

Grade 3 Informational

Island Treasures

Every year, thousands of people visit the Galapagos (ga-LA-pa-gos) Islands in the Pacific Ocean. The islands are small, but they are very special.

The islands are found in a part of the world called the tropics. It is warm all year round in the tropics. Usually, there is a lot of rain. Tropical areas are often covered with green plants, flowers, and giant trees. But the Galapagos Islands are different. The weather is always warm, but it does not rain very much. The islands are brown and dry for many months of the year. The ground is covered with black and gray rocks. Only plants that do not need much water are able to grow there.

Not many animals are able to live in such a hard, dry land. But the ones that do are amazing. That is why people like to come to the islands. If you visit, you will see birds with red chests that puff up like balloons and other birds with wings so small that they cannot fly. You also will see penguins. Most penguins are found in cold, snowy places. The Galapagos penguins are the only ones that live in the warm tropics.

On the beaches, you will find sea lions, which look like seals. Sea lions live mostly in the water, but they like to wriggle out onto the sand to lie in the sun. Another animal you will see on the beach is the marine iguana. These lizards can grow to be four feet long. Lizards usually stay on land and eat land plants. Marine iguanas are different. They swim in the ocean and eat seaweed. They are found only on the Galapagos Islands.

The most interesting creature on the islands is the humpbacked tortoise. Tortoises look like turtles. Galapagos tortoises grow to weigh more than 500 pounds. They live for more than 125 years. They are the biggest and oldest tortoises on Earth.

The Galapagos Islands are full of surprises. The biggest surprise is that the animals there are not afraid of people. They do not run away when they see a person. Visitors can come up close to take pictures. Scientists are able to watch and study them easily.

The country that owns the islands has made laws to protect them. No one is allowed to take away any of the animals. No one can build houses or stores or roads on the land. The Galapagos Islands are treasured because there is no other place like them. It is important to keep the islands the way they are so that people can continue to visit this wonderful place.

Grade 3 Narrative

Snow Day

“Mom, it’s the end of March, and winter is over. We never had a snow day all winter,” sighed Carly. Living in a place with long winters, she had looked forward to those unexpected days when school was canceled.

“You are right, Carly, but aren’t you glad that spring is on the way?” asked Mom.

“I guess so,” said Carly. She sat glumly at the kitchen counter, eating a peanut butter sandwich and drinking a glass of milk.

“There will be a chance for a snow day next winter,” commented Mom.

“That is such a long time from now,” Carly said.

The next day Carly decided to embrace the coming of spring. She put her outdoor winter clothes in the back of her closet, and she packed her sweaters in boxes. She dusted off her flip-flops and tried on a pair of shorts and a T-shirt.

“It is still a little too cold for shorts and a T-shirt,” thought Carly to herself.

Mom decided to spend time preparing the enclosed front porch for spring. It was a sunny day, so she washed the windows, cleaned the covers of the porch furniture, and scrubbed the floor.

Carly entered the porch and said, “It feels like spring out here; it is so warm!”

Mom and Carly stretched out on the furniture and spent the rest of the afternoon reading. The sun shining through the windows made it feel tropical inside the porch.

With the arrival of spring, Carly began to notice the days were becoming longer. Mom and Carly started wearing lightweight clothes. Carly played outside every day. She enjoyed playing basketball and other games with her friends. Now that spring was here, Carly could hardly wait for summer.

One evening in April, Carly sat on her bed looking out the window. The sky looked gray. The wind was blowing fiercely.

“Mom, it looks like it is going to snow,” stated Carly.

“No, winter is over, Carly. Spring is here; it is not going to snow anymore,” confirmed Mom.

Carly awoke the next morning with bright sunlight coming through the window. She yawned and stretched. Then she looked and looked again out the window. She could not believe what she was seeing! She raced downstairs.

“Mom! There is snow on the ground!” shouted Carly.

Mom said, “You are right. It did snow last night—twelve inches! Guess what else? There is no school today!”

Carly danced around the room. She called Marcy and asked her to come over and play in the snow. The snow was perfect for building. Carly and Marcy built snow people. They placed a sign on the snow people that read “Surprise!”

“I finally had my snow day! It was so much fun,” said Carly with a smile.

The consequence of a spring snowstorm was clear. The snow melted quickly. School was back in session the next day. Carly put on her shorts and played outside. Now she could put winter to rest—spring was truly here.