

## Polar Bears in San Antonio?

### Introduction:

Mammals throughout the world live in many different climates and habitats. These differences are one of the reasons why there is so much biodiversity on this planet. You wouldn't expect to see a jaguar in the artic or an otter in the desert because those animals aren't adapted to those environments.

Polar bears live in very cold climates (like the North Pole). They spend 90% of their time on the ice and in the water hunting for seals, and only 10% of their time on land. In places like San Antonio it is way too hot for a polar bear to live on its own comfortably (plus, we don't have very many seals wandering around for them to eat). As humans, it is our responsibility to make sure these animals live a good life in their habitats when we put them in places like zoos.

### Activity: building a polar bear habitat

In this activity you're a zookeeper, and it is your job to design a habitat at the San Antonio Zoo for their newly acquired polar bear! Polar bears enjoy very cold environments with a lot of water that they can swim and eat in. As you design a habitat for these polar bears, keep in mind the amount of space and water the polar bear will need in order to live comfortably. Don't forget to name your polar bear and give it plenty of toys to play with!

To create a polar bear habitat, you can either build one using modeling clay like play dough or you can draw and color your habitat on a piece of paper! Make sure to include all of the needs of a polar bear like food, water, shelter, and space.

### Important vocabulary:

**Habitat:** the natural home or environment of an animal, plant, or any organism.

**Climate:** the average measurement of temperature, wind, humidity, snow, and rain in a place. Climate is like the weather, but it is averaged over a long time.

**Biodiversity:** The number and type of different organisms present in an area



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