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POLAR BEARS

White giants of the Arctic

What's hairy, stands nine feet tall, weighs 1,000 pounds, and is invisible? A polar bear in a snowstorm, of course!

Polar bears are some of the most powerful and fascinating animals on earth. God created them so that they are perfectly suited for the cold, Arctic region in which they live. For instance, a polar bear's paws are very wide compared to other bears' paws. That's because polar bears spend a lot of time walking on snow and ice. The extra-large paws act like snowshoes, spreading out the bear's weight so it doesn't break through the frozen surfaces. The bottoms of the paws are also covered with thick, bumpy pads. Like the tread on your shoes, those bumpy feet help polar bears get around without slipping.



God gave polar bears a layer of blubber that can be as much as four inches thick. The blubber keeps the bears afloat in water. Along with thick fur coats, the blubber also helps the bears stay toasty warm — even when temperatures drop many degrees below zero.

The fur of the polar bear is actually clear.

When the sun strikes it, the fur looks white. The bear's white appearance helps it blend in with its snowy surroundings. That's important for any predator that may need to sneak up on its next meal.

In the Bible, God says He wants to make us white like snow on the inside. That means He wants to wash us clean from sin. When we ask His forgiveness for the bad things we've done, He promises to make our lives clean and new.

"'Come now, let us reason together,' says the Lord. 'Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.' " (Isaiah 1:18, NIV).

Try this!

See if you can unscramble these frozen words.



1. tricA
2. lapor
3. cribeeg
4. nosw
5. goilo

JUST FOR laughs

What do you call a big, white bear that likes to lie around in the sun? A solar bear.

What do you call an angry polar bear?

Don't call it anything. Just stay out of its way!



Did you know?

Polar bears in captivity often need to adapt to warmer climates. At the San Diego Zoo in sunny California, polar bears are fed low-fat diets of fruits, vegetables, crickets and fish. That way, they don't develop the thick fat layer that would keep them warm in the wild.

Enter to win!

(Recommended for ages 3 and up.) Win a cuddly, plush polar bear. Enter online by Jan. 5 at pe.ag.org or mail an entry post-marked on or before that date to Stuffed Bear Giveaway, Pentecostal Evangel, 1445 N. Boonville Avenue, Springfield, Mo. 65802. Include a daytime phone number. You must have a parent or guardian's permission to enter.

