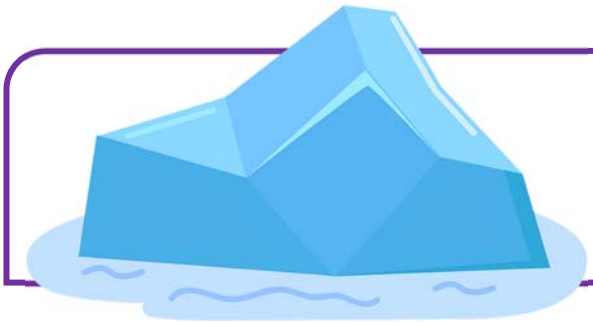
Name _____



Ice Chain

Directions: Read the passage, then answer the cause and effect questions in complete sentences.

Antarctica's Changing Ice

Antarctica holds most of the world's fresh water, locked inside its massive ice sheets. These ice sheets have remained frozen for thousands of years, but rising global temperatures are causing some areas to melt more quickly than ever before. When large sections of ice weaken or break apart, the lost ice adds more water to the oceans. This rising sea level does not stay near Antarctica. Instead, it spreads across the planet, raising coastlines around the world.

Melting ice also affects Antarctica itself. Animals that depend on thick, stable sea ice, such as penguins and seals, may lose important breeding or resting areas. Changes in ocean temperature and salinity can affect where fish and krill live, shifting entire food webs. Scientists monitor these changes closely because Antarctica plays a major role in shaping global climate, ocean circulation, and weather patterns.

1. What is the main cause of increased melting in Antarctica's ice sheets?

2. How does melting Antarctic ice affect sea levels around the world?

3. What effect can melting ice have on animals that depend on sea ice?

4. How might changes in ocean temperature influence fish and krill populations?

5. Why do scientists study the melting of Antarctic ice so carefully?