Deep Sleep

Making it through the winter is hard for many animals. Some animals and insects, like birds and butterflies, are able to migrate to warmer places. Other animals, such as bears, cannot make such a far move. To survive the icy weather, many bears go to sleep. This sleep is called hibernation. Preparing for this deep sleep keeps bears busy throughout late summer and fall. During this time, they must eat a lot of berries and fish. The food helps them gain at least 40 pounds a week. They must store enough body fat because they have to live off this fat while asleep. For its long sleep, a bear finds a cave or hollow log. Its heart rate may drop from 40 to 10 beats a minute. Most bears start hibernating in early October. When they wake up around April or May, they are very hungry. Be very careful if you know there are bears near where you are living. You would not want to be in the path of a hungry bear.
Climbing the Walls

Jill’s dad loved rock climbing. He took many trips to the mountains. He wanted Jill to come with him. But first Jill had to learn about climbing.

Jill was excited. She and her dad found a climbing wall in town. Jill put on a helmet and climbing shoes. Then she put on ropes and other gear. Jill’s ropes were fastened to the floor. From there, they went around her dad’s waist. Then, they went up to the top of the wall.

“I will hold the rope tight,” her dad said. “You will be safe. Just go slowly.”

Jill looked up at the wall. She saw places for her hands and feet. The top looked far away.

Jill started up. She went from spot to spot. She reached out with her hands. She pushed hard with her feet. At last, she was near the top.

“I can’t climb this last bit,” she called down.

“Just try,” her dad called back. “I’m holding you.”

Jill took hold of something small with her hand. She bent down. Then she jumped. Her hand felt the top of the wall. She pulled herself up. She had made it.

“Will you ever do that again?” asked her dad after Jill got back down.

“Oh, yes!” said Jill. “That was great!”
Up, Up, and Away

For thousands of years, people dreamed of flying. They tried many things. Nothing seemed to work. Then in 1783, two brothers in France got a new idea. They were watching smoke. They noticed the way smoke moves up from a fire. It does not seem to come back down. The brothers filled paper bags with smoke. They watched as the smoke moved the bags into the air. The brothers decided to make a big balloon. They filled it with smoke. When it was full, they let it go. Up, up it went. Next, the brothers built another balloon. This time they attached a basket to the balloon. In September 1783, they were ready. They put a rooster, a duck, and a sheep in the basket. They filled the balloon with hot air and let it go. Up it went, this time with passengers. Then, high above the Earth, the warm air cooled. The balloon floated back to the ground. The three animals had taken a round-trip air flight. Two other Frenchmen watched these events. They decided to become the first people to fly. They built a big blue and gold balloon. In November 1783, the balloon carried them over the city of Paris. Today we take air travel for granted. But not too long ago, flight was still a mystery and a challenge. 224