

Life in the Ocean

The ocean is filled with many different kinds of animals.

In the Zone



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Killer whales breach, or jump out of the water.

An **ocean** is a large body of salt water. It can be divided into three **zones**, or layers. The deeper the water, the colder it gets. Why? Sunlight reaches only the water near the ocean's surface. Take a look in each zone to see some of the animals that live there.

Sunlit Zone (surface to 650 feet)

The top layer of the ocean is called the sunlit zone. It is lit by enough sunlight for plants to grow. All plants and most marine animals live in this zone. Whales live here because they need to swim to the surface to breathe air.

Some fish here have special shapes to protect them from **predators**. A predator is an animal that eats another animal for food. The porcupine fish puffs up and raises its spines when danger is near.

Twilight Zone (650 feet to 3,300 feet)

The ocean is colder in the twilight zone. Only dim light reaches this area. There is not enough light for plants to grow. Fewer sea creatures are found here than in the sunlit zone. Jellyfish and octopuses are often found here.



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Jellyfish

Many jellyfish have stinging tentacles that they use to defend themselves and to capture **prey**. Prey is an animal that is caught and eaten by a predator. Octopuses use the suction cups on their tentacles to hold on to prey.

Midnight Zone (3,300 feet to 19,800 feet)

It is pitch-dark and very cold in the midnight zone. No plants grow here. Many of the animals have sharp teeth and big jaws. Other creatures, such as the ratfish, have large eyes to see in the dark. Ratfish swim along the bottom of the ocean and eat smaller sea animals, such as shrimp and sea stars.

Some animals, like the hatchetfish, have body parts that glow in the dark. That helps them to attract prey.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Answer the following four questions based on the information in the passage.

1. Why is it colder in deeper water?

2. Why do whales live in the sunlit zone?

3. Some animals in the midnight zone, such as the hatchetfish, have body parts that glow in the dark. Based on the passage, why is glowing an important characteristic to have for living in this zone?

4. What is this passage mostly about?

Directions: Please read the sentence below and then write the word or phrase that best answers the questions. The first answer has been provided for you.

The porcupine fish puffs up and raises its spines to protect itself when danger is near.

What? the porcupine fish

5. (does) What?

6. When?

7. Why?

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

Whales live in the sunlit zone of the ocean, _____ ratfish live in the midnight zone.

- A but
- B because
- C so

Directions: Read the vocabulary word and definition below. Then answer questions 9 and 10.

Vocabulary Word: **prey** (prey): an animal that is caught and eaten by another animal.

9. Read the sentences below and underline all forms of the word **prey**.
- a. Rabbits are a favorite prey of coyotes.
 - b. Eagles, which often look for other animals to eat, are called "birds of prey."
 - c. The little mouse had no idea that he was prey for the big, long snake.
 - d. Foxes look for small animals like rabbits to be their prey.
 - e. The lion caught sight of his prey running from him.

10. Which picture shows an animal that has just caught its prey?



Teacher Guide and Answer Key

Passage Reading Level: Lexile 700

Featured Text Structure: Descriptive – the writer explains, defines, or illustrates a concept or topic

Passage Summary: The passage describes what life is like in the ocean. The article discusses the three different zones (layers) of water in the ocean and some of the animals that live in each.

To the Teacher: Read the passage aloud to the class [TIP: while reading aloud, show the passage on a whiteboard or give students a copy of the passage so that they can follow along].

Then, use the text-dependent questions 1-8 to facilitate a whole class discussion to ensure students comprehend the key details from the passage.

Finally, use questions 9-10 to deep teach one important vocabulary word [TIP: you can use the model provided for teaching additional vocabulary].

1. Why is it colder in deeper water? [Important Detail]

Suggested answer: Sunlight reaches only the water near the ocean's surface. [paragraph 1]

2. Why do whales live in the sunlit zone? [Important Detail]

Suggested answer: Whales live in the sunlit zone because they need to swim to the surface to breathe air. [paragraph 2]

3. Some animals in the midnight zone, such as the hatchetfish, have body parts that glow in the dark. Based on the passage, why is glowing an important characteristic to have for living in this zone? [Important Detail]

Suggested answer: It is pitch-dark and very cold in the midnight zone. Glowing helps animals like the hatchetfish attract prey. [paragraphs 6, 7]

4. What is this passage mostly about? [Main Idea]

Suggested answer: The article is mainly about how the ocean is made up of

three different zones: the sunlit, twilight, and midnight zones. It also discusses some of the animals that live in each zone.

Directions: Please read the sentence below and then write the word or phrase that best answers the questions. The first answer has been provided for you.

The porcupine fish puffs up and raises its spines to protect itself when danger is near.

What? the porcupine fish

5. (does) What? **puffs up and raises its spines**

6. When? **when danger is near**

7. Why? **to protect itself**

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

Whales live in the sunlit zone of the ocean, _____ ratfish live in the midnight zone.

A but

B because

C so

To the Teacher: ReadWorks recommends that you teach this vocabulary word to the whole class out loud using the four steps listed below.

Vocabulary Word: **prey** (prey): an animal that is caught and eaten by another animal.

Step 1: Introduce the word

- a. Teacher writes the word on the board and divides it into syllables: (prey)
- b. Teacher says: "This word is prey. What is the word?" [All students reply together out loud: "prey."]

Step 2: Provide a child-friendly definition

- a. Teacher says: "Prey is an animal that is caught and eaten by another animal. You can also say that a big animal is preying on a smaller animal."

- b. Teacher says: "The word prey is used when talking about one animal chasing another animal with the goal of eating it. In this passage, the author discusses how jellyfish and octopuses use their tentacles to capture prey."
- c. Teacher says: "What is the word?" [All students reply together out loud: "prey."]

Step 3: Practice the word

Teacher provides examples and additional opportunities to repeat the word. Read the first sentence out loud to your students. Begin reading it again and when you come to the vocabulary word prompt students to say the vocabulary word out loud. Then, finish reading the sentence out loud to your students.

Directions: Read the vocabulary word and definition below. Then answer questions 9 and 10.

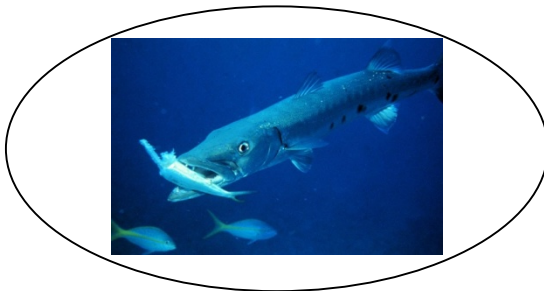
Vocabulary Word: **prey** (prey): an animal that is caught and eaten by another animal.

9. Read the sentences below and underline all forms of the word **prey**.
- a. Rabbits are a favorite prey of coyotes.
- b. Eagles, which often look for other animals to eat, are called "birds of prey."
- c. The little mouse had no idea that he was prey for the big, long snake.
- d. Foxes look for small animals like rabbits to be their prey.
- e. The lion caught sight of his prey running from him.

Step 4: Check for student understanding

To the Teacher: This step can be completed as a whole class activity or as an independent practice.

10. Which picture shows an animal that has just caught its prey?



Suggested Additional Vocabulary: ocean, zones, predator