

Bear Facts Sheet

- large, powerful animals with thick, shaggy fur
- classified as carnivores (meat eaters)
- Alaskan brown bear, the largest carnivore on land, up to 9 feet long and 1,700 lbs.
- sun bear (also called the Malaya bear), the smallest member of the bear family, up to 4 feet long and 100 lbs.
- characterized by heavy bodies; long, thick fur; loose skin; and large, hairy heads
- poor eyesight, poor hearing, excellent sense of smell
- short strong legs, large feet, exposed claws
- runs like a human, putting sole of the foot on the ground first when moving
- usually live alone
- during winter, may spend much time in a state similar to hibernation
- some experts say not true hibernators
- temperature does not drop like other hibernating animals
- called "winter lethargy" by some experts
- awaken easily and active on mild winter days
- prepare for winter sleep by eating large quantities of food and storing fat
- go into den when food is scarce
- longer periods of sleep for bears in harsher climates
- as dens, use caves, brush piles, or burrows, some built in hillsides
- polar bears usually active during winter
- cubs born during mother's winter sleep period
- bears eat mice, squirrels, fish; love ants, eggs, and grubs; also eat acorns, fruit, and nuts
- wander far for food
- try to avoid fights, but fierce when cornered; seldom lose a fight
- American black bear most common, 5 ft. long and 200-300 lbs., fast (runs 25 mph) and skilled tree climber
- not always completely black
- troublesome around campsites; have injured campers
- live in large wooded areas in North America
- 75,000 in national forests
- 25,000 killed annually by hunters
- polar bears best swimmers, little smaller than big browns (8-3/4 ft.)
- thick, creamy-colored fur
- pads on soles of feet to protect from cold
- run up to 35 mph, swim 3 to 5 mph
- prey on sea mammals
- live in areas bordering Arctic Ocean
- hunted for sport and hides
- giant pandas in bamboo forest in China; spend 10-12 hours, daily, eating bamboo stems and shoots
- some say panda belongs to raccoon family

WRITING

Opening Paragraph

Directions

On your own or in pairs, write two different opening paragraphs for a report on bears. Follow the directions for each paragraph as stated below. Each paragraph should be at least three or four sentences in length. (Use the space on this sheet or your own paper for your work.)

Sample Opening 1

(Share some interesting or important details in this opening.)

Sample Opening 2

(Ask the readers a question or two in this opening.)



Next Step Share your opening paragraphs with your classmates. Decide which ones would really gain a reader's attention.

