

MR. POPPER'S PENGUINS

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ATWATER

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READING RIGHT

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Synopsis

Mr. Popper loves the wintertime. His house painting work is no longer needed and he can spend his time reading about polar expeditions. After sending Admiral Drake a letter he receives a message and a penguin by way of reply. Mr. Popper and his family are excited about having a penguin for a pet. The penguin is lonely and unhappy until a near-by zoo sends another penguin to the Poppers. It doesn't take long before there are ten little penguins in the family.

It takes a lot of money to feed to so many penguins. As a way of earning money, Mr. Popper decides to train the penguins to perform and travel around the country with them. Although many funny things happen on and off the stage, the penguins are a big success and the Poppers now have enough money to pay the bills.

In the end the penguins are asked to go on an expedition to the North Pole. Sadly Mr. Popper agrees to let them go, and discovers that he has been invited along too, a dream come true for him.

MR. POPPER'S PENGUINS

Lesson 1

Chapters 1 - 4

1. Mr. Popper looks forward to winter. Why is that?
 - A. He doesn't have to work so he can read more travel books.
 - B. During the winter he takes his family on many trips.
 - C. In the wintertime he can play with his children and build snowmen.

2. Why doesn't Mrs. Popper look forward to winter?

3. Underline the characteristics that describe Mr. Popper.

Absent minded Demanding Wealthy Kind

4. Mr. Popper liked to listen to Admiral Drake's radio broadcasts. From where did Admiral Drake send his message to Mr. Popper?

- A. Arctic
- B. Antarctic
- C. Australia

5. What does "pompously" mean?

("... and his black tailcoat dragging pompously behind his little pinkish feet...")

6. How do you think Mrs. Popper feels about having a penguin living with them?

7. Predict one thing that you think might happen in this story.

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Lesson 2

Chapters 5 - 8

1. In what year was this book first published?
2. Why did Mr. Popper want the service man to drill holes in the refrigerator door?
3. A policeman came to the Popper house thinking there was a wild animal there. Who sent the police to their house?
 - A. A neighbor
 - B. The mailman
 - C. The service man
4. Captain Cook has a game he plays that is helpful to Mrs. Popper and keeps him busy.
What does he do?
5. What is a "rookery" ?
("I guess this is what you call the rookery," said Mrs. Popper.)
6. Mr. Popper hung up the telephone when the Automobile Licensing Bureau answered his call. Why did he do that?
7. In what way did Mr. Popper look like Captain Cook?
8. Why do you think no one in the story recognizes that Captain Cook is a penguin?

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Lesson 3

Chapters 9 - 13

1. Who was Greta and from where did she come?

2. Why did Mrs. Popper want the penguins to move out of the refrigerator?
 - A. She needs a place to keep the family's food cold.
 - B. The penguins are making a mess inside the refrigerator.
 - C. She is afraid that they won't get enough air inside of it.

3. What was different about Mr. Popper's penguins breeding habits from those in the Antarctic?
 - A. In the Antarctic the male bird sets on the eggs all of the time.
 - B. Mr. Popper's penguins laid their eggs in a chair instead of a nest.
 - C. Mr. Popper's penguins laid more eggs than penguins at the South Pole.

4. What does "mopey" mean?
("He feels mopey, I guess.")

5. Choose Mr. or Mrs. Popper and describe the kind of person you think they would be.

6. Mr. Popper was dreading spring and the fact that he would have to return to work.
Why did he feel that way?

7. For what reason was Mr. Popper training his penguins?

8. What do you think would be the best part about having a pet penguin?

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Lesson 4

Chapters 14 - 17

1. The bus driver wanted Mr. Popper and his penguins off the bus. Why?
2. Why were Mr. Popper and his penguins late in getting to the train station?
 - A. The two taxi drivers were talking
 - B. The taxi drivers bumped into each other as they raced to be first
 - C. People around the taxis were so curious that they blocked the car from moving
3. Mr. Popper could have walked to the theaters instead of taking taxis. Why didn't he?
 - A. People stopped to stare and it caused traffic jams
 - B. Mr. Popper had always wanted to be rich enough to ride in a taxi
 - C. It was too cold for the penguins to be out walking around
4. Put the three parts of the penguin's act in the correct order.
_____ Columbus and Nelson fighting
_____ Climbing the ladder and sliding down the stairs
_____ Marching to the music
5. What is the reason Mrs. Popper wears gloves when she plays the piano for the penguins?
6. How do you think Monsieur Duval, the tight rope walker, felt about the penguins being on stage at the same time?
7. What season of the year is it getting to be when Mr. Popper and the penguins arrive in Boston? What is a clue the author gave to support that opinion?

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Lesson 5

Chapters 18 - 20

1. Mr. Popper was afraid that something had hurt his penguins when they were in the locked room. What did he think had happened?
2. Who got Mr. Popper and the penguins released from jail?
 - A. Admiral Drake
 - B. Mrs. Popper
 - C. Mr. Greenbaum
3. Why did Admiral Drake want Mr. Popper's penguins?
 - A. They had been sick so he wanted to return them to the South Pole.
 - B. He wanted to take them to the North Pole where there were no penguins.
 - C. Captain Cook had been his pet and he was lonely for him.
4. What does the phrase "breaking down completely" mean?
("All that kept him from breaking down completely was the knowledge that what he was doing was best for them, too.")
5. Mr. Klein wanted the penguins to make movies, Admiral Drake wants them for a different reason. If they were your penguins explain what would you decide to do and why?
6. How do you think Mr. Popper felt about being invited to go along on Admiral Drake's expedition?
7. How would this story have been different if television had already been invented?
8. What was your favorite part of the book? Why?

MR. POPPER'S PENGUINS

Answer Key

LESSON 1

1. Mr. Popper looks forward to winter because he is a house painter and he doesn't have to work in the winter so he has more time to read his travel books.
2. Mrs. Popper doesn't look forward to winter because there isn't much money without her husband working and he is home all the time and she says he is hard to sweep around.
3. The characteristics that should be underlined are ABSENT MINDED and KIND.
4. Admiral Drake's radio message to Mr. Popper came from the Antarctic.
5. Pompously means a showy display of self-importance in a solemn manner.
6. Answers will vary.
7. Answers will vary.

LESSON 2

1. This book was first published in 1938.
2. Mr. Popper wanted the service man to drill holes in the refrigerator door so the penguins could breathe when they were inside of it. The refrigerator was going to be their home.
3. C
4. Captain Cook kept busy by picking up objects he found scattered around the house.
5. A rookery is a penguin's nest.

Answer Key Continued:

6. Mr. Popper hung up the telephone when the Automobile Licensing Bureau answered because he had been trying to find out if his penguin needed a pet license and no one seemed to know, they just kept transferring his calls around to different departments so he decided not to waste anymore of his time.

7. Mr. Popper and Captain Cook looked alike because Mr. Popper put on a black evening coat with tails, bright colored tan shoes, and slicked down his dark hair. This was similar to the penguins' natural appearance.

8. Answers will vary. One possible reason that no one recognizes a penguin is that without television and movies people were not able to see things that were from different places.

LESSON 3

1. Greta was another penguin who came from the Mammoth City Aquarium.

2. A

3. C

4. Mopey means quietly or sadly.

5. Answers will vary.

6. Mr. Popper was dreading spring and returning to work because he wanted to stay home with his penguins.

7. Mr. Popper was training his penguins so he could put them on the stage as an act and make money.

8. Answers will vary.

Answer Key Continued:

LESSON 4

1. The bus driver wanted Mr. Popper and the penguins off the bus because he had opened all of the windows so his penguins wouldn't get cold but the people on the bus were cold and they were complaining.

2. B

3. A

4. The correct order is 3, 1, and 2.

5. Mrs. Popper wears gloves when she is playing the piano because they have to keep the basement very cold for the penguins and her hands were too cold to play without them. After she got used to playing all the music with them on she just kept them on for performances.

6. Answers will vary.

7. By the time they arrive in Boston spring is on the way. The author mentions "warm spring winds," the month of April, and the fact that their contract had been ten weeks long were all clues.

LESSON 5

1. Mr. Popper was afraid that Mr. Swenson's performing seals had hurt his penguins.

2. A

3. B

4. Breaking down completely means to be crying uncontrollably.

5. Answers will vary.

6. Mr. Popper was most likely very excited to be going to the North Pole with Admiral Drake because he was so interested in polar expeditions.

7. Answers will vary.

8. Answers will vary.