

Once there was a penguin called Forster who liked asking questions. He asked questions about numbers and stars and ice and snow, and lots of questions about fish.

As he got older, he noticed that his friends were changing from fluffy grey to a sleek black and white. They were looking more and more like the grown-up penguins. Forster noticed that his flippers were a sleek black as well, and that his tummy was not grey anymore but a bright white.

But there was one part of himself he could not see. He asked himself, "What colour are the feathers on the top of my head?"

He tried to pull the feathers on the top of his head down in front of his eyes so that he could see for himself, but they were too short.

He looked around at all the other young penguins. He said to himself, "All the feathers on the tops of their heads are black, so mine must be black as well."

But Forster thought, "What if my feathers are different? How can I know for sure?"

So, he asked his mum what colour the feathers were on the top of his head. "Why, black of course, like everyone else's," she said.

But Forster thought, "What if my feathers were bright green? If they were bright green, my mum wouldn't want me to be embarrassed. So, she'd still say they were black. How can I know for sure?"

So, he asked a friend, and more friends. "What colour are the feathers on the top of my head?"

"Why, black, of course. The same as ours," they all said, and laughed.

But Forster thought, "What if they're all playing a joke on me, and saying the feathers on my head are black when they're really bright green? How can I know for sure?"

Then Forster had an idea. He could look in a mirror! But the only mirror was on the post at the South Pole. There were people there, and he didn't think he liked people. So, Forster tried to stop thinking about the feathers on the top of his head, and joined the other young penguins who were going to the sea to go fishing for the first time.

It was a very calm day. When he got to the edge of the sea, he looked down. There, looking up at him, was him! He moved left, and his reflection moved right. He moved right, and his reflection moved left. And then he looked down and up at the same time, and could see that the feathers on the top of his head really were black!

But then Forster thought, "What if that isn't my reflection? What if it's another penguin just like me, under the water, moving when I move?"

So, he dived into the water to see. All there was to see was himself. So, finally, he was sure that the feathers on the top of his head were black.

But then Forster thought, "What about the feathers on the back of my head? How can I know what colour they are?"

Just then, a tasty looking fish swam by, and Forster chased after it.