

# DRESS LIKE A POLAR BEAR

Polar Bears have incredible adaptations that allow them to survive in the harsh arctic climate. Invite your students to explore these adaptations together and discuss how they can help humans dress warm enough to be safe in the cold winter weather.

## Discussion:

What do we wear to keep ourselves warm outside?

Do you sometimes still get cold even when wearing all of your winter gear?

What do you think polar bears have on their body that helps them stay warm in the arctic?



Polar bears have 3 layers that make up their coat and other adaptations that help keep their ears and paws warm.

1. The first layer is a thick layer of insulating fat which helps keep their bodies nice and warm. **If we want to dress like a polar bear, what should we wear as the first layer that stays really close to our skin?**
  - a. A base layer that is tight to your skin that can keep you warm and dry. Wool is a good fabric for this.
2. The second layer is a thick underfur that snuggles against their skin. **What could we wear as our layer of thick fur?**
  - a. An insulating layer like fleece. Even fleece pajamas work. Or try a lighter jacket that will still keep you warm.
  - b. **Underneath this fur is their skin. What colour is polar bear skin? It's black! Why do you think it's black? Dark colours attract and hold heat.**
3. Finally, their outer layer is oily, water-repellent fur. It protects the bear from the cold water and snow. **Have you ever gotten your socks wet in winter or spring? Does it make your feet feel warm or cold? Or if you get caught in the rain without a sweater or umbrella, you'll get colder. What outer layer could we wear that would keep us dry and safe from the wind.**
  - a. A jacket that is waterproof and windproof. It can be thinner if you have a good layer for insulation.
4. Now think about polar bears little ears that are covered in fur. **What could we wear to keep our ears and head warm?**
  - a. A toque, balaclava, scarf, etc.
5. **What about their furry paws? What should we be putting on our hands and feet?**
  - a. Mittens: mittens that don't separate fingers will be warmer than those that do. Make sure they're thick and waterproof.
  - b. Thick socks and winter boots.