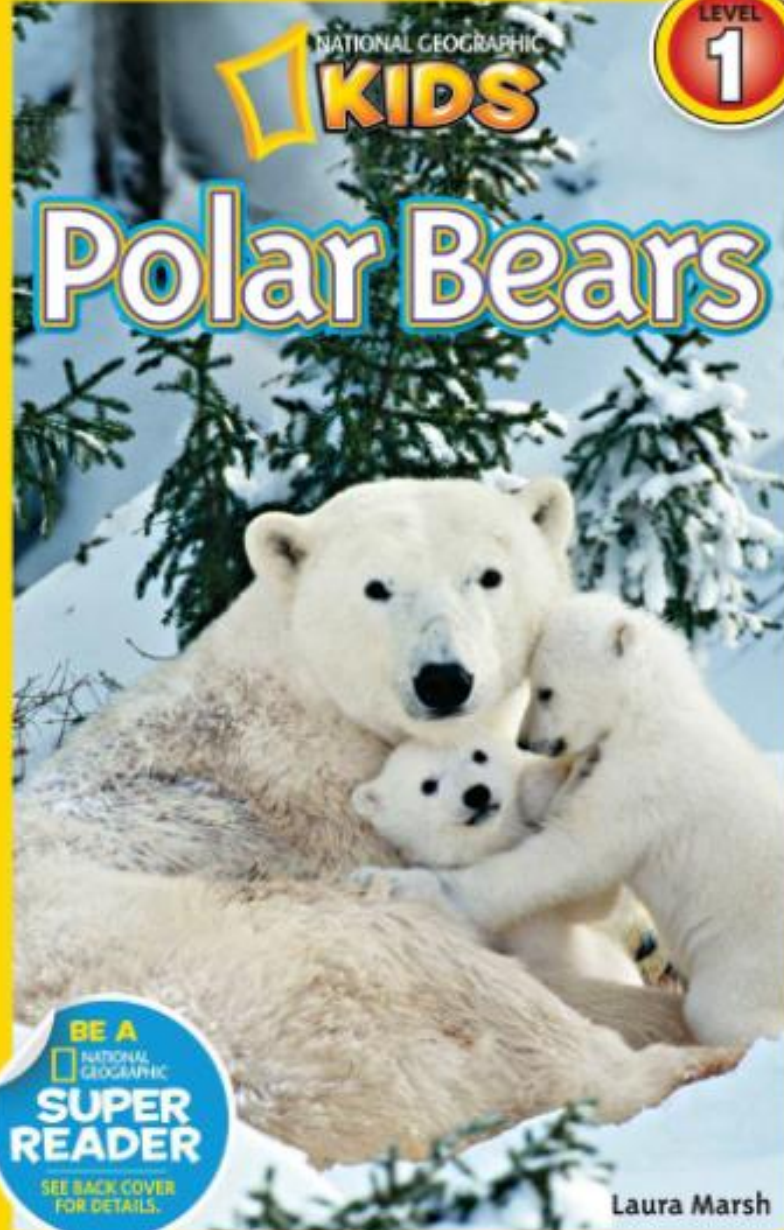


NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC
KIDS

LEVEL
1

Polar Bears



BE A
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC
SUPER READER
SEE BACK COVER FOR DETAILS.

Laura Marsh

Dear Parents,

Children are naturally curious about the world around them, and curiosity is a powerful motivation for reading. Studies show that informational reading is critical to success in school. National Geographic Readers allow you to feed your children's interests and create readers who not only can read, but also want to read!

To sustain children's excitement about reading, we have created a new program called **NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SUPER READERS**. As kids read each National Geographic Reader, they cross off its picture on a free National Geographic Super Readers poster that parents can download from kids.nationalgeographic.com/superreader.

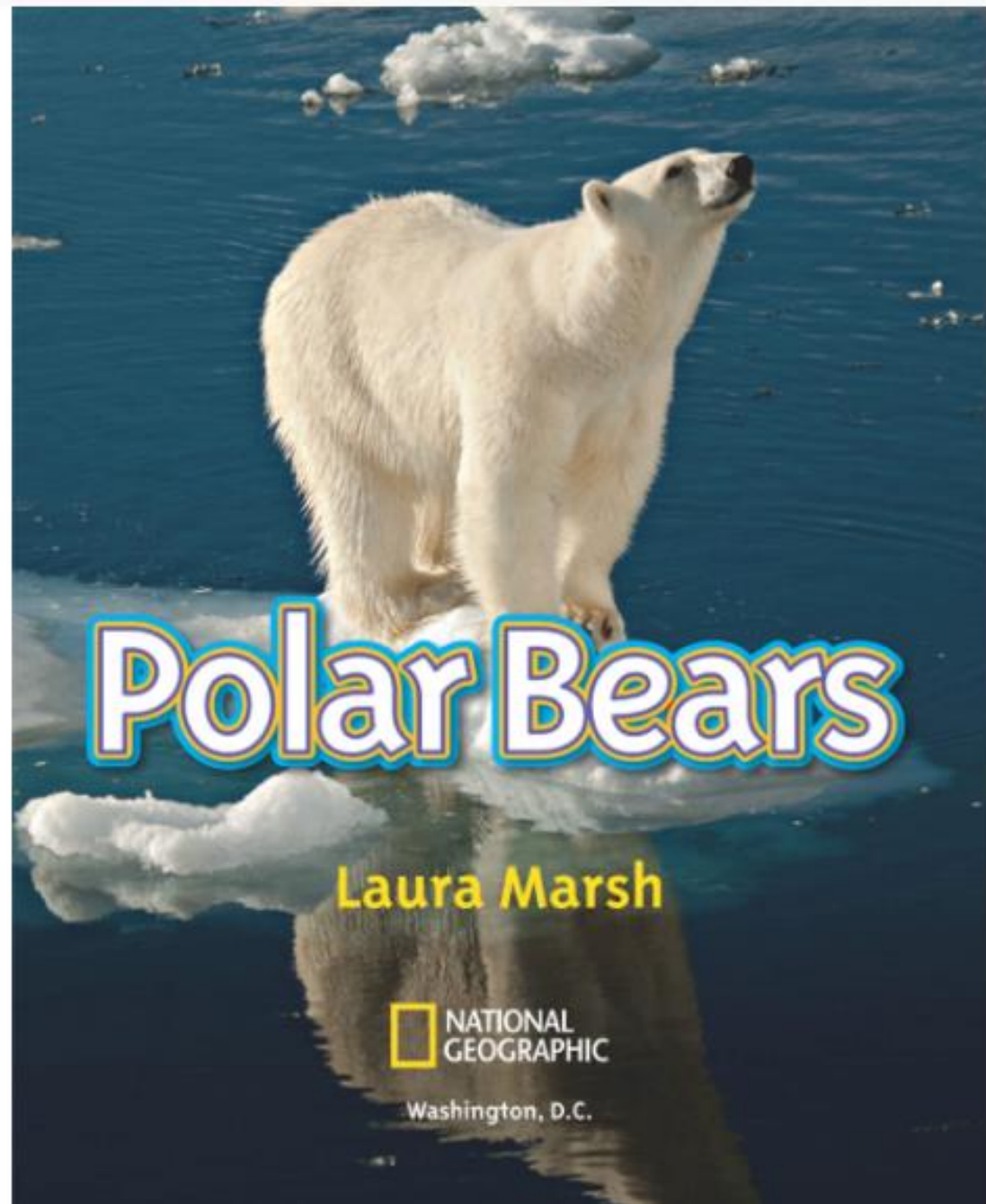
After reading four books, kids and parents go to the website and download specially designated prizes that reward their effort. Kids can have even more reading fun online, with lively book-related quizzes and games, fascinating excerpts, and sneak previews of upcoming books.

The National Geographic Super Readers program appeals to kids' love of accomplishment while providing them with incentives to keep reading. When the reading experience is fun, children learn more and achieve more. What could be better than that?

Sincerely,



Mariam Jean Dreher
Professor of Reading Education
University of Maryland, College Park



For Eva —L.F.M.



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Who Am I?



I'm white and
furry, and I
swim in the sea.

The cold snow
and ice are just
right for me.

Who am I?
A polar bear!

Big Bears!

Have you seen a polar bear in a zoo?

Polar bears are big—really big.



They are the biggest meat-eaters on land. A polar bear can weigh as much as seven men!



A polar bear's body is built for the Arctic. These bears have thick fur to keep them warm.

Polar bears have thick fat, too. The fat keeps body heat in and keeps the Arctic cold out.



8

Q How do polar bears stay cool?

A They turn on bear conditioning!

Word Bite

ARCTIC: The area near the North Pole, where it is very cold



9

Powerful Paws



Long, thick, curved claws grab food easily.

Thick pads keep feet warm.

Big paws keep bears from sinking into the snow. The paws are larger than a dinner plate!

Front paws are webbed, like ducks' feet. This helps polar bears swim.

Bumps on the footpads keep bears from slipping on the ice.

A polar bear's paws do many things. Paws dig dens in the snow. They break the ice to find food. They also pull food out of the water.

Word Bite



DEN: A hidden hole where a wild animal lives. Polar bear mothers have their babies in a den.

Super Swimmers

Polar bears are great swimmers.
They spend a lot of time in
the water.

Their front paws paddle.
Their back legs steer. Their fat
helps polar bears float.



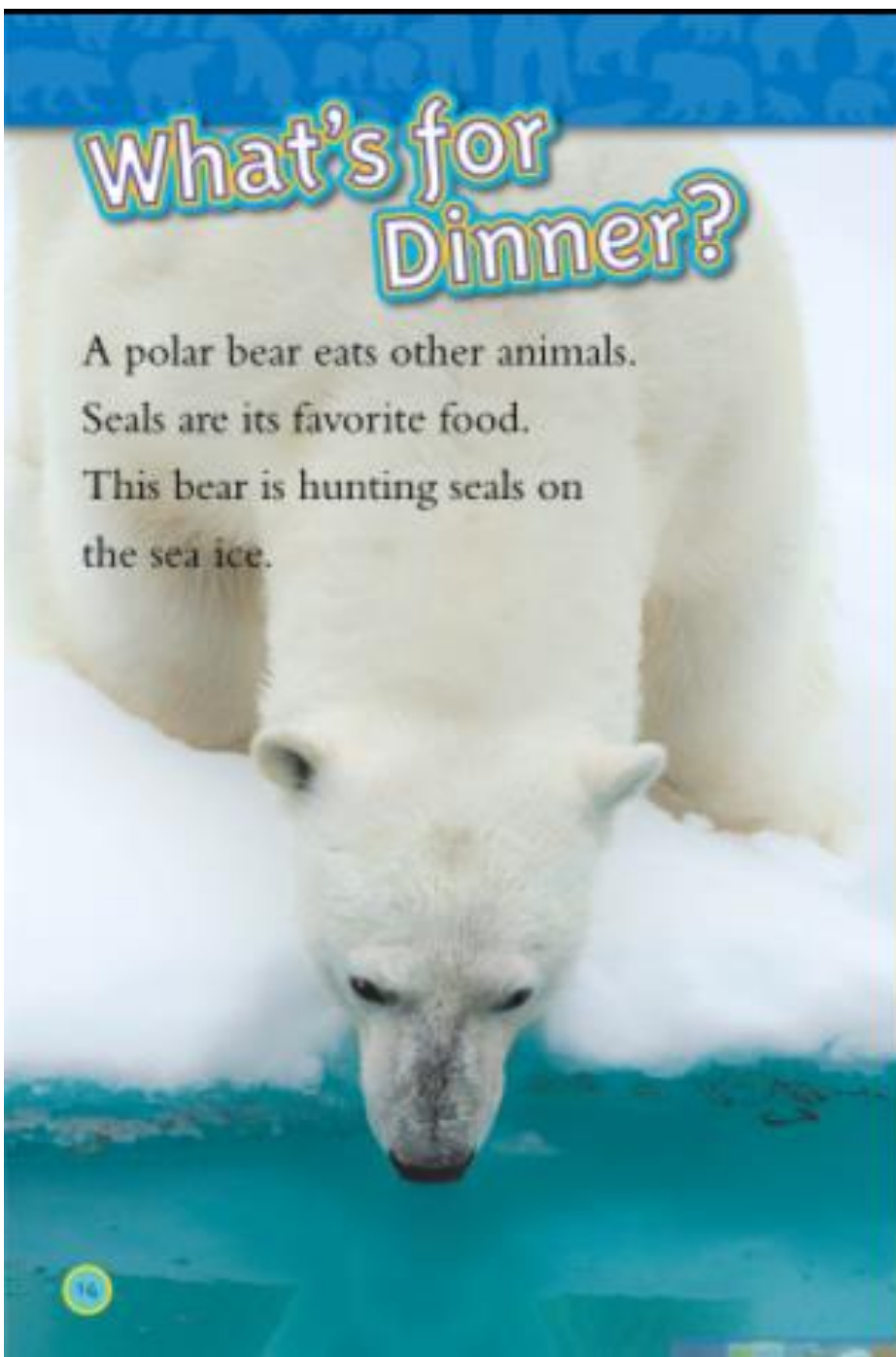
Word Bite



FLOAT: To rest or move in
water without sinking

What's for Dinner?

A polar bear eats other animals.
Seals are its favorite food.
This bear is hunting seals on
the sea ice.



Q What do polar bears eat for lunch?

Ice bear - 011

A

Seals come up for air at holes in the ice. The bear waits and waits. Finally, a seal appears. The polar bear snatches it in a flash.



Polar bears have good noses. They can smell a seal 20 miles away!



Polar bears have good hearing and eyesight, too. These come in handy when looking for dinner. This bear has spotted an arctic fox.





Where do polar bears keep their money?



In snow banks.

The ice melts in spring and summer. Polar bears stay with the ice when they can. They move to land when the sea ice is mostly gone.

On land they usually don't eat at all. Some bears may eat bird eggs. They may eat plants or berries. But there is not much food for polar bears on land.

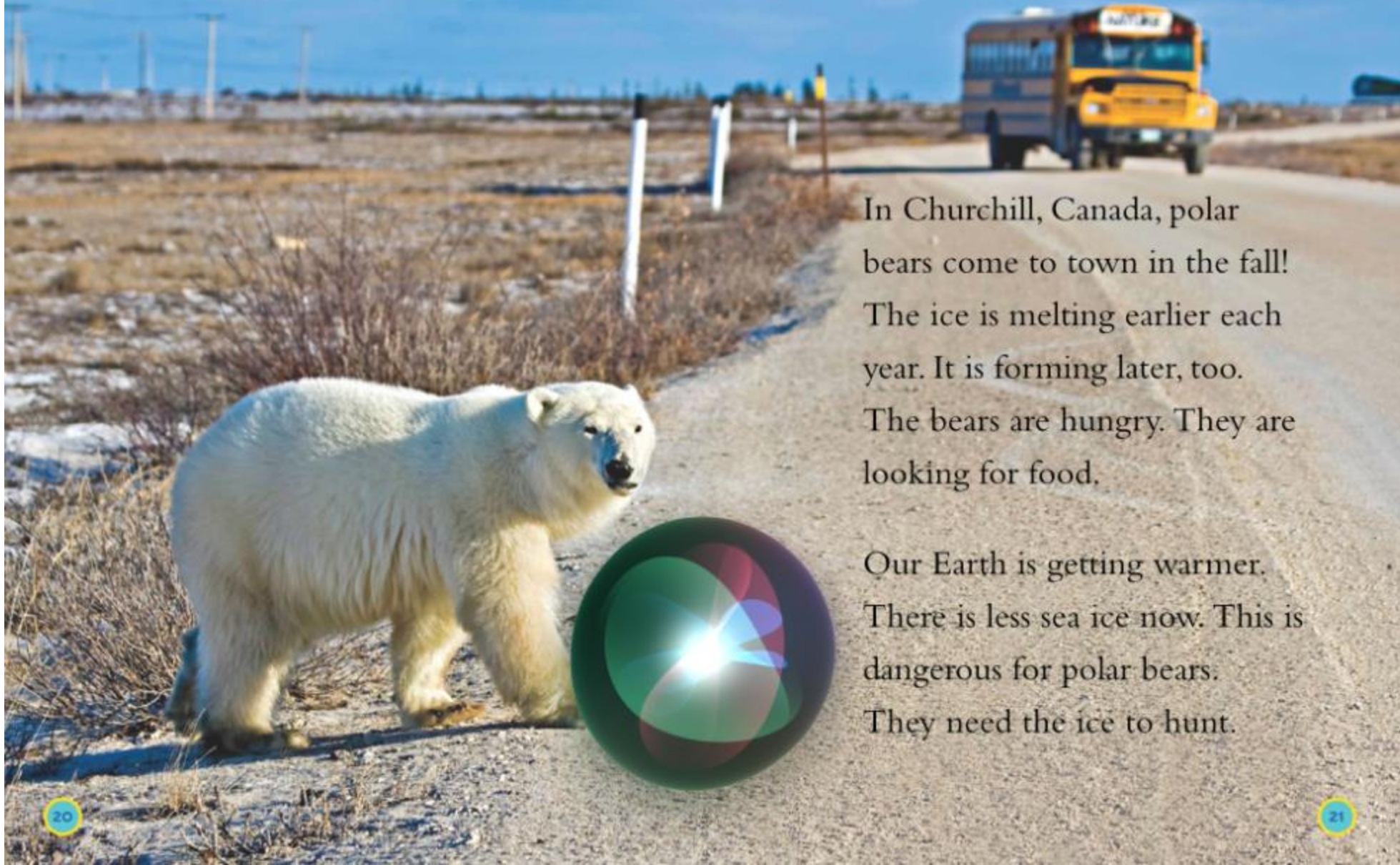


Bears in Town

Q What do you call a bear with no teeth?

A Gummy bear!

A



In Churchill, Canada, polar bears come to town in the fall! The ice is melting earlier each year. It is forming later, too. The bears are hungry. They are looking for food.

Our Earth is getting warmer. There is less sea ice now. This is dangerous for polar bears. They need the ice to hunt.

7 Amazing Polar Bear Facts



1 The largest polar bear ever recorded was 2,209 pounds. That's the weight of a small sports car!



2 Polar bears have black skin underneath their white fur.



3 Sometimes polar bears get too hot. Then they take a swim or roll in the snow.



4 Walrus are one of the few animals that polar bears are afraid of.



5 Some people go on vacations to see polar bears. They ride in special buggies to stay safe.



6 Polar bears can eat 100 pounds of seal fat at one time. That's about as heavy as 400 hamburgers!



7 Polar bears clean themselves by rubbing their bodies on the snow.

Cute Cubs

Every new polar bear is special. A mother bear has babies, called cubs. She digs a den in the snow. The cubs stay safe and warm in the den.



Word Bite
CUB: A baby bear

The cubs drink their mother's rich milk. They grow quickly. Soon they are big enough to leave the den.

Q Why do polar bears have fur coats?

A Because they look silly in jackets!

A mother polar bear teaches her cubs to hunt. She also teaches them how to stay safe and warm.

The cubs leave their mother when they are two years old. They are ready to live on their own.



Playtime!



Polar bears like to play just like you!

Bears wrestle with each other.

They slide in the snow.

They like to play games, too.

Q What is a polar bear's favorite breakfast?

A Ice Crisps!

Sometimes a cub gets a ride from Mom! These bears are off on an Arctic adventure.



What in the World?

These pictures show up-close views of things in a polar bear's world. Use the hints to figure out what's in the pictures. Answers are on page 31.

WORD BANK

Walrus Paw Tail Nose Fur Seal



HINT: A polar bear's favorite food



HINT: Keeps a bear warm



HINT: Helps find dinner



HINT: You don't have one of these.



HINT: Built for snow, ice, water



HINT: Polar bears are afraid of this animal.



Answers: 1. Nose, 2. Tail, 3. Seal, 4. Fur, 5. Paw, 6. Walrus



ARCTIC: The area near the North Pole, where it is very cold



CUB: A baby bear



DEN: A hidden hole where a wild animal lives. Polar bear mothers have their babies in a den.



FLOAT: To rest or move in water without sinking

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1

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- * PLAY BRAIN-BUSTING GAMES
- * TAKE CRAZY QUIZZES
- * HAVE TOTALLY OUTRAGEOUS FUN!

For Details: You can watch a cool Super Readers video at kids.nationalgeographic.com/superreader



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