

Good Eating: The Short Life of Krill

Matt Lilley

Illustrated by Dan Tavis

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9 x 11, 36 pages, full color illustrations

Grades 2-6

Summary

Good Eating: The Short Life of Krill follows the life of an Antarctic krill, starting with an egg sinking in the deep sea. The 2nd-person narrative follows the krill as it metamorphoses from a “six-armed oval” into a 26-legged glutton, and as it rises from the ocean’s deep midnight zone to the surface, encountering all sorts of hungry sea creatures as it grows.

Antarctic krill can catch and eat one-celled phytoplankton, and krill in turn are eaten by the largest animals ever to live on earth—blue whales—as well as by seals, penguins, and a host of others. Antarctic krill are a keystone species of the Southern Ocean.

This book will lead to discussions about

- The ocean food web
- Life stages and metamorphosis
- Narrative point of view

Before You Read

Access Prior Knowledge

- Do you know anything about any of the animals on the cover?
- Which animals do you think are predators? Which animals do you think are prey?
- Could some of the animals be both predators and prey?
- Which animal on the cover do you think this story is mostly about?
- Can you think of something that might happen to the krill in this story?
- Where do you think these animals live?
- Krill go through many metamorphoses as they grow. Do you know some other animals that change form as they grow?



After You Read

Discussion Questions

- Why do you think the title is *Good Eating*?
- Do you think this book is fiction or nonfiction? Why?
- Do you think it's hot or cold where Antarctic krill live? Are there any clues in the book?
- How many metamorphoses, or changes, does the krill go through in the book? Of the other animals you know that metamorphosize, how many changes do they go through?
- What animals live near you? What foods do they eat?
- Krill eat one-celled plants called phytoplankton. What kinds of plants do you eat?
- What might happen to the other animals in the book if they couldn't find any krill?
- Krill are bioluminescent— they can make light. Why do you think they do that?
- Krill stay together in large swarms. Why do you think they do that?
- Krill have shells. What other animals have shells? Why do you think krill lose their shells and then grow new ones?

Activities

- Antarctic krill are about 2.5 inches long. Look for things in your house/classroom that are the same size. A normal blue whale is about 75 feet long. With your teacher or parent, go outside and stand about 75 feet apart. How many krill do you think a blue whale could swallow at once?
- This book is written in the 2nd-person “you” point of view. Pick a section of the book and rewrite it in the 1st-person “I” point of view or in the 3rd-person “he, she, it” point of view. How does changing the point of view change the story?
- The following animals appear on the cover of *Good Eating*. Can you find each animal on the cover? If you're not sure about any of them, try searching the internet for pictures of them.
 - A. King Penguin
 - B. Antarctic Tern
 - C. Colossal Squid
 - D. Antarctic Krill
 - E. South Polar Skua
 - F. Blue Whale
 - G. Chinstrap Penguin
 - H. Mackerel Icefish
 - I. Wandering Albatross
 - J. Gentoo Penguin
 - K. Sea Leopard
 - L. Snow Petrel

For Further Discussion

- Why are krill important animals?

- Krill live around Antarctica. They spend much of their lives under sea ice. How might climate change affect them? If there are fewer Antarctic krill, how will this affect the other animals that live in the Southern Ocean?
- This story is told in the 2nd-person “you” point of view. What if it were told in the 1st-person “I” point of view? Or the 3rd-person “he, she, it” point of view? How would it be different?

Further Reading

Batten, Mary, and Thomas Gonzalez. *Life in a Frozen World: Wildlife of Antarctica*. Peachtree Publishing Company Inc., 2020.

Florian, Douglas. *Ice!: Poems about Polar Life*. Holiday House, 2020.

Nicol, Stephen, and Marc Mangel. *The Curious Life of Krill: A Conservation Story from the Bottom of the World*. Island Press, 2018.

Schuh, Mari C. *Blue Whales (Animals)*. Pebble, 2020.

Internet Resources

You may find the following Internet resources helpful as you continue to explore the topic of the book.

International Science and Health Foundation: Krill Facts

Website devoted to encouraging learning, exploration, and communication of the latest research on the sustainability of krill in the Antarctic. <http://www.krillfacts.org/>

Classroom Antarctica

A comprehensive online teaching resource produced by the Australian Antarctic Division, with lesson plans aimed at grades 3 to 8. <https://classroom.antarctica.gov.au/>

LEARNZ.

LEARNZ is devoting to educating people on Antarctica. This page is about Antarctic food webs: <https://www.learnz.org.nz/scienceonice144/antarctic-food-webs>

Cool Antarctica

Website with extensive information about Antarctica. Pages about krill and the Antarctic food web: <https://coolantarctica.com/Antarctica%20fact%20file/wildlife/krill.php>
<https://coolantarctica.com/Antarctica%20fact%20file/wildlife/whales/food-web.php>

Game (This is also at the back of the book)

National Geographic Kids. Krill Smackdown. <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/games/action-adventure/article/krill-smackdown>

From the website: “Move a group of small, shrimplike animals called krill around the waters off Antarctica. But look out for predators, such as emperor penguins and blue whales, that see these krill as a tasty snack!”