At Home in the Cold
by Stephen Whitt, Jessica Fries-Gaither, and Nicole Luthy
Readers Theater for Grades 4-5

Characters
Narrator
Penguin
Whale
Walrus
Arctic Cod
Crocodile Icefish
Chorus (2-3 students)

Narrator: The Arctic and Southern Oceans are cold. But many animals have special adaptations that allow them to live there.

Chorus: Who? Who’s at home in the cold?

Penguin, Whale, Walrus, Cod, and Icefish: We are! Animals like us live in the cold oceans!

Penguin, Whale, and Walrus: We are warm-blooded. Our bodies turn energy from food into heat.

Cod and Icefish: We are cold-blooded. We depend on the environment to keep warm.

Narrator: How do adaptations help these animals survive?

Whale: Our bodies produce heat all the time. But that heat escapes our bodies. That’s a problem.

Narrator: How do you keep the heat in your bodies?

Walrus: Insulation is the answer!
**Penguin**: We have thick layers of fat called blubber. Blubber helps hold in the heat.

**Narrator**: Blubber works really well. Sometimes too well…

**Whale**: If I got stranded on land, I could get too hot. My blubber would make me overheat and I could die.

**Narrator**: Lucky for him, the ocean water is just right for his body.

**Chorus**: Not too cold and not too hot. Just right!

**Cod and Icefish**: Not us! That doesn’t work for us!

**Narrator**: Fish are cold-blooded. They don’t make their own heat. They depend on the environment to warm them up.

**Chorus**: But the water is cold! How do they survive?

**Fish**: Our adaptations are different from the warm-blooded animals’ adaptations.

**Cod**: I have antifreeze proteins in my blood. They keep my blood from freezing.

**Icefish**: That’s nothing! My blood is seawater, with just a few white blood cells. I don’t have any red blood cells at all!

**Narrator**: The icefish doesn’t just tolerate cold water. It depends on cold water to stay alive!

**Chorus**: Most of us live where the weather is warmer. We enjoy the feel of sunlight on our skin. We like the warmth that comes with long summer days.

**Penguin, Whale, Walrus, Cod, and Icefish**: But our icy world isn’t just home. It’s the only place we can survive!