

ESL/EFL Lesson on the North Pole Solo

Website: <http://www.globalschoolnet.org/expeditions/northpole/index.html>

Part 1: Discuss the North Pole

Brainstorm with your students about what they think of when they think of the North Pole. Use the mind map below to organize their information.

Note: Students will be adding to the mind map with information about Wave Vidmnar as they progress through the text. There is an unlabeled branch for additional ideas. The mind map can be used at any point during the lesson.

Fast Facts:

1) The North Pole is an imaginary point at the earth's northern axis where lines of longitude converge. The Magnetic North Pole is a location to where compasses point from virtually every place on the planet, which acts somewhat like a giant magnet. The closest town to the Magnetic North Pole is Resolute, a small town in Canada. (Explorer Wave is traveling to the North Pole)

2) Average temperatures at the pole are -30°F , (-36 C) and can go as low as -74°F , (-58)with wind-chill can go as low as -150°F . (-101.2 C)

2) The ice covering Antarctica (the south pole) is approx. 3000 feet (914.4 meters) thick, while the ice at the north pole is no thicker than 17 feet (5.8 meters) typically much less

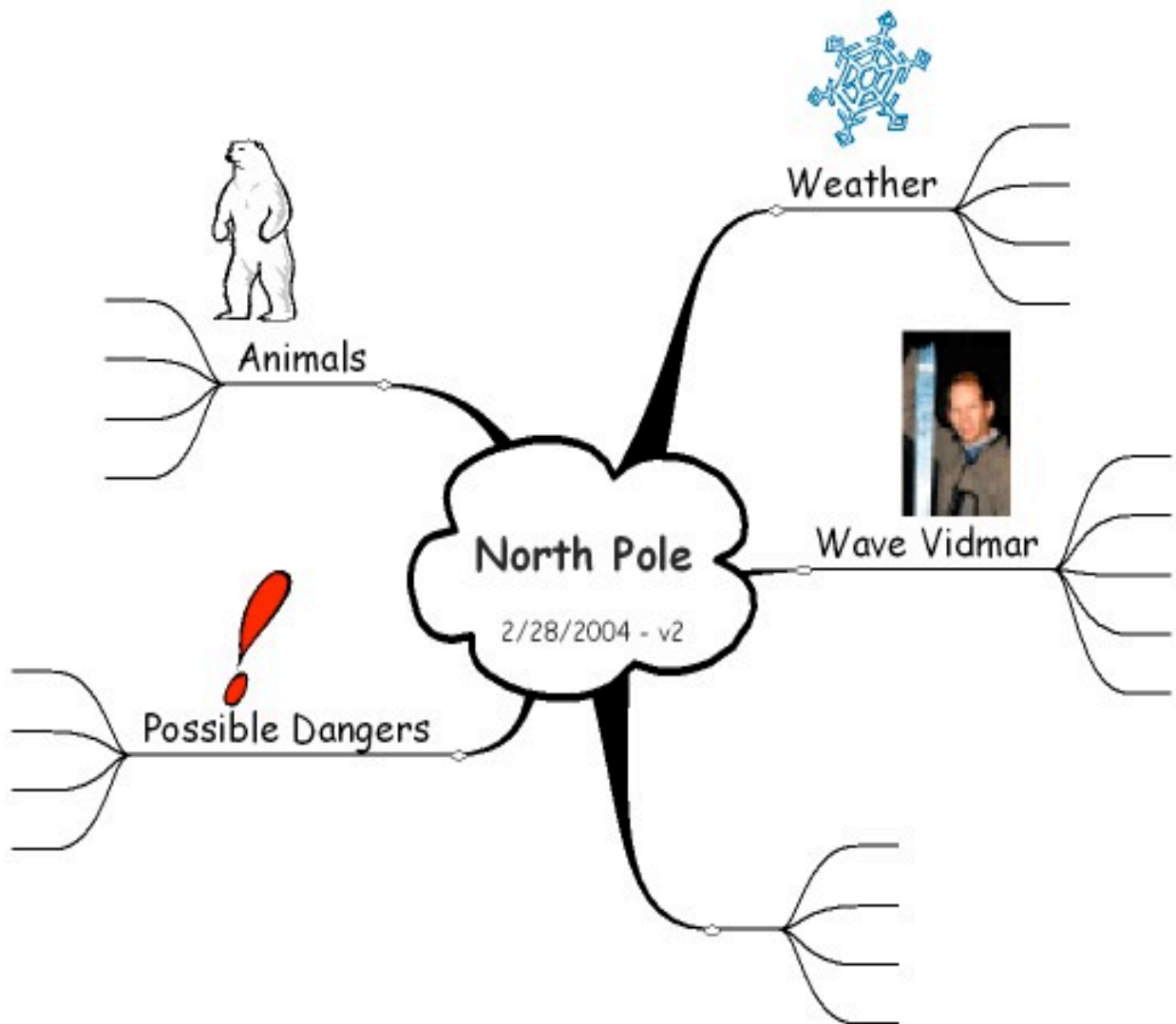
3) There is no land beneath the ice that covers the north pole. In fact, at times there is no ice and only water

4) Long periods of darkness (in the winter) and light (in the summer).

5) Special natural lightings of the northern hemisphere called Aurora

6) Animals Polar Bears (whales (Bowhead whale, Beluga whale, narwhal), Orcas (Killer Whales), Arctic Fox (they always follow polar bears and scavenge their leftovers) and Harp seals

Mind Map



Part 2 : Introduce the information about Wave Vidmar and his expedition to the North Pole. Have students read **part one** of the text. Explain that this is a true story and is very recent, February 2004.

Sample Vocabulary for reading texts

Expedition, Explorer , Exposure, Frozen frostbite, Geographic North Pole, Journey, Traveler sledge environment harsh gear inspire

North Pole Solo

Wave Vidmar is a modern day explorer and was born in San Diego, California in USA. Wave is 39 years old. He has a dream. He wants to be the first American to attempt a 660 mile (1061.94 km) solo journey to the Geographic North Pole . The expedition will take approximately 60 days across the frozen Arctic sea ice. Wave will leave his hometown of Oakland, California and fly to Russia. Then he will leave from the Artichevsky Peninsula, in upper Russia and he will walk ski and swim for over a thousand kilometers solo to the north pole! Wave will be dragging a sledge with his gear. It will weigh 325 lbs (147.73 kilos). It will have everything he needs to accomplish his goal in the harshest environment on earth! Wave hopes that he will inspire other people to achieve their goals.

Activity 1. Wave needs to carry identification with him at all times. Complete this ID card with information from the text.



First Name: _____

Family Name: _____

Place of Birth: _____

Year of Birth: _____

Destination: _____

Number of days expected to travel _____

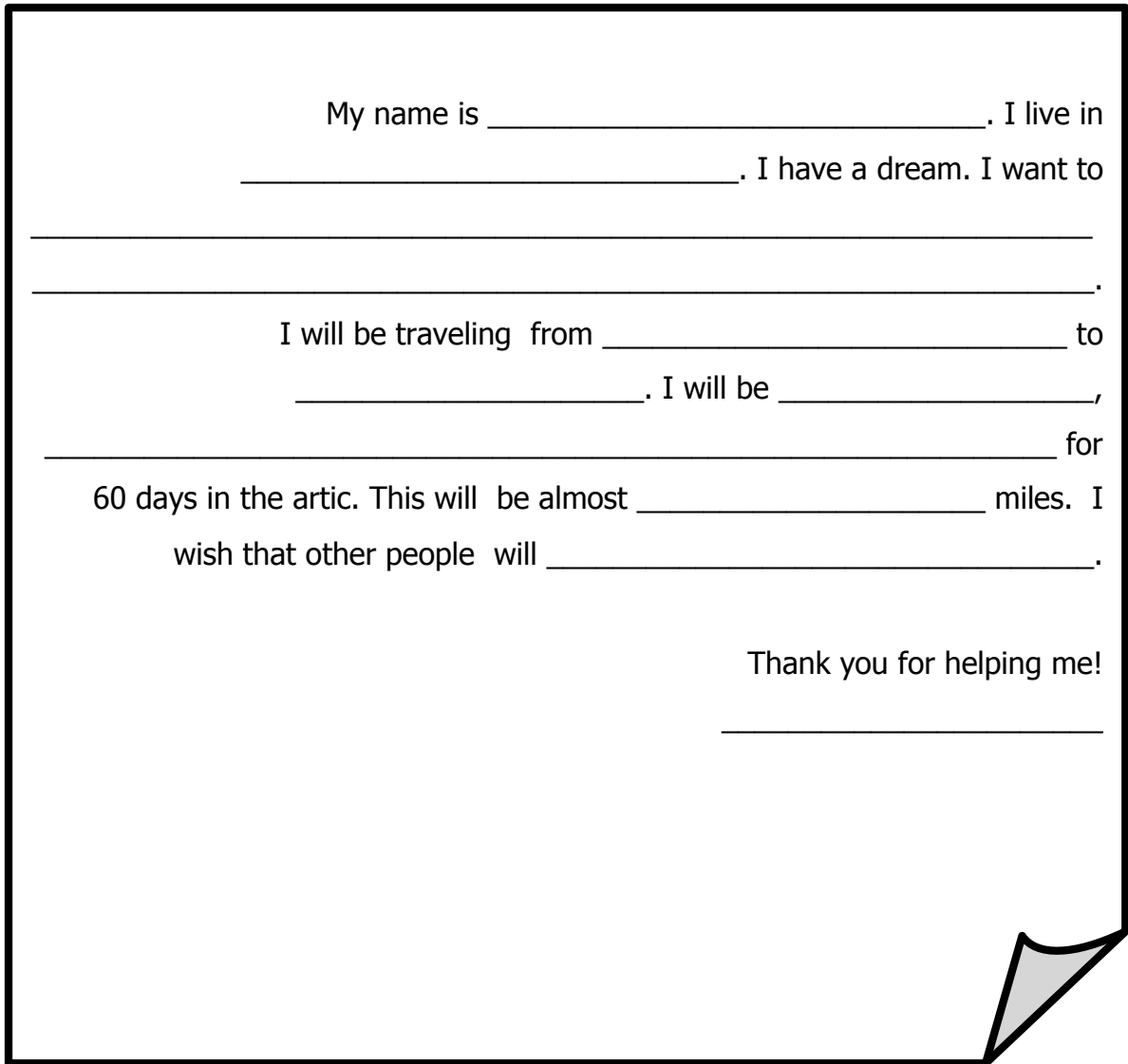
Activity 2. Wave needs a letter explaining what he is doing in the North Pole. This is very important because it is a dangerous trip and if something happens he needs for people to understand who he is and what he is doing. Help Wave prepare this note that will be in his backpack!

My name is _____ . I live in
_____. I have a dream. I want to

_____ .

I will be traveling from _____ to
_____. I will be _____ ,
_____ for
60 days in the artic. This will be almost _____ miles. I
wish that other people will _____ .

Thank you for helping me!



Activity 3 . Interview with Wave

You are going to read an interview with Wave.

If you could ask Wave questions what would you ask?
Write 5 questions here.

Read an original interview with Wave Vidmar.

Were any of the questions the same as yours?

Make a * next to the questions that you wrote and that are in the interview.

Answer the questions about the text.

Q & A: with Explorer Wave Vidmar

Q. How safe are you sleeping at night in your tent?

A. That's a relative question. More accurate to ask what dangers will I face while sleeping. Attacks from polar bears are still likely, though I'll have a special wire, called a perimeter wire attached to trip flares to alert me to their presence (and hopefully scare them away). Also, the ice could crack beneath my tent and the ocean could swallow me whole. Or the ice could be rammed under or over another piece of ice.

Q. How long can you expose your skin before you get frostbite?

A. At the 'average' temperature of -30F, it takes less than 10 seconds to get frostbite to exposed skin.

Q. What sort of food will you be eating?

A. I'll be using mostly freeze-dried backpacking foods and other foods high in calories. Reducing the weight I carry/drag is important, freeze-dried foods are the lightest with the most amount of calories.

Q. How many days of food will you take with you?

A. Approximately 70 days, with about 7,000 calories worth of food for each day.

Q. Can you listen to music while you are walking?

A. I could, but I won't. I need to listen carefully for polar bears, which actively hunt humans and have been known to follow explorers for several days.

Q. Will you take any books with you?

A. I won't take any 'traditional' printed books, but will bring several ebooks, stored on memory cards that I can read in my PDA. The kinds of things I'll bring are world history, and science references. I don't read fiction.

Q. Do you have any hobbies?

A. My lifestyle and interests are closely integrated so that most of my 'hobbies' are actually careers. Perhaps extreme snowboarding would be one of my hobbies, since I don't consider it a career. I do enjoy doing many different things in life, and often end up supporting myself from such interests as: art (glass, ceramics, pastels), music (creating, composing, recording, producing), science, exploration, writing, video, and product design.

Q. What's your greatest fear?

A. For this expedition : Not accomplishing my goal. Swimming in the inky black ocean will be disconcerting. Overall : not being able to explore and attempt to accomplish my dreams and goals would be my greatest fear. Dying before I had attempted what I truly wanted to attempt or accomplish in life would be tragic to me.

Q. What's your greatest hope?

A. That I inspire positive change in this world, both for the present and future. I think we've come a long way as humans, but we still have a long way to go.

Q. Do you have any personal heroes?

A. Yes, renaissance men such as Benjamin Franklin, Leonardo DaVinci, and others that forged their own paths in life, despite popular or public opinion. Regarding polar exploration, Borge Ousland is the man. I admire and find inspiration from many different people, many of which will never be famous; it's the desire, and drive to accomplish their own dreams and goals that makes me smile.

Q. How will you deal with the isolation?

A. Hahaha, I'm looking forward to it! 24 hours of daylight, and no one to bother or be bothered by, it's a dream come true! I like people, but will mostly miss warm cheeseburgers and hot showers. Daily I'll be able to talk and communicate with the outside world, and I know that my adventure will come to an end within roughly two months. I'll miss my loved ones and friends, but know that it won't last forever, so I embrace the opportunity for solitude, and the experiences to come

Reading Comprehension Questions

1. List the possible dangers that Wave may face during his expedition

2. What are Wave's hobbies? _____

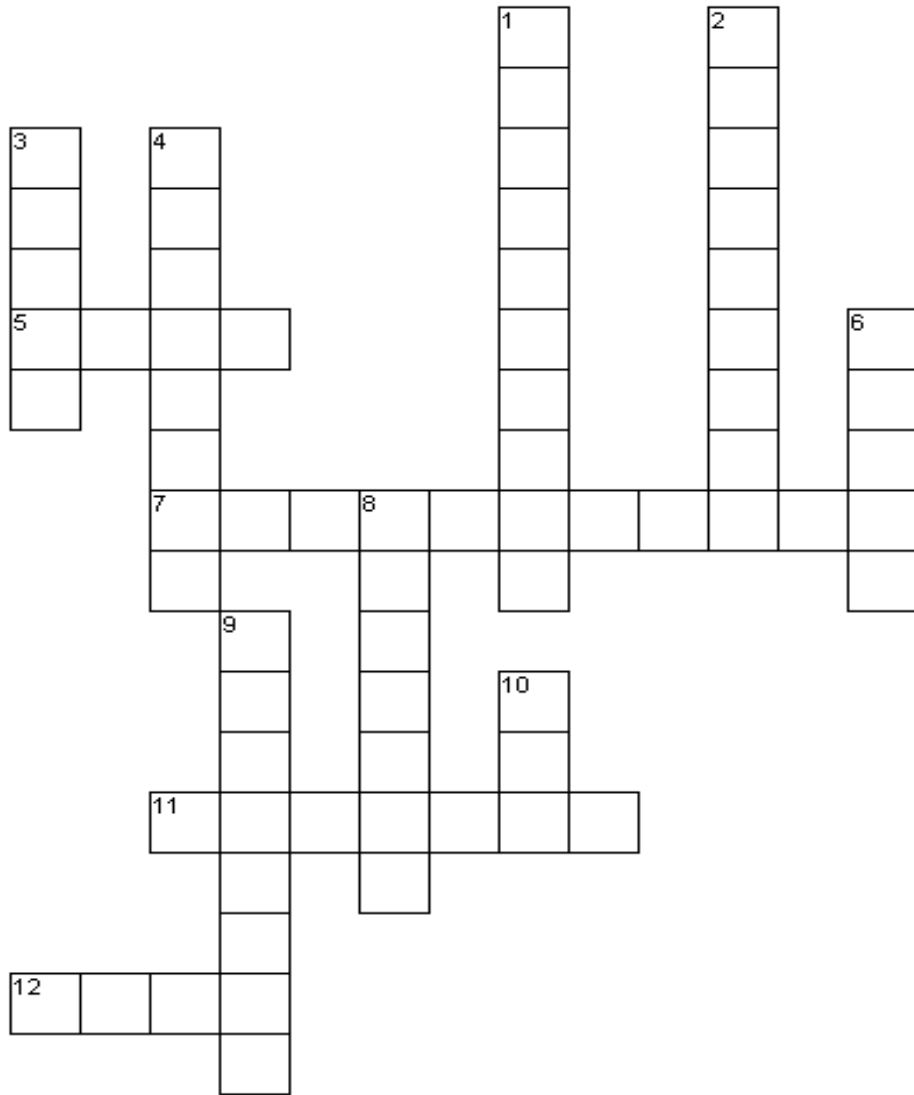
3. How do you know that Wave has a serious personality?

4. Why is Wave taking Freeze Dried Foods?

5. Think about Wave's heroes. Why does he admire people like Benjamin Franklin?

6. Imagine this was the year 1904. Which things would Wave NOT be taking with him if this Expedition was 100 years ago?

North Pole Solo Vocabulary



Across

- 5. all alone
- 7. surroundings
- 11. trip
- 12. equipment

Down

- 1. A journey
- 2. Injury from exposure to freezing
- 3. difficult
- 4. person who explores, adventurer
- 6. Polo northern most point on earth
- 8. motivate
- 9. when skin is exposed to sun, wind
- 10. frozen water

12 of 12 words were placed into the puzzle.

[Visit Puzzlemaker at DiscoverySchool.com](http://DiscoverySchool.com)

