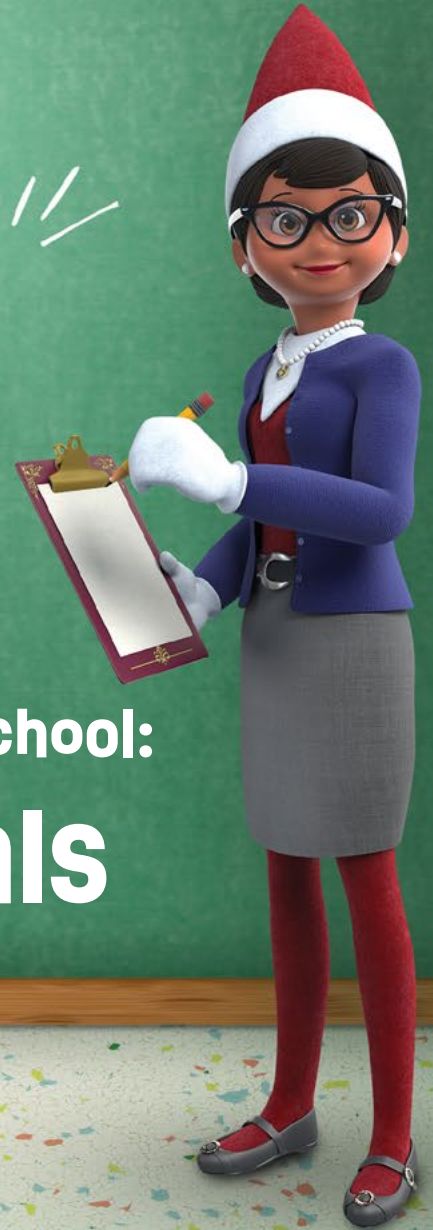




**SCOUT ELF
SCHOOL**™



Lessons from Scout Elf School:
Arctic Animals



Note to Teacher

Here at Scout Elf School, students stretch their minds to learn about their North Pole neighbors as well as all the animals they might meet on their travels across the world. When it is time to stretch their muscles, Scout Elf students enjoy pretending to be some of their favorite arctic friends. To survive in the cold, arctic animals have adapted by using a few different methods to remain warm. Aside from special skin and body coverings, their body systems slow down, or they have special respiratory systems or slower breathing patterns. Some have smaller bodies and shorter limbs, or even smaller snouts and ears to reduce surface area, which reduces heat loss and helps them conserve heat as they breathe. In this activity, your students will practice stretching to make themselves bigger and smaller, self-regulation through breathing, and the importance of wellness breaks.

Core Curriculum Standards

Wellness breaks including yoga-inspired stretches increase core strength, improve posture, and build confidence and concentration.

Activity Instructions

Project the Arctic Animals Yoga Guide for students to use as a reference. Ask students to spread out so that everyone has room to stretch. Keep instructions simple and make slow, easy transitions. Begin by having students hold each pose for 10-15 seconds while explaining that with practice, students should be able to eventually hold each pose for 30 seconds or more! Encourage students to breathe deeply and move carefully from pose to pose.

Students should begin in the “Scout Elf” pose. Once they settle, ask them to practice inhaling and exhaling slowly. Move through each pose in the chart, asking students to imagine themselves as a:

- **1. Seated Scout Elf helper**
Sometimes called the easy pose, students practice sitting still and quietly, just like Santa’s Scout Elf helpers do for extended periods of time.
- **2. Narwhal**
In traditional yoga, it is called the mountain pose. Here, students move into a standing stretch, with arms reaching above their heads.



Activity Instructions (cont'd.)

- **3. Arctic hare**
With arms raised and hands flopping like tall bunny ears, students balance on one foot. Those with better balance may scrunch their faces tightly while inhaling and exhaling quickly—like a small rabbit—before relaxing into deeper breaths.
- **4. Beluga whale**
While planking or lying flat on the ground, students breathe deeply while stretching as long as they can.
- **5. Polar bear**
On hands and feet, in a down dog yoga position, students walk (and grow!) like a polar bear.
- **6. Snowy owl**
In the “chair pose” students practice slowly turning their heads from side to side like a snowy owl.
- **7. Moose**
In the classic “warrior two” pose, students bend the front knee, stretch the back leg, and bring their arms to the side, making themselves large, like a moose.
- **8. Arctic fox**
If they were Noorah, Santa’s extraordinary arctic fox, students could swish their magical tails from this position.
- **9. Lemming**
Back to a sitting stretch with legs in front, students can try making themselves as small as possible, reaching as close to their knees as they can get.

Once students have moved through each pose, ask them how their bodies and brains feel. Explain that self-moderation and imaginative relaxation have positive health benefits and can help them relax in times of stress. Ask students which arctic animal pose is their favorite and why.

Further Discussion:

Ask students what they think their bodies would need to survive at the North Pole. How would they adapt to survive the extreme temperatures?