

# Polar Bear Watch Scavenger Hunt

## Answers

1. When you enter *Polar Bear Watch* you will see animals that live in the \_\_\_\_\_. You will learn about what town in Canada? Use the map as a clue. (the Sub-Arctic or tundra; Churchill, Manitoba)
2. Owls have sharp claws called talons to catch food. The talons enable these birds to eat \_\_\_\_\_. (small rodents)
3. Name two birds that can survive in the Arctic year round. Clue: one of them lives in this exhibit. (Snowy owl and ptarmigan)
4. Polar bears use body language to talk with one another.
  - If you see a polar bear with flattened ears, what do you think he is saying?  
A polar bear with flattened ears is saying “back off”
  - If two polar bears are reared up, standing on their back feet, facing each other with their front paws on each other’s shoulders, mouths open, what might they be communicating to each other? Polar bears that are mock boxing are saying “let’s play”
5. Magnet and Alaska can swim in freezing cold water! Why don’t they get cold? (They have blubber that acts like a wet suit and have thick fur.)
6. You can see two sets of footprints right by the underwater area.
  - What two animals do you think those prints belong to? (Hint: they belong to the only two mammals we have on exhibit in Polar Bear Watch.)  
The polar bear and the arctic fox.
  - Why might they be traveling together?  
The Arctic fox will follow the polar bear for seal scraps.
7. What are some ways that our polar bears get enrichment at the Zoo? Look in their exhibit. What “toys” do you see? (Possibly fish frozen in their pools, Gatorade®, barrels or tires – the keepers change items frequently to keep things interesting for the bears.)
8. Littering can harm animals. How can throwing litter on the road harm the northern raven? (The raven might get hit by a car when checking out potential food.)
9. What can ravens learn to do? (count and mimic sounds such as “hello” or a dog’s bark)
10. A Tundra Buggy® is designed to travel over the Arctic tundra. People can safely observe wild polar bears from inside a Tundra Buggy. Look at our Tundra Buggy’s tires.
  - How does your height compare to the height of the tire?  
(probably smaller)
  - How does an adult’s height compare to the tires’?  
(probably larger than the student and possibly the tire)
  - Why do the tires need to be wide?  
(They are wide to distribute the weight of the buggy in order to cause less damage to the terrain.)

The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore

**11. Polar Bear Alert! If a polar bear wanders too near Churchill, how do the people of Churchill prevent the bears from entering the town?** (trained officers chase it away, catch and relocate it immediately, or house it temporarily until it can be taken out to sea)

**12. Arctic foxes are cryptically colored. This means their coats change colors to best blend in to their surroundings.**

- **What time of year would arctic foxes be brownish gray? Why?** (summer, to blend in with the ground with plants, rocks, and dirt)
- **What time of year would arctic foxes be white? Why?** (winter, to blend in with the snow)
- **What color is the arctic fox today?** (Sly is white with gray/brown on his face.)

**13. Look at the length of the Arctic fox's tail. Is it long or short compared to its body length? How does this help them stay warm?** (They have a long tail so that they can curl up their body and wrap their tail around themselves)

**Before you exit *Polar Bear Watch* make sure you step into our Tundra Buggy Observation area. This allows you a great overlook of the polar bear exhibit! Answer these questions based on information found inside the Tundra Buggy – look in the display cases and don't forget the posters above the windows!**

**14. When facing the front of the Tundra Buggy (looking toward the steering wheel), look into the polar bear area on the right. You'll see a stone structure. Can you find anything in the Tundra Buggy that tells you the name of the stone structure?** (In the display case there is a book that tells you the name of the structure is Inuksuk.)

**15. Where did our female, Alaska, come from, before we got her here at the zoo?** (she was rescued from a circus)

**16. What human food do we give to the arctic fox?** (Cheerios)

**17. What two types of bird feathers are on display? How are they different?** (raven and snowy owl; ravens are black with an iridescent sheen and the owls are white with brown bars)

**18. Are people who live in Churchill, Manitoba allowed to feed the polar bears that come through town? (NO) Why not?** (Feeding the bears only reinforces their behavior to approach people which is not safe for humans or the bears.)

**19. Why do we train the polar bears?** (It is something for them to engage in thus it provides enrichment for them; when they need a check up, blood drawn, shots, or looked over in a medical situation they do not need to be anesthetized which is stressful and dangerous for the bears)

**20. Why can't we use a clicker (sound) to train Alaska?** (She is deaf so her trainer uses a visual bridge – a light to blink. For an explanation of a bridge in training, read the rest of the poster where you found out Alaska was deaf.)