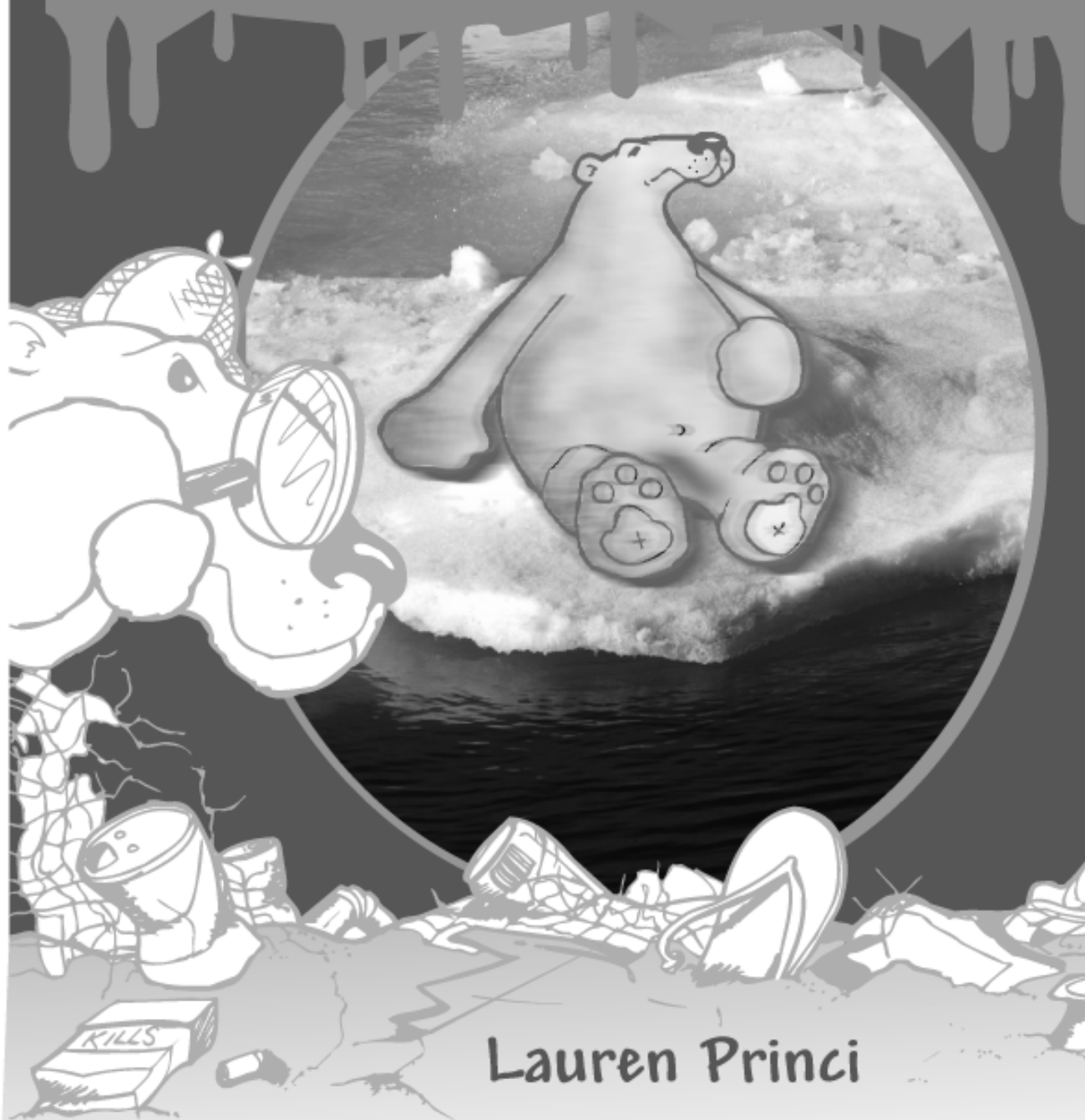


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# Porter P. Bear

## The Earth Detective





# Porter P Bear

Meet Porter P Bear, your tour guide for this book. Porter has had to move from his home in the North Pole because it is getting too hot and the ice sheets are melting.

He is renting a small freezer room in the back of a butcher shop but he wants to go home.

He needs your help to stop global warming and will start by teaching you a few important facts about why the earth is heating up.



# My Home is Melting

An imaginary line on a map will show you where the Arctic is.



I hate summer! My fur gets tangled, my paws crack and my snow cones melt. You might not feel the same way as me but I prefer to live somewhere that is freezing cold. On top of planet Earth is a region around the North Pole called the Arctic.

This is where I was born - in a small cave underneath the snow.

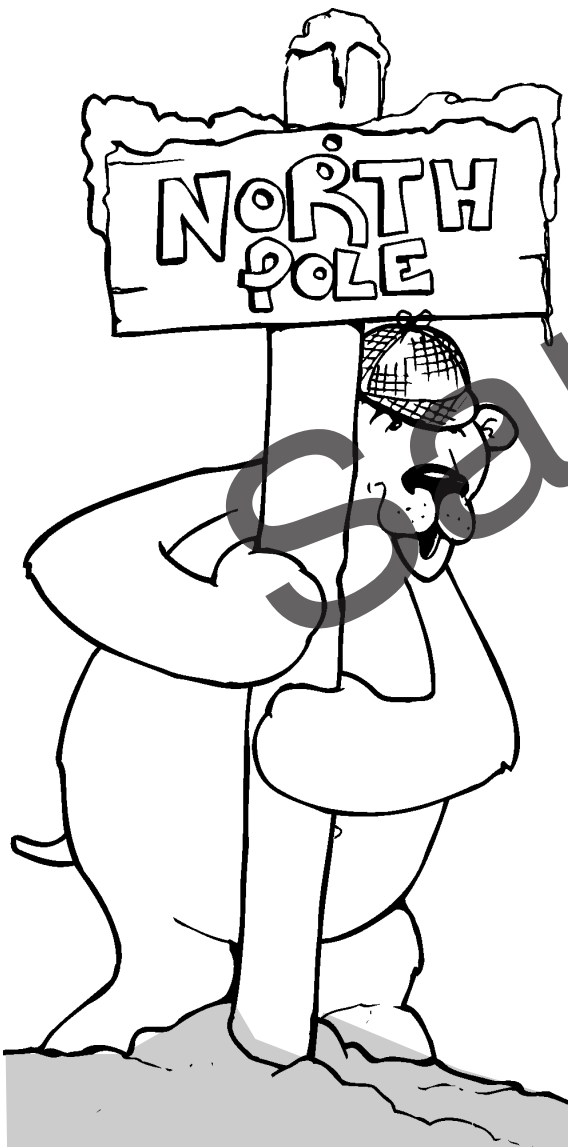
The Arctic is made up of a big, ice-covered ocean and the top parts of countries like Russia, Canada, Greenland, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and the U.S.A.

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If you visited the North Pole you would feel like you had stepped into a giant freezer - that's how cold it is.

As well as polar bears you can find seals (yum), Arctic foxes, snowy owls, wolves, collared lemmings, walruses and many other cool animals. You may notice that many of the animals living in the Arctic are white. This is so predators cannot see them hiding in the snow.

Rabbits, wolverines and bears in the Arctic all have extra wide feet with hair on the bottom. This helps them to walk on the snow and slippery ice without falling over.





There is one problem. My home at the North Pole is melting! Some of my friends have moved away to places where the climate is cooler and some of them have even died of heat exhaustion. The only good things about my new home at the butcher shop are the delicious salmon steaks I gobble during the night.

Although Harry the butcher has been very kind, my freezer is very cramped and very lonely.

While I've been living among humans I've had some time to do a bit of detective work about why the ice is melting back home and I think I have found some answers.

The reason the earth's climate is changing is because there is too much gas in the earth's atmosphere. I don't mean the gas that comes out of your mouth or bottom - I'm talking about greenhouse gases that people are sending into the air.



Have you ever been inside a greenhouse before? They are glass or plastic houses where plants are grown.

Harry the butcher has built his own greenhouse at the bottom of his garden so that he can grow all of the herbs he puts into his delicious sausages.

The inside of a greenhouse gets very hot during the day

because the heat of the sun gets trapped inside by the glass and warms the plants.

The earth's atmosphere is a bit like a greenhouse, protecting the planet from space radiation and trapping the sun's warmth to keep plants and animals alive.

Humans aren't putting heat trapping gases into the air on purpose, they just don't realise that many of the things they use and do everyday are hurting the earth.

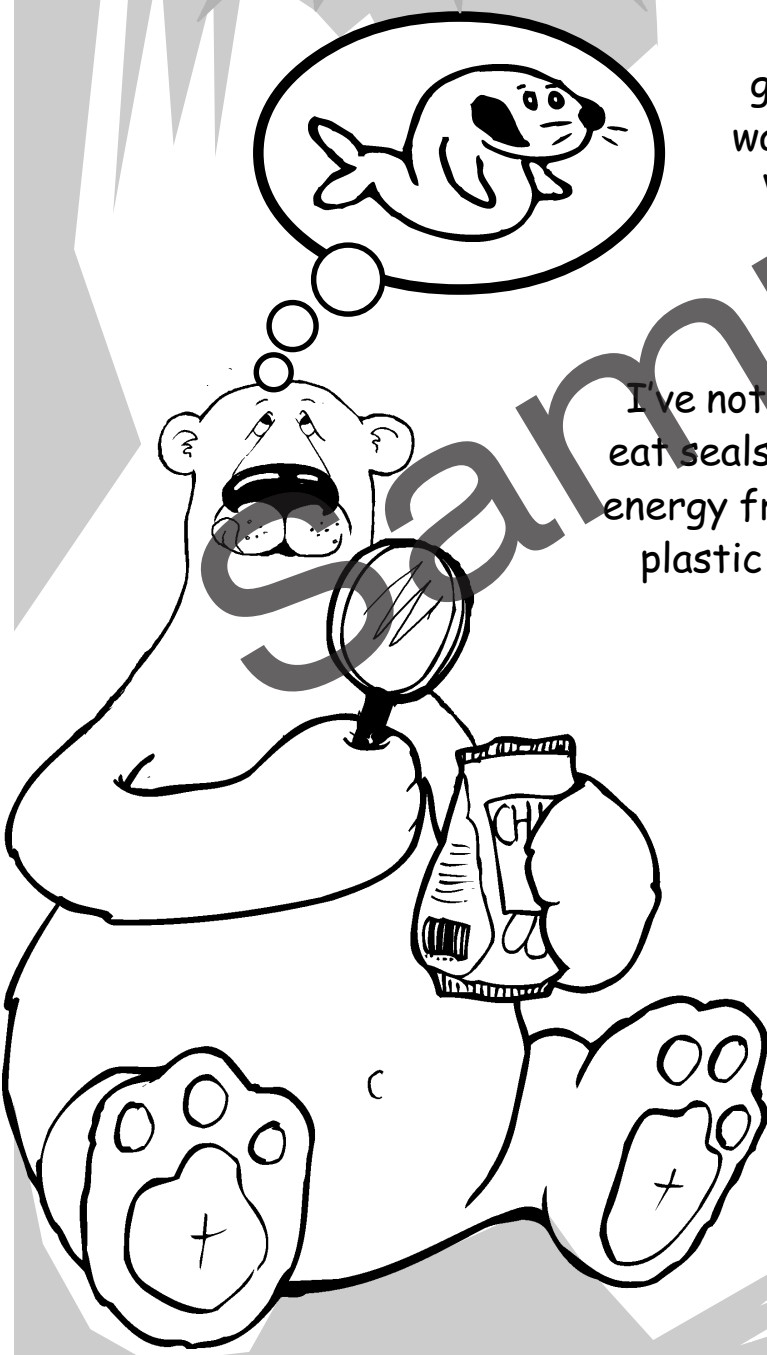


# Energy

You see, it all has to do with energy. You know - the stuff that helps you to move and to think. I know that if I don't catch at least one seal a day I feel really grumpy and tired and don't want to play with my friends. What foods do you eat to get the energy that you need every day?

I've noticed that humans don't eat seals but get lots of their energy from colourful stuff in plastic packets and boxes.

Humans also need energy for other things they can't live without, such as driving in cars, heating in their homes, hairdryers, hot water to clean themselves (humans really do smell quite awful) and the use of many other gadgets that help make their lives easier and more comfortable.



What I didn't understand was where all of these machines got their ENERGY from.

I didn't see a microwave eating cereal for breakfast, or a car munching a burger for lunch. So what made them work?

My question was answered when I noticed drivers stopping at a shop called a "petrol station". It seems that cars get fed a special drink called petrol which gives them enough energy to drive the humans around anywhere they need to go. This made me wonder if all of the other gadgets humans used needed petrol to work too. I decided to watch the people working at the butcher shop very carefully until I found the answer to my question.

It only took a little while before a lady came into the shop and asked for five slices of ham.

I watched closely as Harry the butcher plugged a black cord into three holes in the wall, flicked a switch and started slicing the ham on a sharp, spinning machine.

I couldn't figure out what had made the machine work.

Was there petrol in the wall that travelled through the black cord?

