

Dedicated to Bjørn, Bibi and Olivia – Sofie and Nan Na

For Carolyn, Clive, Tilly and Natalie – Angela



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Take a journey through the Wild World,

From mountain peak to forest floor,
Through swamp mud and starry pool,
Across golden sand and snow drift.
Discover why each place is like no other.

Gaze at amazing plants and trees,

The birds, insects,

Reptiles, mammals and fish

That share this one, beautiful Earth.

But look close, look quick,

For all is changing –

The Wild World is in danger,

Calling with many voices for your care.

What we see may soon be gone.

Learn how to protect it.

There is no time to lose. . .



Rainforest

Hot, wet rainforest

Spreads a green roof high above the earth,
Loud with the *swing, swoop* and *song* of life.

Bright birds flash,

Apes chatter,

Plump fruit ripens to slowly tempt the *sloth*.

But what is hidden below that canopy, where the sun cannot pass?

A shady world

Of strangle-vines scrambling for a shaft of light,
Lush leaves searching for a glimmer in the gloom.

Haunt of mighty *gorilla*, poisonous *frog*,

And slithering *python*.

A secret world

Where fungi glow upon tree roots,

Termites swarm among dead things on the dark forest floor,

Never knowing that their tiny work feeds giants.

An artistic illustration of an Arctic scene. In the foreground, two seals are hauled out on a large ice floe. In the middle ground, a polar bear stands on an ice floe with a cub on its back, and another cub is on a nearby floe. A walrus is partially visible on a small ice floe in the water. In the background, a large white bird with a black cap and red beak flies across the sky. The sun is a bright yellow circle in a hazy, blue and white sky. The water is a deep, textured blue.

Arctic

Cold rim of the northlands,

Frozen sea –

Where summer's sun never sets

And winter sleeps the longest night.

Here, at the top of the world, time has no zone,
But the white *bear* tramps to the rhythm of freeze and thaw.

Hers is a crystal kingdom of ice-fields and blue shadows.

A fractured world of drifting floes.

She knows the language of snow,

The teeth of the blizzard,

The mood of the *walrus*,

The scent of *seal*-breath at the melt-hole.

She knows vast distance, solitude and hunger,

Chilling Arctic beauty,

Where the only warmth lies beneath her own thick fur.



Prairie

Old prairie lands that once stretched far

Now lie, precious and few,
Protected from the plough.

Plains of tall bluestem brush the *bison's* shaggy hide.
Gopher and *prairie dog* tunnel beneath sweet buffalo grass

As pronghorn graze,

Under the eye of *box turtle*, resting at the creek.

Swelling seed heads sway in the ripening sun,
But, deep in the dark earth, tangled roots lock tight,
As anchor against wild weather.

For on this broad stage, nature plays the drama queen –

Swift in anger to curse with drought,
Blast a scouring wind,
Spin a fury of tornadoes.