



An Educator's Guide for

# THE BOY WHO COULDN'T FLY

written by Peter Friend  
illustrated by Soda Design



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## About the book:

With their beautiful, broad wings, the people of Quill are born to soar through the air. So what went wrong with Padrin - or "Padrin the penguin" as the kids at school taunt him? There seems to be no chance he'll ever fly and every chance that he'll continue to be the object of ridicule for his whole life. Sometimes, however, it needs someone who is different from everyone else to be a hero...

## About the author:

**Peter Friend** has sold fiction to numerous magazines and anthologies around the world. In real life, he's a computer analyst, but hopes to one day become a full-time living art treasure.

His latest publication is *Deadline Delivery*, an interactive adventure book set in a future flooded city, available in ebook or print format from Amazon.



## Pre-Reading Discussion Questions:

- Study the cover of the book. Explain what the cover art and title suggest what this story might be about.
- Respond to these questions based on the blurb on the back cover:
  - ~ Where will the story take place?
  - ~ Name the protagonist.
  - ~ Identify the protagonist's problem.
  - ~ Determine the solution to the protagonist's problem.
  - ~ Define the word 'hero'. Tell what the word means to you.
- Consider the title - THE BOY WHO COULDN'T FLY. Based on your impression of the cover art the title, and blurb make a prediction. What do you think this story is going to be about?

## Post-Reading Discussion Questions:

*“There’s more to life than flying, Padrin” (pg. 3).*

- *Foreshadowing* is a literary device used to suggest the action or events that will take place in a story. Discuss how the quote foreshadows the events that occur in *THE BOY WHO COULDN’T FLY*.
- Examine Padrin’s desire to fly. Explain why flying is so important to him.

*Quillians never went swimming – their wings weren’t waterproof like duck or seagull feathers, and wet wings were so heavy that they would soon drag a Quillian underwater and keep them there (pg. 15).*

- Consider the quote above. Identify how the statement reveals Kralico’s weakness.
- Discover how the statement reveals Padrin’s ultimate strength.
- Compare and contrast Padrin and Kralico. Identify shared traits. Tell ways that they differ.

*He ran into the waves after her. The rushing water tugged at his body and he lost his balance. He took a deep breath and dived, waving his arms and kicking his legs, and flapping his stubby wings ... (pg. 18).*

- In this scene, Padrin is spontaneously responding to a dangerous situation. He’s set his fears aside in efforts to save Kralico. Determine what this action reveals about his character.
- Examine how this action ultimately benefitted Padrin.

*“No thank you, ma’am. I can already fly – underwater” (pg. 22).*

- Explore how in the act of saving his nemesis, Kralico, Padrin came to discover how own inner strength.
- How about you? Are there times in your life when you feel different, as if you don’t fit in? Consider ways that your perceived differences, like Padrin’s, may become your strengths.

*Review the Pre-Reading Discussion questions. Discuss your story line predictions based on the cover art, title, and blurb. Were you correct?*

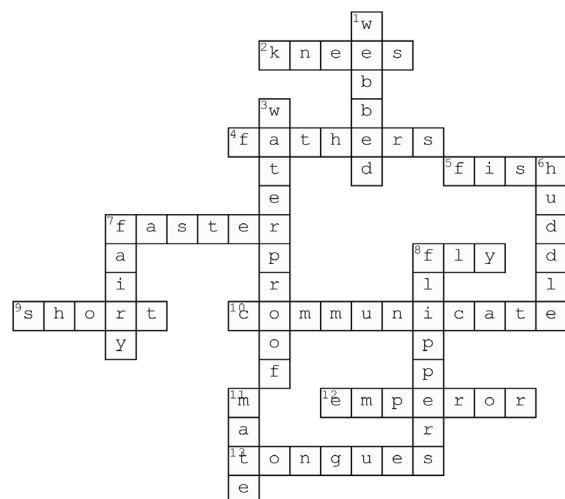
## Extension Activities:

~ *Anthropomorphism* is a literary tool in which an author gives an animal human traits. Identify ways that author Peter Friend used this anthropomorphism in the story. Examine Padrin’s character. Give examples of how the author used true facts about penguins to develop Padrin’s physical nature, natural limitations, and a logical and believable solution to the story.

~ Draw an illustration of your interpretation of what a Quillian might look like. Write a short informational essay listing and describing facts about the bird.

~ Consider Padrin’s emotional response as he studied the city of Quill’s skyline (pg. 2). Write a short essay explaining why he preferred the beach over the golden towers of Quill.

## Penguin Crossword Answers:



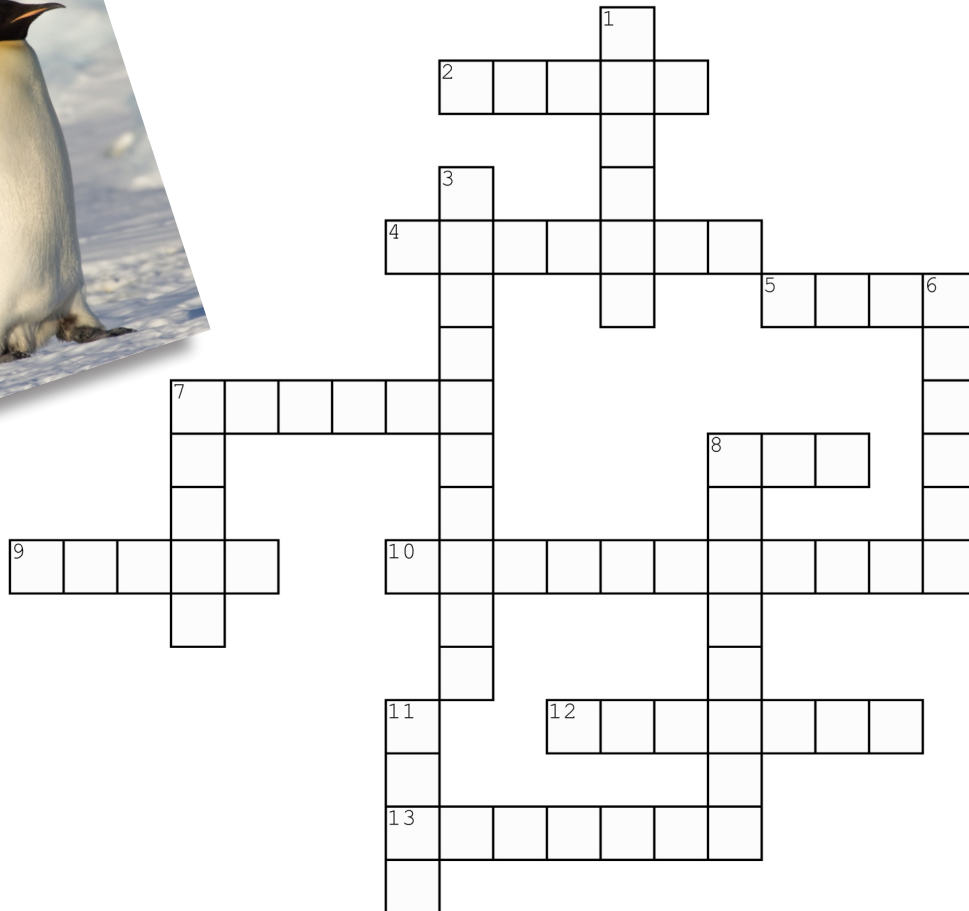
Guide created by Debbie Gonzales, MFA  
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## Penguin Crossword Puzzle

**Directions:** Research basic facts about penguins to solve this crossword puzzle.



**Down:**

- 1. Penguins have black \_\_\_\_\_ feet with claws
- 3. Penguins have \_\_\_\_\_ feathers to keep their skin dry
- 6. Penguins \_\_\_\_\_ together to keep warm
- 7. The smallest penguin species
- 8. Penguins have \_\_\_\_\_ instead of wings
- 11. Penguins \_\_\_\_\_ for life

**Across:**

- 2. Penguins have no \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Penguin mothers and \_\_\_\_\_ care for their young
- 5. Penguins eat \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. Penguins walk \_\_\_\_\_ than humans
- 8. Penguins cannot \_\_\_\_\_
- 9. Penguins have \_\_\_\_\_ legs
- 10. Penguins \_\_\_\_\_ by waving flippers & moving their heads
- 12. The \_\_\_\_\_ Penguin is the largest penguin species
- 13. Penguins have bristles on their \_\_\_\_\_ that help slippery seafood from getting away

