

Saving the Yellow Eye

by John Darby



Book Summary

The yellow-eyed penguin is the rarest penguin in the world. Scientist John Darby explains how he set out to study this endangered bird and to help recreate its endangered habitat.

Features of the Book

- The information in the photographs
- The use of graphs
- Fact files on penguins
- The use of photo insets
- Specialised vocabulary – *habitat, extinct, endangered, hemisphere*
- The clear statement of the problem and solution
- The use of maps

Purpose

Saving the Yellow Eye can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- exploring specialised vocabulary;
- summarising important ideas;
- exploring cause and effect;
- using maps and graphs as sources of information;
- using electronic media to research a topic.

The Guided Reading Lesson

- Exploring specialised vocabulary
- Summarising important ideas
- Exploring cause and effect
- Using maps and graphs as sources of information

Introducing the text

Discuss the concept of extinction and introduce some of the vocabulary that the students will meet in the book.

- What does it mean when we say that an animal is endangered?
- Can anyone name an endangered animal?
- What do we mean when we say that an animal has become extinct?
- Do you know the names of some extinct animals?

Some students may suggest that dinosaurs have become extinct.

Continue the discussion, looking at the reasons why some animals become endangered – changes to the environment, pollution, introduced predators, and disease. Try to introduce examples of local animals that are under threat.

Discuss the cover of the book together.

- What do you think a “yellow eye” is?
- Do you know where this kind of bird is found?
- Why do you think the book is called Saving the Yellow Eye?

Reading and discussing the text

Ask the students to read pages 4 to 7. This introduces the problem that John Darby has to deal with. You could ask the following purpose-setting question:

- *How have people caused problems for the yellow eye?*

When the group has finished reading this section, discuss the question and the photographs on page 6, which clearly show how the yellow-eyed penguins' habitat has changed.

- *What do you think might happen if something isn't done to help the yellow eye?*
- *What could be done to help?*

Read the fact file on pages 8 and 9 together. Discuss the globe and make sure that the students understand the concept of the Southern Hemisphere. Discuss the comparison chart for the three kinds of penguin. Ask the students to reread the page and present as many facts as they can to the group, using both the text and the photographs. Do the descriptions in the text match the way the photographs are presented?

The students can now read the rest of the story independently. As they read, be aware of any difficulties they may be having and offer help where it is needed. Encourage the students to use their dictionaries and to ask for word definitions where necessary.

- *As you read, think of the main steps that John Darby and other scientists took to solve the problem of the dying penguins.*

As the students finish, ask them to record on a time line the main steps taken to solve the problems facing the scientists.



Revisiting the Text

The suggested activities below can be used immediately after the guided reading lesson if appropriate or could be taken as a mini-lesson at a later time.

S Using maps and graphs as sources of information

In this book, maps and graphs are used to convey information to the reader. Revisit the pages that use these and discuss how the information has been presented. Model the graphs on the board as you discuss them.

- *Can you see why the dates are put along the bottom of the graphs?*
- *Can you find three years on the bar graph on page thirteen where something unusual happened to the penguins?*
- *About how many chicks born in 1981 were still alive when the graph was made?*

Ask the students to summarise what happened in 1984. They can read pages 14 and 15 and then give a verbal summary to the group. Now look back at the graph on page 13.

- *Do you think the graph shows what the problem was?*

鼓励 the students to create another graph to practise recording information in this way. You could suggest that they survey the other students in the class for birth dates and record these against the months of the year. They can use the blackline master on page 73 to do this. Follow up this activity by discussing the way the students have displayed the information and what it tells them about the distribution of birth dates.

S Using electronic media to research a topic

Suggest that the students use the Internet to research the topics of endangered species and penguins. They could try the following address to begin with: www.penguin.net.nz You should preview any website before allowing the students access. They should be prepared to present further information to the rest of the group and explain how they did their research.