

This book is part of the Inuutsiarniq Reading Series, developed by the Department of Health in Nunavut. The Inuutsiarniq Reading Series is a unique, Nunavut-developed literacy initiative that infuses Northern values of healthy living and self-care into a culturally appropriate reading program.

The Inuutsiarniq Reading Series was developed to support the reading level guidelines outlined in the Department of Education's Inuktut reading program, Uqalimaariuqsaniq. Uqalimaariuqsaniq is a sequential and progressive Inuktut reading program that supports students in their development as readers.

Healthy students are better learners and become healthy adults. For more information, visit www.gov.nu.ca/health and your local Health Centre.

Book details

Level: 10

Text type: Non-fiction, information book

Subjects/themes: How to test ice conditions, how to identify safe and unsafe ice, how to respond in an emergency if someone falls through the ice

Key features: 32 pages, supportive illustrations

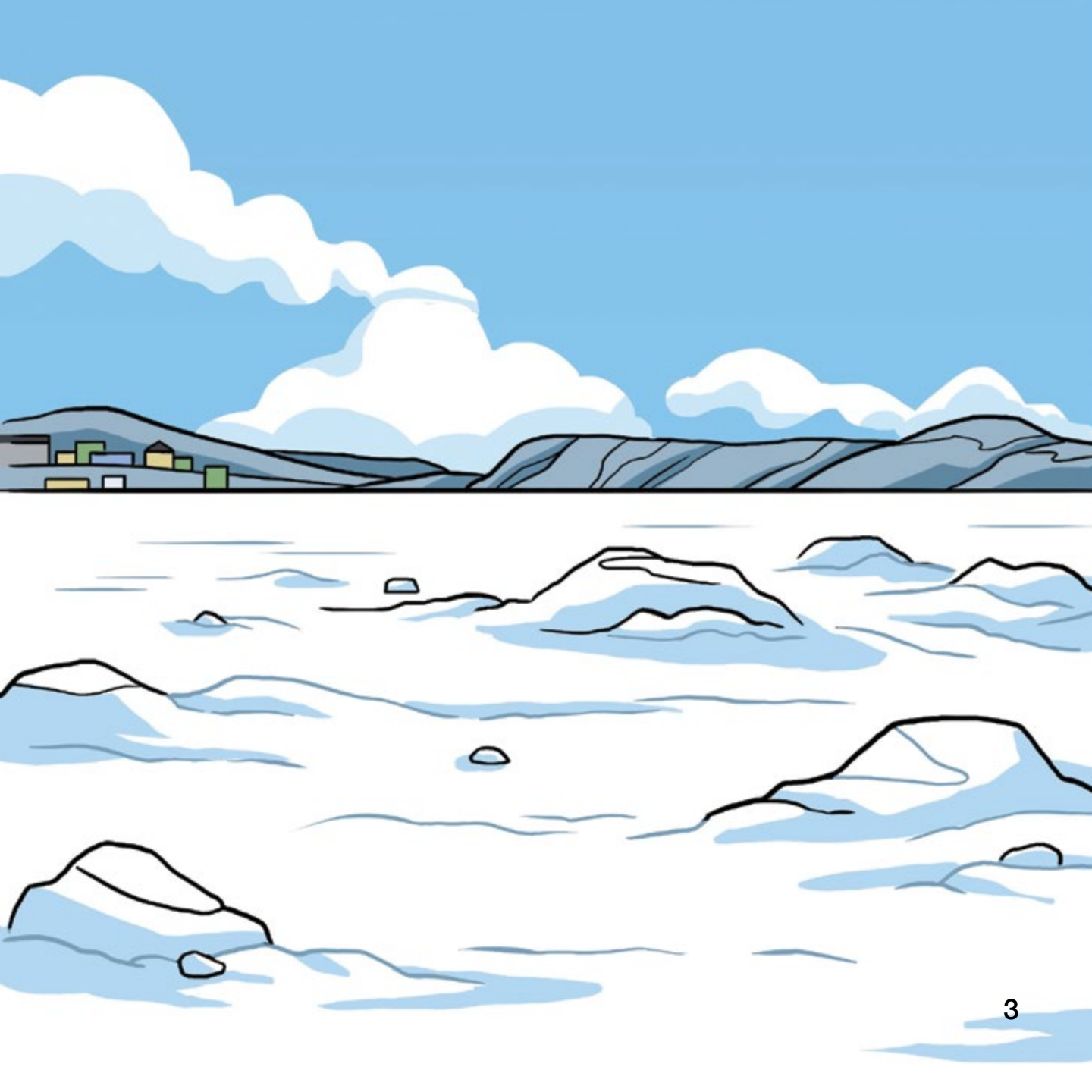
How to Be Safe on the Ice

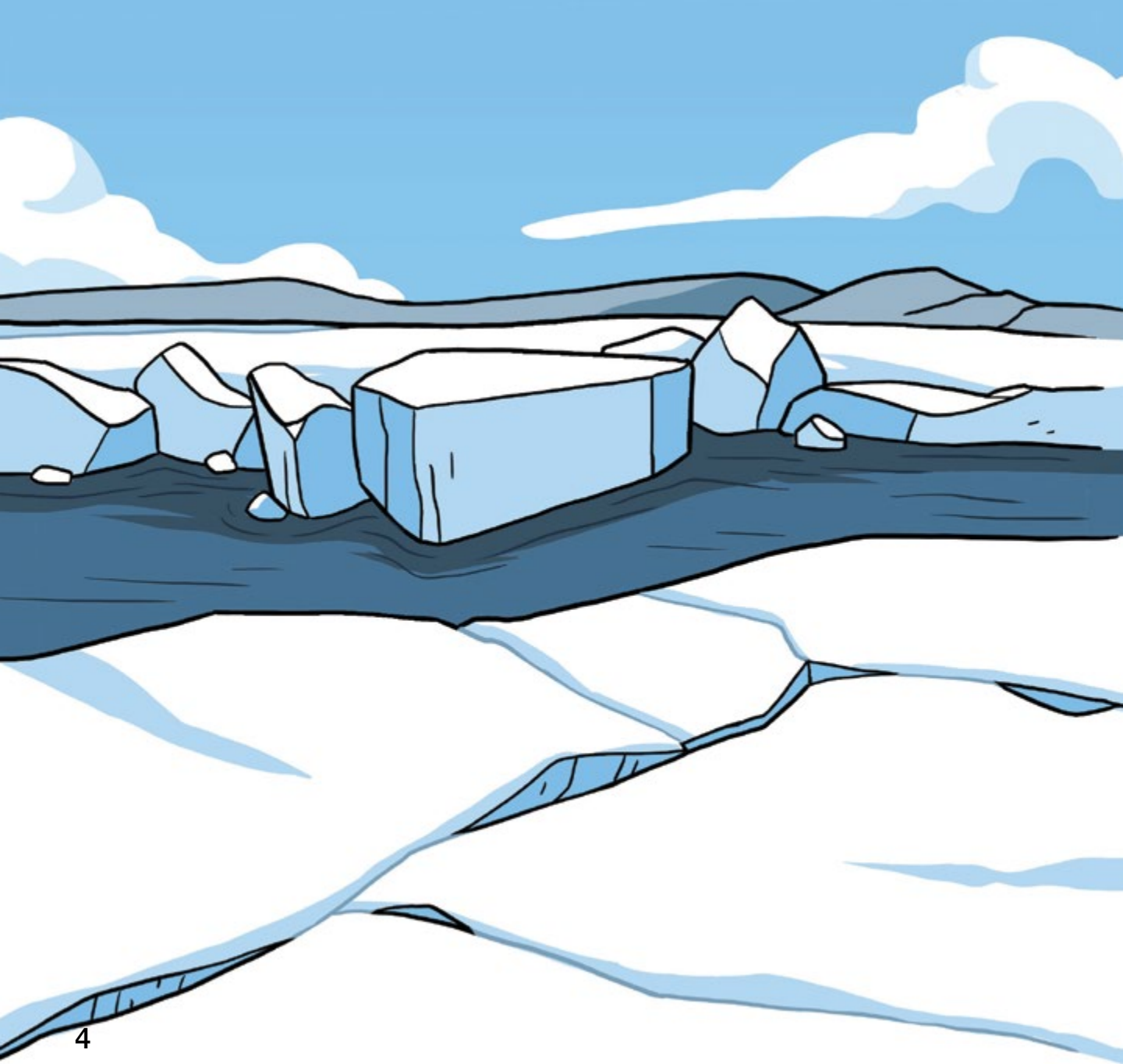


Illustrated by
Amanda Sandland

Nunavut is surrounded by ice for most of the year. Nunavummiut travel on the ice to hunt and move between communities.

It is important to know how to be safe on the ice.

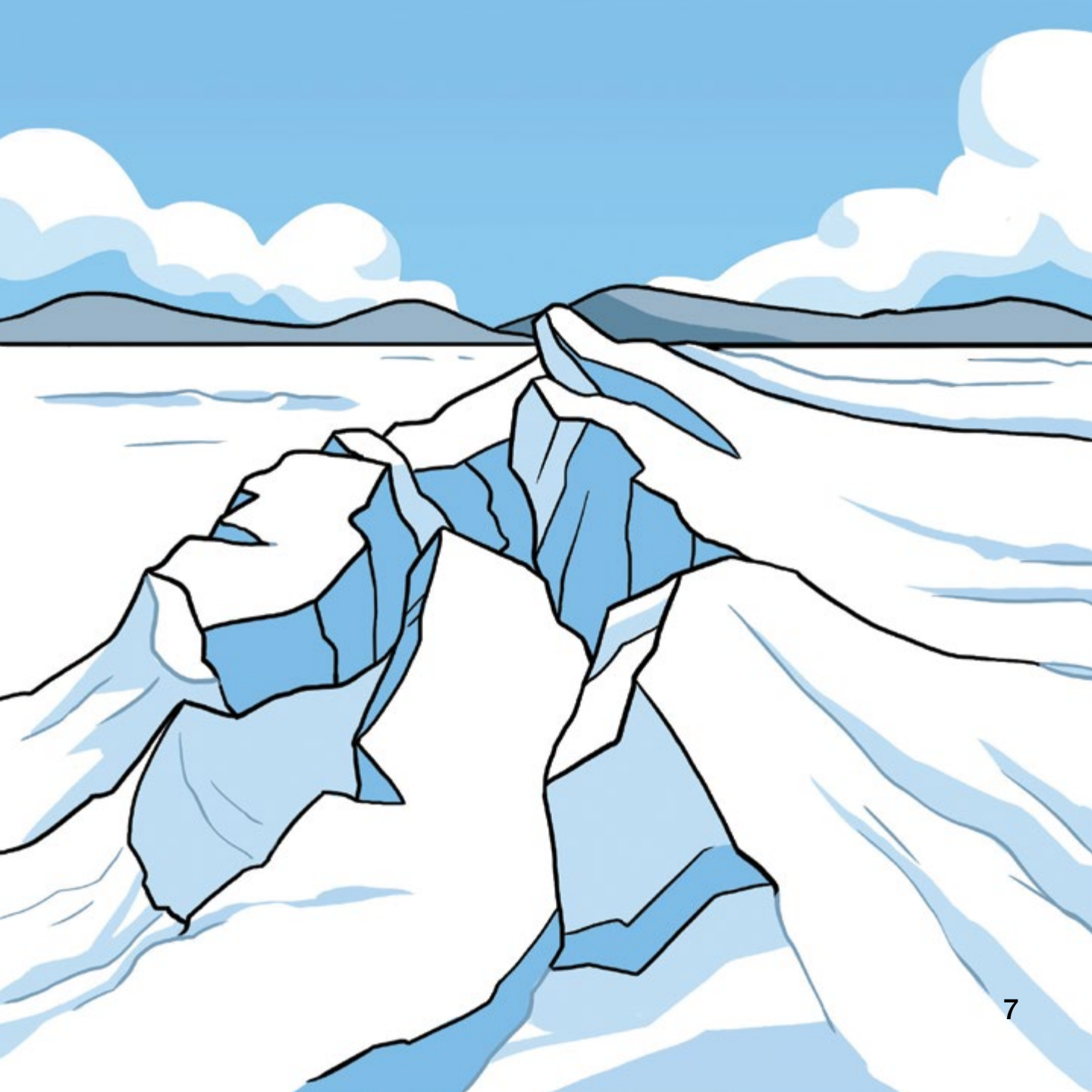




Ice is always changing. It freezes and thaws. Even in winter when the surface of the ocean is frozen solid, this ice still moves with the tides.

When the ice rises and falls with the tide, ridges and cracks are created. Below these ridges there can be large caverns.

It is very dangerous to go into ice caverns. The ice above you could fall on you. If the tide comes in when you are under the ice, you could drown.



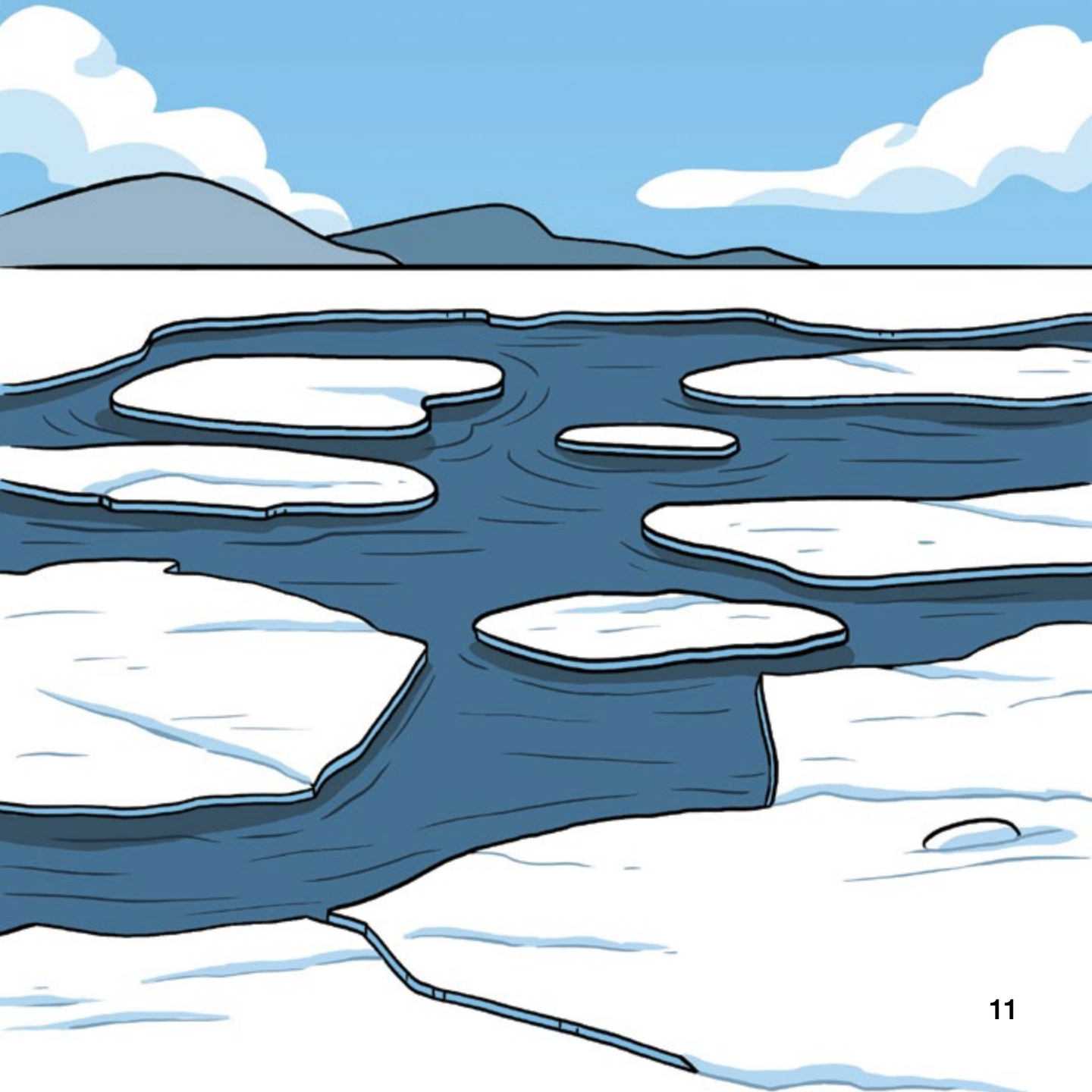


When the tide is high, it can overflow onto the ice. This can make the ice slushy. Skidoos can get stuck in the slush, so you could get stranded far out of town.

If you are walking in the slush and are not wearing high rubber boots, your feet can become very wet and could freeze.

When ice thaws and breaks up in spring, you will see ice pans in the water. These are flat chunks of ice near shore.

You should never walk or play on ice pans. They could float far out to sea while you are standing on them.

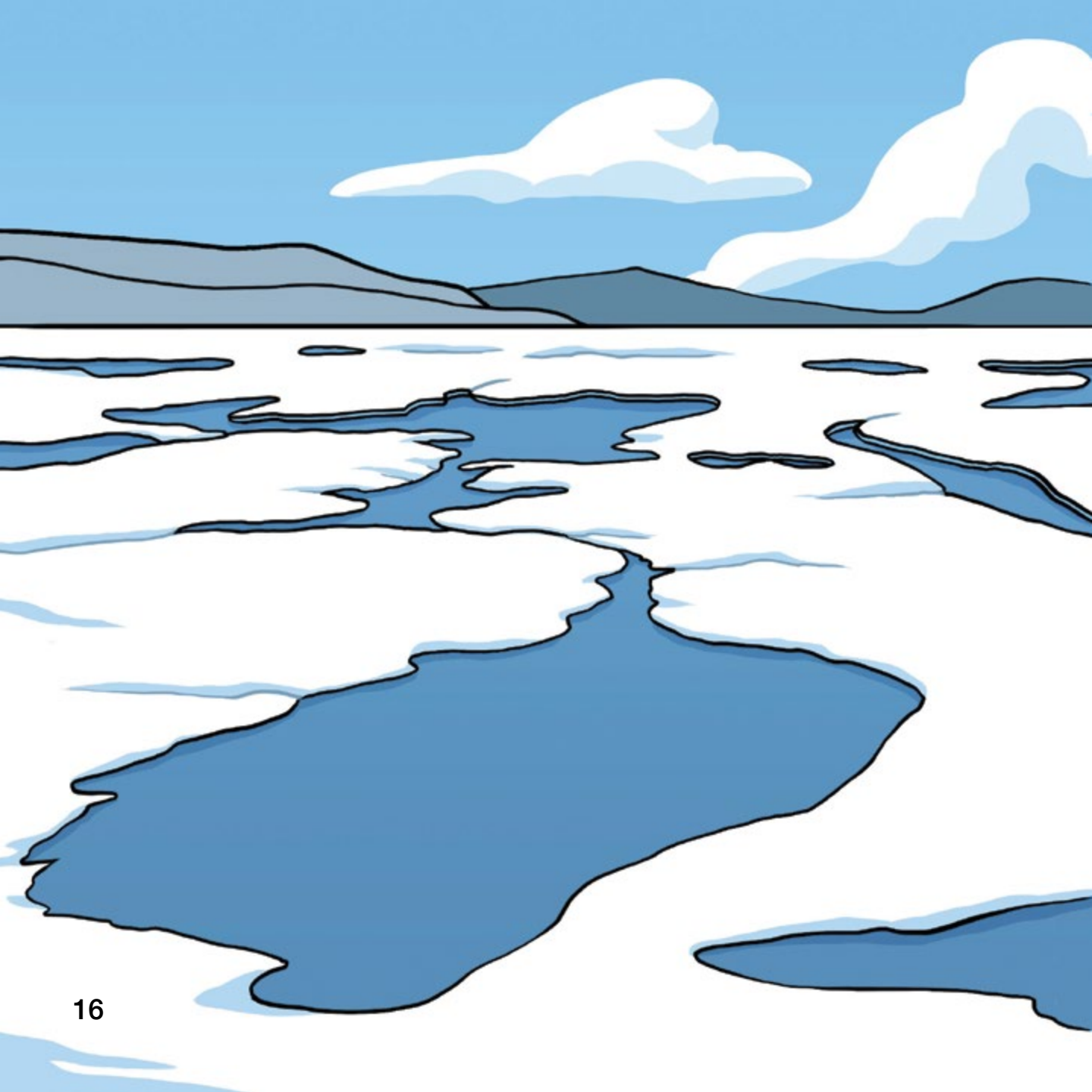




Some ice looks flat and solid, which might make you think it's safe to walk on. But it is important to always test the ice before you walk on it. You should always test ice conditions with an Elder or adult who knows how to test ice properly.

An adult can test the ice by hitting it hard with a harpoon, as though they are trying to poke a hole in it. If the ice cracks on the first hit, it is not safe to walk on. If they hit the ice three times and it does not crack, it is usually safe to walk or drive a skidoo on.

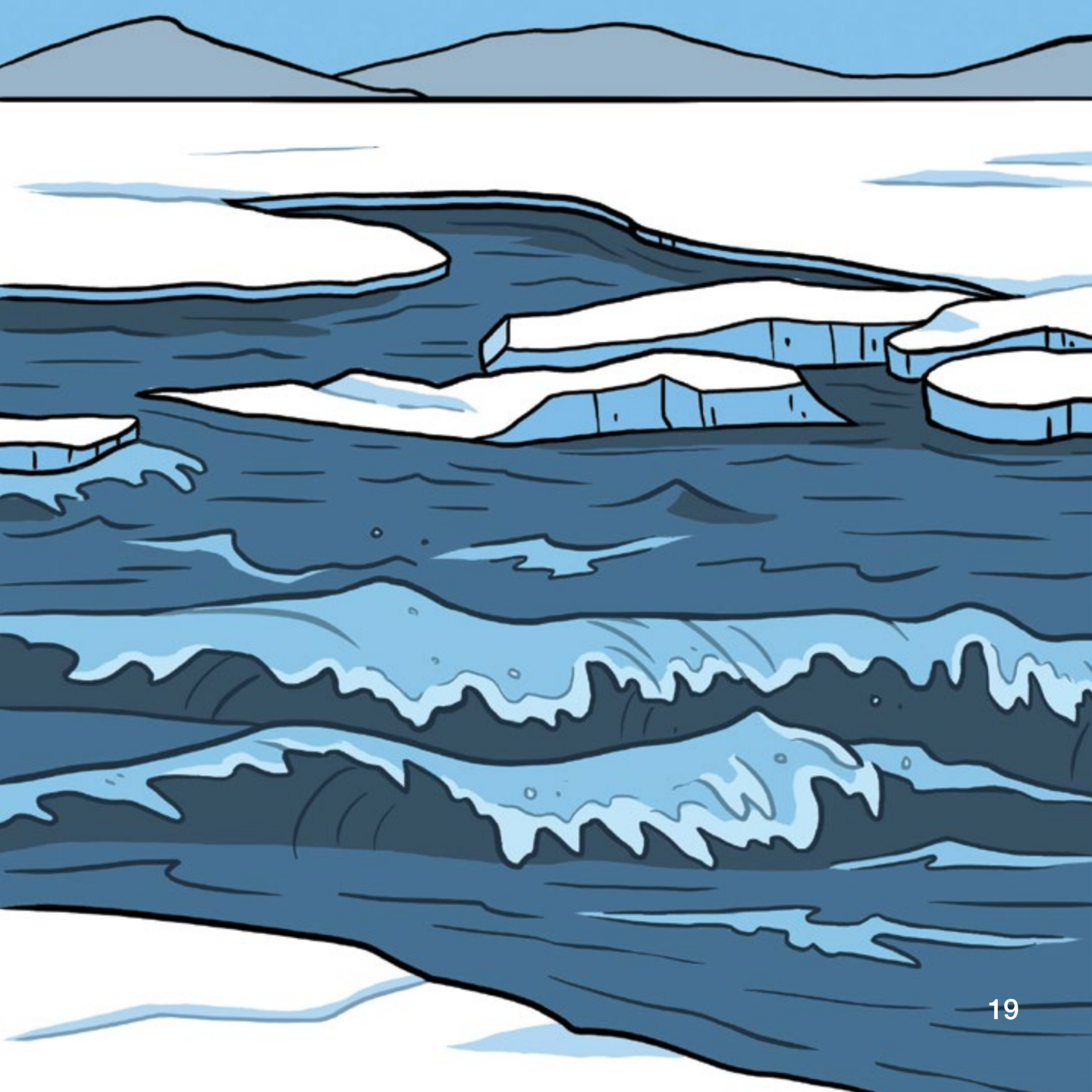




Ice that is frozen solid is usually clear blue. This means the ice is strong enough to walk or drive on. Ice that is grey or black could be unsafe because the water below it is still flowing.

If you don't know if ice is safe to walk on, don't walk on it. If the ice breaks, you could fall into ice-cold water. The water could be flowing, and you might get trapped under the ice.

The water below the ice could be deeper than you think.





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If you find yourself walking on ice that might be unsafe, turn around. Stay calm. Lie down on your stomach and crawl or slide back in the direction you came from until you get to solid land.

If you fall through the ice, stay calm and breathe normally. Try to slide onto the unbroken ice on your stomach and kick your feet up so you are parallel with the ice, the way a seal would. Do not stand up again on the ice. Crawl until you are on solid ice or land.





If you see someone fall through the ice, call for help. Do not go near the hole. The ice around the hole could be weak, and you could fall through too.

Tell the person who fell through the ice to stay calm. Pass them a rope or long pole, like a harpoon, to grab onto. You can pull from the other end. Ask the person to crawl along the ice on their stomach.





A person who has been rescued from the water should be taken to the closest warm place right away. Wet clothing should be removed, if possible. If you don't have extra clothes for them to change into, wring out as much water from their clothes as you can.

This person might need to go to the health centre to be treated for hypothermia.

Hypothermia is when the body gets so cold that it can't warm itself back up.

Hypothermia can make someone very sick or even die.



There are many other types of ice that we should remember to be safe on. Rivers, ponds, creeks, and ditches all freeze in winter. They can thaw quicker than the ocean because they are smaller bodies of water.

Next time you are playing outside on the ice, remember all these ways to stay safe!



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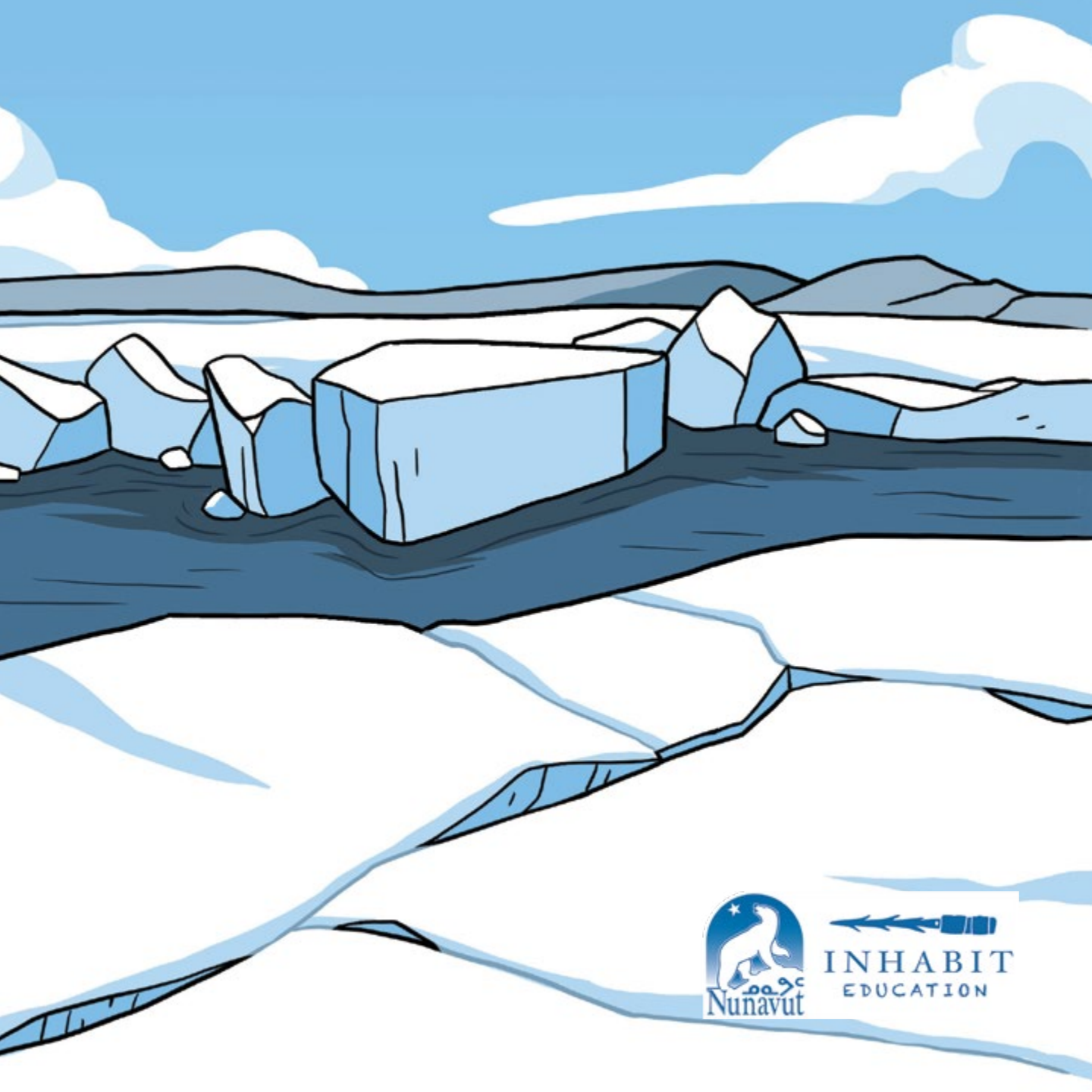
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Printed and bound in Canada

ISBN 978-0-2287-0397-6



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