

**To the Top of the World:
Adventures with Arctic Wolves
Theme 6
5th Grade Challenge Reading**

Name _____

Date _____



How much do you know about wolves? Take this true and false test before reading the story. As you read, look for the answers provided in the book.

- _____ 1. Wolves travel alone and are seldom seen in groups.
- _____ 2. Wolves generally weigh more than 200 pounds each.
- _____ 3. In the spring in the Arctic, wolves shed profusely.
- _____ 4. Each wolf has its own distinctive howl.
- _____ 5. Wolves are dangerous animals who often attack humans.

Before Reading

With your group, make a KWL Chart about Arctic Wolves

What I know	What I'd like to find out	What I learned

While Reading

Read page 1.



Notice that the author is writing in the first person. The author is searching for something and it seems that this wolf is about to present him with the chance to take what?

Notice also that the author is speaking about the wolves as though they are pets – really almost human. He has named the wolf, Buster, after his father. He seems to give the animals speech, letting us “hear” what he supposes they are thinking.

Read the rest of the story, keeping these two aspects of the story in mind.

As you read, note each of these vocabulary words in the story. Based on how the word is used in the text, make a prediction about what the word means. Then check the meaning in a dictionary.

Word	page	Predicted meaning	Dictionary meaning	Was my prediction close
perceptive	1	alert	Having an awareness of one's environment	✓
dominant	12			
submissive	12			
adaptation	23			
ritual	29			
exhilarating	30			
unprovoked	41			

In this story, the author (pg 21) gives his philosophy on the practice of giving human characteristics to animals. Examine the definition of anthropomorphism and the two references to the concept given below. Build your own concept definition map of anthropomorphism.

Anthropomorphism (from the Greek anthropos for human and morphe for shape) is the tendency for people to think of animals or inanimate objects as having human-like characteristics. If you have ever named your car, talked to your computer, or begged your printer to work, you are guilty of assigning anthropomorphic characteristics to a machine.

From an online review of *Bambi*

Bambi is just as beautiful as you probably remember it. Maybe even more so. After years of watching stiff, mass-produced, and visually uninteresting TV cartoon fare, it's easy to forget just how good animation can be. Sure, *Bambi's* characters are overly cute and too human-like for the environmentally-aware '80's. But they move naturally and their forest home is exquisitely rendered. And, on the side of realism, Bambi's mother *is* killed, the deer *do* have to struggle for food in the winter, and the devastating effects of campfire carelessness are graphically depicted. The Disney crew was aware that animals acting like people would interfere with the visual realism they were striving for. So they did their best to minimize this activity, while keeping enough **anthropomorphism** to amuse and entertain. The script, for example, contains very little dialogue--only 900 words, according to information from the studio. It's hard to believe, these days, the work that went into the making of *Bambi*. Artists and animators studied animal anatomy in detail; they kept a collection of live fawns, rabbits, birds and skunks for movement study and even dissected a dead deer to learn more about its musculature. Another artist spent 5 months tramping around the Maine wilderness, making sketches and pictures to guide the creators of the forest backgrounds.

The Lion King continues a tradition of storytelling that is centuries old: **anthropomorphism**, or giving animals human speech and feelings. In her book *Animal Land: The Creatures of Children's Fiction* (William Morrow & Company, NY, 1975), Margaret Blount writes, "Talking animals seem to be as old as man; and folklore tales read like Man's remotest dreams." Every culture has its own animal stories. When we tell stories about animals acting like humans, we are better able to see ourselves in the Circle of Life.

Select several pictures from the book. Some of the captions show evidence of anthropomorphism. Contrast these captions with other that show a more neutral or scientific language.

Anthropomorphic caption	page	Neutral or scientific caption	page
The ever-confident Buster appears to take great pleasure in finding unusual situations.	41	As the summer draws to a close, the fur on the half-grown pups starts to whiten, beginning with their faces, once they reach full maturity, their coats will remain white all year.	42

Concept Definition Map

Personal connections
To concept

What is it:

Concept:
Anthropomorphism

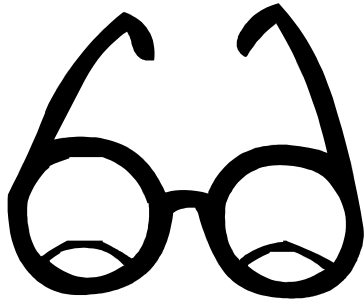
Example

A comparison or metaphor

Example

Non-examples

Unanswered questions

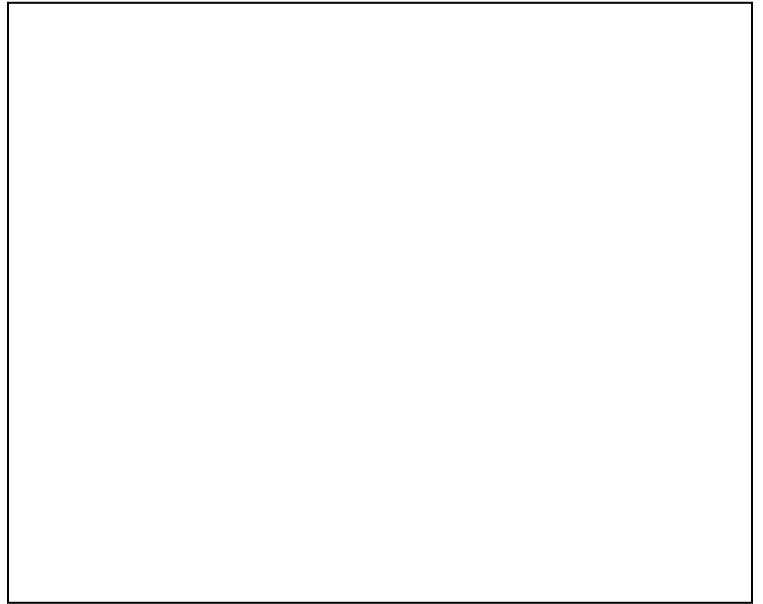


After Reading:

Spend an hour closely observing an animal. It might be a family pet, a bird in your backyard, or even an ant or cricket. Take a photograph of the animal or make a detailed sketch. Write about your experience using the first person. Try writing one account in strictly scientific terms and use more anthropomorphic language in the other. Share the writing with your group. Can the group make a generalization about which type of writing is more engaging and interesting to them?

Animal Observation

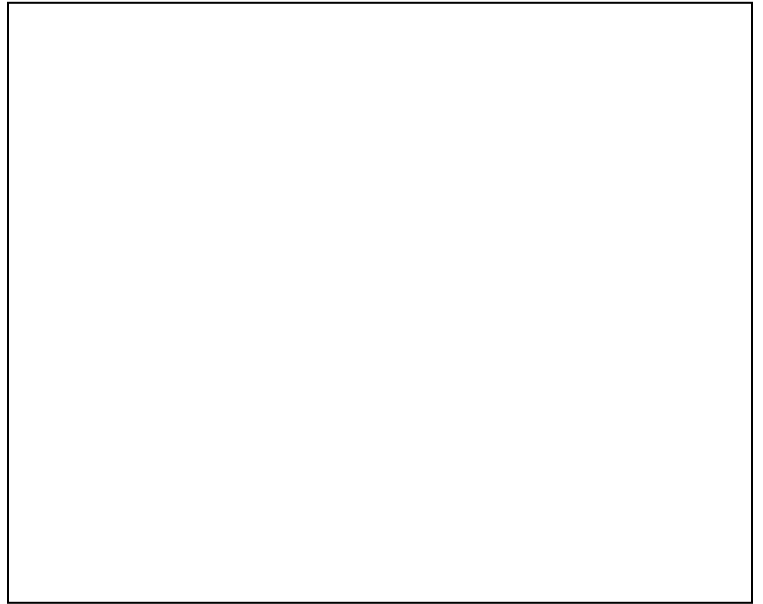
Title



caption

Animal Observation

Title



caption
