

Mr. Popper's Penguins

by Richard and Florence Atwater

A Novel Study by:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Dictionary Detective!

Chapters 1 - 3

Using a dictionary, find the definitions for the words below.

pompous

Definition: _____

expanses

Definition: _____

inquisitive

Definition: _____

heathen

Definition: _____

spectacles

Definition: _____

tobogganed

Definition: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Vocabulary Study

Chapters 1 - 3

Match Up

Match the words in the left column to their definitions in the right column.

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------|
| pompous • | • eyeglasses |
| expanses • | • to travel downhill by a long, flat sled |
| inquisitive • | • uncivilized |
| heathen • | • to be very curious |
| spectacles • | • open areas |
| tobogganed • | • arrogant |

Fill in the Blanks

Complete each sentence by filling in the blanks with the provided vocabulary.

pompous expanses inquisitive spectacles heathen tobogganed

1. Animals might be considered _____ creatures because they are not civilized the way we are.
2. The green _____ of the valley were part of a beautiful view from the hill.
3. We giggled with delight as we _____ down the steep slope.
4. Many old photographs show people wearing round _____.
5. That girl is so _____; she always looks down her nose at us.
6. The _____ boy asked at least ten questions during the class.

**A Little
Extra!**

In Chapter 1, we learn that Mr. Popper is "quite an authority" on the subject of Polar explorers. What do you think this expression means?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Understanding the Story

Chapters 1 - 3

Multiple Choice

1. What does Mr. Popper dream of doing?

- (a) Painting.
- (b) Inventing something.
- (c) Traveling.
- (d) Owning a pet.

2. In Chapter 3, Mr. Popper receives a surprise gift from:

- (a) A scientist.
- (b) An astronaut.
- (c) The president.
- (d) Mrs. Popper.

Short Answer

3. Why does Mrs. Popper wish Mr. Popper had a different job?

Long Answer

4. Mr. Popper is passionate about Polar expeditions and enjoys reading books and watching movies to learn more about this topic. What are you passionate about? In what ways do you pursue your interests?

**A Little
Extra!**

Why is Mrs. Popper worried about the winter ahead? Why is Mr. Popper looking forward to it?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter Summary

Chapters 1 - 3

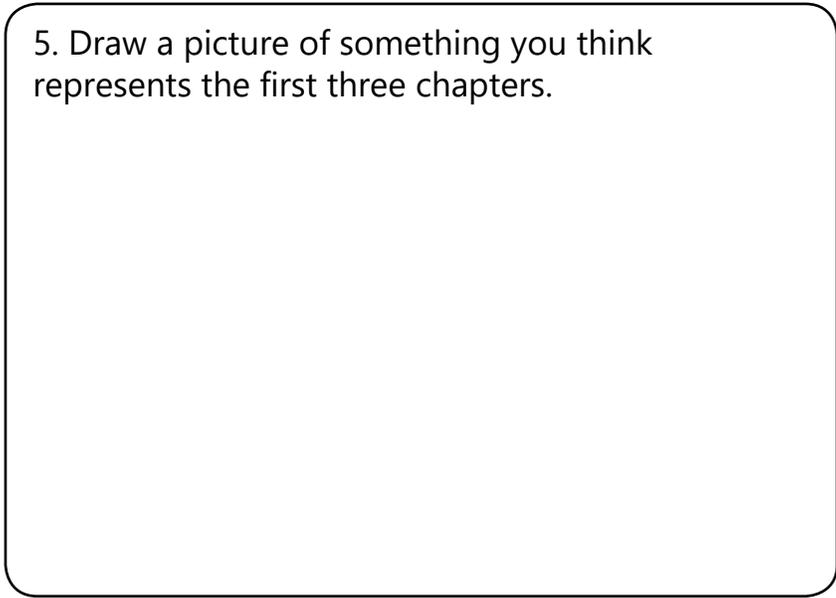
1. If you could give a title to this section of the book, what would it be?

2. What happens in these chapters?

3. What is your favorite part of this section of the book?

4. What new words did you learn in Chapters 1 to 3?

5. Draw a picture of something you think represents the first three chapters.



Name: _____

Date: _____

Dictionary Detective!

Chapters 4 - 6

Using a dictionary, find the definitions for the words below.

trilled

Definition: _____

ventilating

Definition: _____

ordinance

Definition: _____

solemnly

Definition: _____

considerable

Definition: _____

indignantly

Definition: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Vocabulary Study

Chapters 4 - 6

Which Word?

On the provided lines, write the matching vocabulary word for each definition.

trilled	ventilating	ordinance	solemnly	considerable	indignantly
---------	-------------	-----------	----------	--------------	-------------

1. Angrily. _____
2. Very seriously. _____
3. A large amount. _____
4. Made a musical sound. _____
5. A law. _____
6. Allowing fresh air to enter. _____

Making Sentences

Make a sentence for each word below.

1. Solemnly: _____
2. Trilled: _____
3. Ventilating: _____
4. Indignantly: _____
5. Ordinance: _____
6. Considerable: _____

A Little Extra!

The icebox service man who comes to the house tells Mr. Popper to sit down where he can "keep an eye" on him. What does the man mean by this?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Understanding the Story

Chapters 4 - 6

Multiple Choice

1. What word best describes Captain Cook when he arrives at Mr. Popper's house?

- (a) Scared.
- (b) Shy.
- (c) Curious.
- (d) Angry.

2. What is the first food Captain Cook eats at Mr. Popper's house?

- (a) Shrimp.
- (b) Goldfish.
- (c) Eggs.
- (d) Tuna.

Short Answer

3. Captain Cook is named after a famous person. Who was the original Captain Cook?

Long Answer

4. Explain how Mr. Popper changes his refrigerator for the penguin in Chapter 5.

**A Little
Extra!**

What reasons does Mr. Popper give for choosing the name "Captain Cook" for his first penguin?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter Summary

Chapters 4 - 6

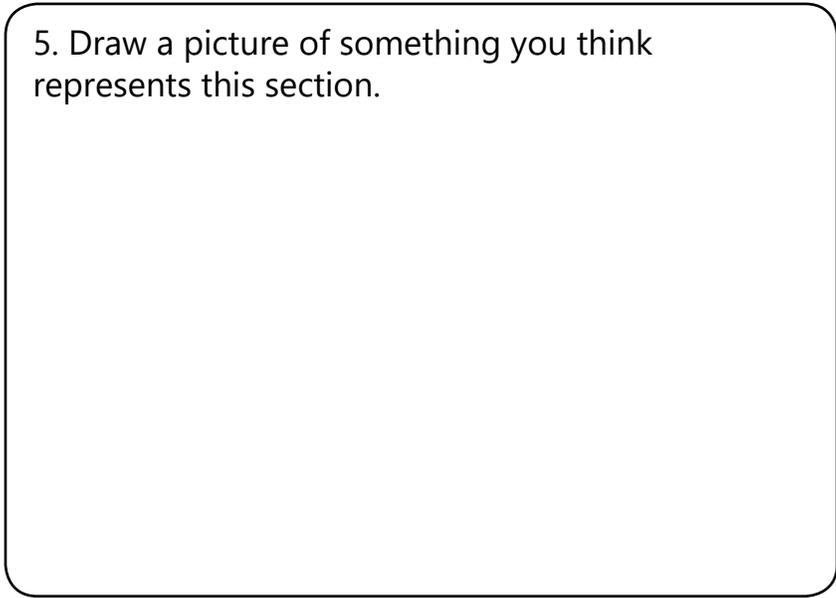
1. If you could give a title to this section of the book, what would it be?

2. What happens in these chapters?

3. What is your favorite part of this section of the book?

4. What new words did you learn in Chapters 4 to 6?

5. Draw a picture of something you think represents this section.



Name: _____

Date: _____

Dictionary Detective!

Chapters 7 - 9

Using a dictionary, find the definitions for the words below.

customary

Definition: _____

elegant

Definition: _____

belatedly

Definition: _____

unwearyingly

Definition: _____

reproach

Definition: _____

astonishment

Definition: _____

Vocabulary Study

Chapters 7 - 9

Match Up

A synonym is a word that means the same as another word. For example, happy and joyful are synonyms. Match the vocabulary words with their synonyms!

- | | |
|----------------|------------|
| customary • | • surprise |
| elegant • | • blame |
| belatedly • | • usual |
| unwearyingly • | • graceful |
| reproach • | • tardily |
| astonishment • | • steadily |

Best Word

Circle the word which works best in each sentence.

- To my (elegant / astonishment), the front door was wide open when I got home.
- My brother wasn't happy when I (belatedly / reproach) wished him a 'Happy Birthday'.
- My niece looked very (elegant / steadily) dancing during the ballet performance.
- "Why do you (customary / reproach) me for everything?" I asked my mom when she shouted at me about the mess in the kitchen.
- Robin always works (unwearyingly / belatedly), even when she's very tired.
- In our house it is (customary / astonishment) to say a prayer before every meal.

**A Little
Extra!**

What action words or expressions are used in Chapter 7 to describe Captain Cook's process while building a nest in the icebox?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Understanding the Story

Chapters 7 - 9

Multiple Choice

1. What does Mr. Popper use for a leash when he takes the penguin for a walk?

- (a) A dog's leash.
- (b) Yarn.
- (c) A clothesline.
- (d) A telephone cord.

2. Mr. Popper and Captain Cook meet the following people on their walk EXCEPT:

- (a) A scientist.
- (b) A neighbor.
- (c) A photographer.
- (d) A barber.

Short Answer

3. In Chapter 7, Captain Cook collects odds and ends from around the house. What does he use these things for?

Long Answer

4. What does Captain Cook do when he reaches the top of the stairs behind the barber shop? What problem does this cause for Mr. Popper?

**A Little
Extra!**

How do you think people would react if you walked a penguin on a leash around your neighborhood?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter Summary

Chapters 7 - 9

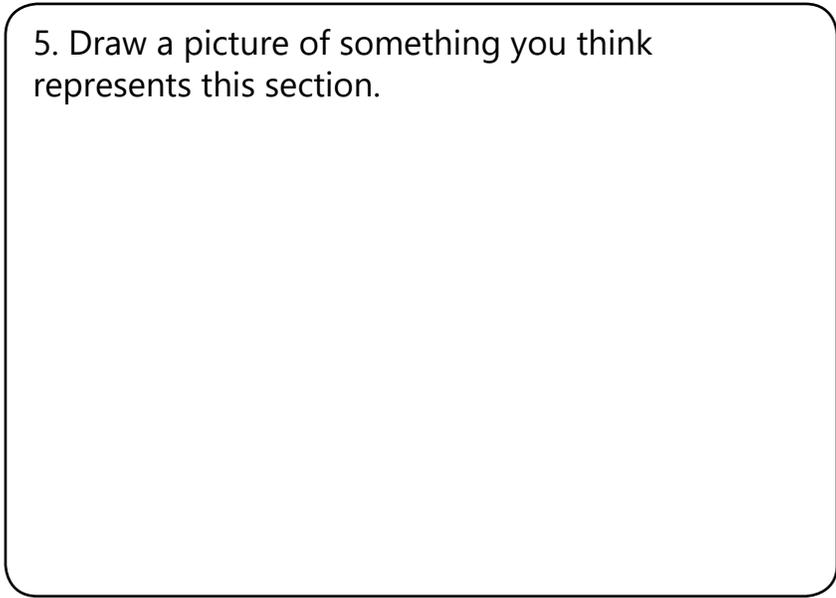
1. If you could give a title to this section of the book, what would it be?

2. What happens in these chapters?

3. What is your favorite part of this section of the book?

4. What new words did you learn in Chapters 7 to 9?

5. Draw a picture of something you think represents this section.



Name: _____

Date: _____

Dictionary Detective!

Chapters 10 - 12

Using a dictionary, find the definitions for the words below.

stupor

Definition: _____

scarcely

Definition: _____

rotogravure

Definition: _____

tremendous

Definition: _____

dreaded

Definition: _____

sympathetic

Definition: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Vocabulary Study

Chapters 10 - 12

Match Up

Match the words in the left column to their definitions in the right column.

- | | |
|---------------|----------------------------------|
| stupor • | • a process of printing |
| scarcely • | • hardly |
| rotogravure • | • waited for something with fear |
| tremendous • | • a dream-like state of mind |
| dreaded • | • to be understanding |
| sympathetic • | • wonderful |

Fill in the Blanks

Complete each sentence by filling in the blanks with the provided vocabulary.

sympathetic tremendous rotogravure dreaded stupor scarcely

1. My assignment was so _____ that I got an A+ on it!
2. An old process of printing called _____ was invented in Germany a hundred years ago.
3. We _____ have any trees here as our climate is very dry and hot.
4. The teacher was _____ about my nosebleed.
5. She _____ going back to school in the fall because of the bullies.
6. I think something is wrong with her as she is always in a _____.

**A Little
Extra!**

Why do you think the authors called Chapter 10 "Shadows"?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Understanding the Story

Chapters 10 - 12

Multiple Choice

1. When Captain Cook gets sick, what does the aquarium curator send?

- (a) Soup.
- (b) Medicine.
- (c) Food.
- (d) Another penguin.

2. To which room does Mr. Popper move his penguins in Chapter 12?

- (a) The kitchen.
- (b) The cellar.
- (c) The living room.
- (d) The attic.

Short Answer

3. In Chapter 12, what surprises Mr. Popper about Greta's eggs?

Long Answer

4. The icebox is too small for two penguins. How does Mr. Popper solve this problem in Chapter 11? Why is Mrs. Popper unhappy with his solution?

**A Little
Extra!**

What does Mr. Popper do with the furnace? Why does he do this?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter Summary

Chapters 10 - 12

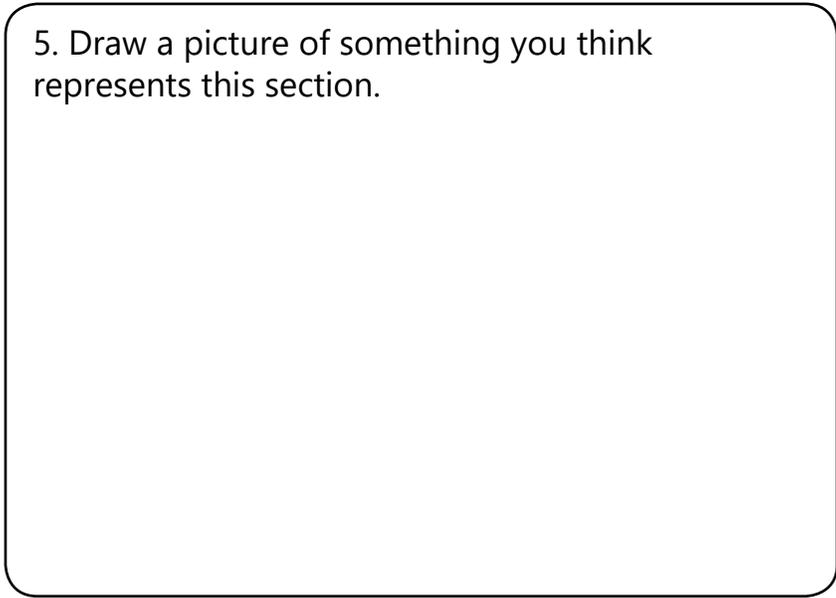
1. If you could give a title to this section of the book, what would it be?

2. What happens in these chapters?

3. What is your favorite part of this section of the book?

4. What new words did you learn in Chapters 10 to 12?

5. Draw a picture of something you think represents this section.



Name: _____

Date: _____

Dictionary Detective!

Chapters 13 - 15

Using a dictionary, find the definitions for the words below.

trooped

Definition: _____

droll

Definition: _____

vigorously

Definition: _____

exhibit

Definition: _____

clinch

Definition: _____

novelty

Definition: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Vocabulary Study

Chapters 13 - 15

Which Word?

On the provided lines, write the matching vocabulary word for each definition.

trooped	droll	vigorously	exhibit	clinch	novelty
---------	-------	------------	---------	--------	---------

1. A show or demonstration. _____
2. Funny and amusing. _____
3. A hug or embrace. _____
4. Walked somewhere together. _____
5. To do with a lot of energy. _____
6. Something new and unusual. _____

Making Sentences

Make a sentence for each word below.

1. Droll: _____
2. Exhibit: _____
3. Trooped: _____
4. Novelty: _____
5. Vigorously: _____
6. Clinch: _____

A Little Extra!

List at least three adjectives you could use to describe Mrs. Popper's feelings as she talks to Mr. Popper about their money problems.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Understanding the Story

Chapters 13 - 15

Multiple Choice

1. In Chapter 13, Mr. and Mrs. Popper discuss all of the following EXCEPT:

- (a) Selling the penguins.
- (b) Shipping the penguins back to Antarctica.
- (c) Training the penguins.
- (d) Eating the penguins.

2. Which of these is NOT one of the acts the penguins learn in Chapter 13?

- (a) Sliding down hills.
- (b) Slapping each other with flippers.
- (c) Marching in a line.
- (d) Tap dancing.

Short Answer

3. Why are the Poppers and their penguins asked to exit the bus in Chapter 14?

Long Answer

4. In Chapter 15, the penguins perform on stage for the first time. Describe a time when you had to perform in front of a group of people. How did you feel?

**A Little
Extra!**

What kind of animal act would you be interested in seeing?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter Summary

Chapters 13 - 15

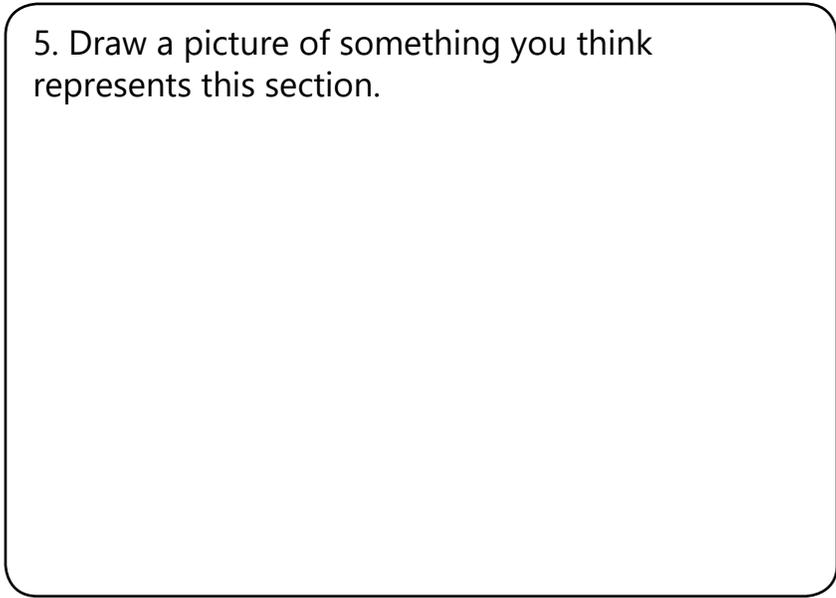
1. If you could give a title to this section of the book, what would it be?

2. What happens in these chapters?

3. What is your favorite part of this section of the book?

4. What new words did you learn in Chapters 13 to 15?

5. Draw a picture of something you think represents this section.



Name: _____

Date: _____

Dictionary Detective!

Chapters 16 - 18

Using a dictionary, find the definitions for the words below.

uneasy

Definition: _____

berths

Definition: _____

nuisance

Definition: _____

testimonial

Definition: _____

porter

Definition: _____

vexed

Definition: _____

Vocabulary Study

Chapters 16 - 18

Match Up

Match the vocabulary words with their synonyms!

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| uneasy • | • docks |
| berths • | • annoyance |
| nuisance • | • gatekeeper |
| testimonial • | • unsure |
| porter • | • upset |
| vexed • | • endorsement |

Best Word

Circle the word which works best in each sentence.

1. The sweaty (porter / vexed) ran all over the platform handling passengers' suitcases.
2. "What a (berths / nuisance)!" Mrs. Lee exclaimed when it started to rain during the picnic.
3. All the (testimonial / berths) at the port were occupied by large container ships.
4. I was truly (vexed / nuisance) when my cell phone fell into the lake.
5. The (testimonial / uneasy) from the celebrity made the product very popular.
6. Nancy was (porter / uneasy) when she heard strange noises coming from the basement.

**A Little
Extra!**

In Chapter 17, the authors say that when the penguins were on the road, "their reputation traveled ahead of them". What do you think this means?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Understanding the Story

Chapters 16 - 18

Multiple Choice

1. In which car do the penguins travel while on the train?

- (a) The baggage car.
- (b) The sleeping car.
- (c) The caboose.
- (d) The club car.

2. What big mistake does Mr. Popper make in Chapter 18?

- (a) He loses his star penguin.
- (b) He goes to the wrong theater.
- (c) He oversleeps.
- (d) He forgets to bring the ladder for the penguins.

Short Answer

3. Why are the penguins becoming irritable toward the end of their tour?

Long Answer

4. At the end of Chapter 18, Mr. Popper is arrested. Do you think this is fair? Why or why not?

**A Little
Extra!**

After reading the book so far, what do you think might happen to the Poppers and their penguins?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter Summary

Chapters 16 - 18

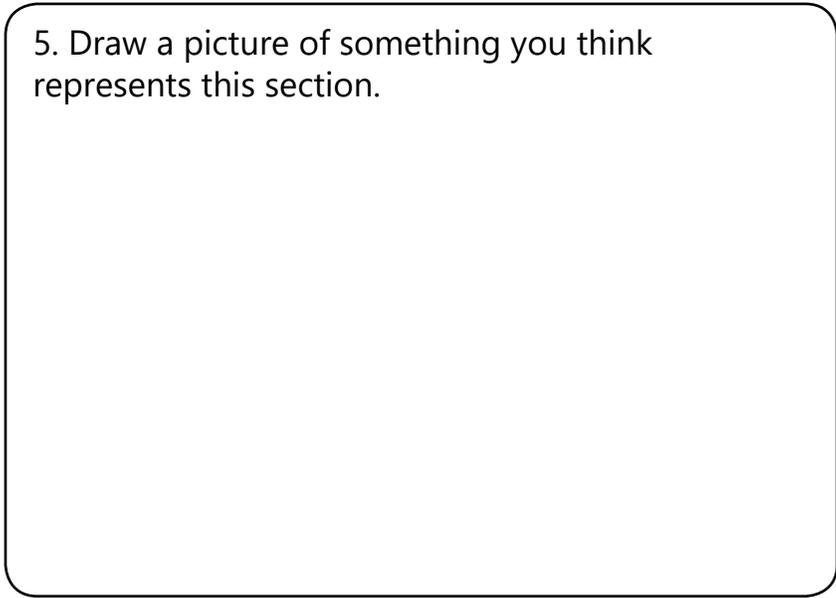
1. If you could give a title to this section of the book, what would it be?

2. What happens in these chapters?

3. What is your favorite part of this section of the book?

4. What new words did you learn in Chapters 16 to 18?

5. Draw a picture of something you think represents this section.



Name: _____

Date: _____

Dictionary Detective!

Chapters 19 - 20

Using a dictionary, find the definitions for the words below.

renewing

Definition: _____

gangplank

Definition: _____

corridor

Definition: _____

haggard

Definition: _____

scuttled

Definition: _____

establishing

Definition: _____

Vocabulary Study

Chapters 19 - 20

Match Up

Match the words in the left column to their definitions in the right column.

- | | |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------|
| renewing • | • starting something off |
| gangplank • | • ran with short steps |
| corridor • | • starting something again |
| haggard • | • a piece of wood to get onto or off of a ship |
| scuttled • | • to look tired and worn out |
| establishing • | • a hallway |

Fill in the Blanks

Complete each sentence by filling in the blanks with the provided vocabulary.

corridor renewing haggard gangplank scuttled establishing

1. "We will be _____ our efforts to create a bigger army for our country", the president announced.
2. The _____ was so unstable that I was sure I would fall into the water.
3. Finding the classroom and _____ empty, John sneaked into Mrs. Kane's classroom and took some chalk.
4. The crab _____ away when I tried to get closer to it.
5. After _____ our new cleaning business, we began to advertise.
6. Kaylee looked _____ for a few days after she had the flu.

**A Little
Extra!**

Write a sentence that you think best describes Mr. Popper's feelings when he joins the expedition to the North Pole.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Understanding the Story

Chapters 19 - 20

Multiple Choice

1. Who pays to get Mr. Popper out of jail?

- (a) Mrs. Popper.
- (b) Mr. Greenbaum.
- (c) Mr. Swerson.
- (d) Admiral Drake.

2. Where will the penguins go when their performing days are over?

- (a) The South Pole.
- (b) The North Pole.
- (c) An aquarium.
- (d) The local zoo.

Short Answer

3. Mr. Popper has a hard time coming to a decision about what to do with the penguins at the end of the story. Explain the reasons behind Mr. Popper's ultimate decision.

Long Answer

4. Would you have made the same decision as Mr. Popper does about the penguins? Explain why or why not.

A Little Extra!

On the back of this paper, write a paragraph describing what kind of adventures you imagine Mr. Popper might have at the North Pole. Discuss what you think might be the best thing about his trip and the worst thing about his trip.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Chapter Summary

Chapters 19 - 20

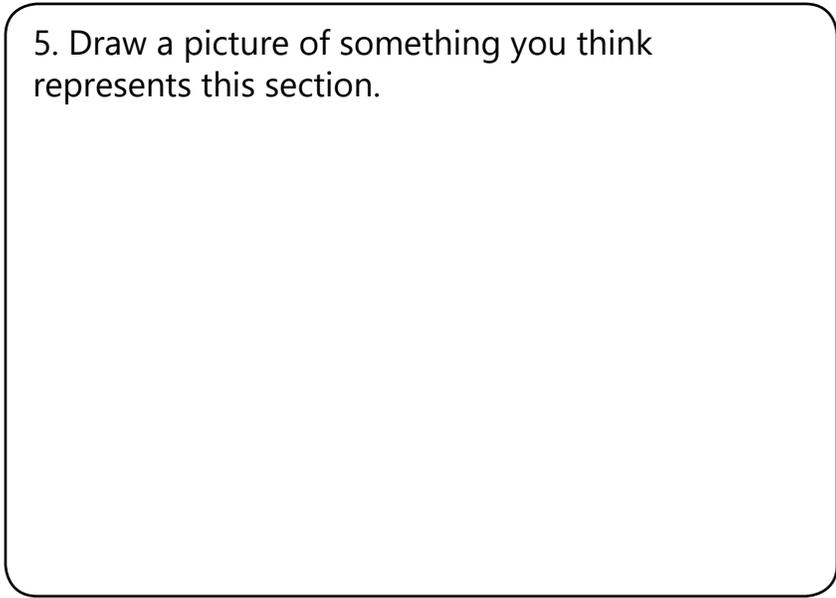
1. If you could give a title to this section of the book, what would it be?

2. What happens in these chapters?

3. What is your favorite part of this section of the book?

4. What new words did you learn in Chapters 19 to 20?

5. Draw a picture of something you think represents this section.



Time for a Test!

Mr. Popper's Penguins

Part A – Multiple Choice

1. What is Mr. Popper's occupation?

- (a) A scientist.
- (b) An explorer.
- (c) A teacher.
- (d) A painter.

2. What does Captain Cook do when he first meets Mrs. Popper?

- (a) He pecks at her.
- (b) He slaps her with his flipper.
- (c) He runs away from her.
- (d) He stares at her.

3. Captain Cook's health improves in Chapter 6. Why did he seem sick before this?

- (a) He was getting old.
- (b) He was too warm.
- (c) He was lonely.
- (d) He wasn't getting enough food.

4. What instrument does Mrs. Popper play when training the penguins?

- (a) The piano.
- (b) The harp.
- (c) The guitar.
- (d) The flute.

5. Why doesn't Mr. Popper like the name "Popper's Pink-toed Penguins" in his meeting with Mr. Greenbaum?

- (a) The name is too long.
- (b) The penguins won't like it.
- (c) The name is too short.
- (d) The penguins don't have pink toes.

6. Why does Mr. Popper ride in the baggage car with the penguins on the train?

- (a) He doesn't want them to get hurt.
- (b) He doesn't want anyone to take them.
- (c) He wants to keep them calm.
- (d) He doesn't have money for a ticket.

7. In Chapter 17, we learn that the penguins get free food from:

- (a) A shrimp company.
- (b) A tuna company.
- (c) A local fisherman.
- (d) The theater owner.

8. What do we learn about Mr. Popper in Chapter 17?

- (a) He is not greedy.
- (b) He does not like to be a nuisance.
- (c) He is honest.
- (d) All of the above.

9. Why is Mr. Popper arrested in Chapter 18?

- (a) He gets into a fight.
- (b) He crashes his car.
- (c) He breaks into a theater.
- (d) He steals a penguin.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Time for a Test!

Mr. Popper's Penguins

Part B – Short Answer

1. Describe the chain of events that lead up to Mr. Popper owning his very own penguin.

2. The setting is where and when a story takes place. Describe the setting of *Mr. Popper's Penguins*.

3. Why does Mr. Popper decide to create a traveling act of performing penguins?

Part C – Long Answer

1. *Mr. Popper's Penguins* is a comedy. What are three funny things that happen in this story?

2. Chapter 1 mentions that Mr. Popper is "a dreamer". What are his dreams? How do the events of the novel lead to one of his dreams coming true at the end?
