Discover the icy wastes of the polar regions and the remarkable plants and animals that survive in such hostile conditions. Here is an exciting and informative guide to the vast, icy wastes at the ends of the earth. Superb color photographs of snowy mountains and frozen seas, rare animals and plants, and the teeming life on and under the ice offer a unique eyewitness view of our planet’s polar wilderness. See a seal with a trunk, a bear in a burrow, icebergs bigger than skyscrapers, 200-year-old snow goggles, and a pony’s snowshoe. Learn about the northern and southern lights, the crushing power of ice, why Amundsen beat Scott to the South Pole, how penguins keep warm, and what reindeer eat. Discover why layers of clothing retain body heat, which birds are known as pirates of the air, which mammals live farthest north, how long a walrus feeds on its mother’s milk, whether lemmings commit mass suicide or not, and much, much more!

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My Personal Review:
I am a confirmed DK Eyewitness fan. What a visual way--the fabulous color photographs and detailed but limited narrative--to get students into nonfiction to learn about things of the world, all over the world. Even at the top and bottom of the world. The Arctic and Antarctica. The North Pole and a continent. North and South. Polar opposites, except for the ice and cold and blizzards and a multitude of flora and fauna and even people.

Flora and fauna? Yes, I know about the animals, but plant life? They fill only three pages in the 64-page book. Only specialized, hardy plants can survive the fierce winds, biting cold, thin soils, and short growing season of the polar lands (18). Wormwood, a type of iris, long grass, a wort, a daisylike flower, primrose, and weeds (even in the icy lands) grow here.
On the other hand, animal species fill 35 pages (not counting man). One of the ugliest critters I've ever seen, a giant isopod (beauty in the eye...) grows up to 8 inches in the bottom of the ocean, eating anything it can find. Do you know starfish can live to be 39 years old? Musk oxen, Arctic tern, whales, caribou, arctic fox, ptarmigan, cranes, loons, petrels, cormorant, snowy owl, golden eagles, albatross, penguins, emperor penguins, polar bears, moose, grizzly bear, lynx, reindeer, the list goes on. Each two-page spread features photographs, habitats, food, products from the animals, bone structure, and so on.

The last section is devoted to man and his ability to cope with extreme cold and weather. Their natural clothing, hunting masks, bone carvings, ships, exploration, weather suits, sleds, homes of natives.

Always fascinating, always filled with material to keep a person busy for days reading all the material, studying all the pictures, DK Eyewitness book of Arctic and Antarctic is solid scholarship, page design, and sharp photographs that make images come alive. A wonderful book.

Memorial Day, Shreveport, Louisiana, temperature 94 degrees. May God bless all our soldiers in active campaigns and fallen soldiers wherever they may be.

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