Deep in the Ocean

A Reading A–Z Level L Leveled Book
Word Count: 367

Connections

Writing
Would you want to be an oceanographer when you grow up? Why or why not? Write a paragraph using details from the text to support your answer.

Science
Choose and research an animal that lives in the deep ocean. Create a poster. Include a picture and at least five interesting facts about the animal and its habitat.

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Deep in the Ocean

Focus Question
How would you describe the deep ocean and what lives there?

Written by Natalie Rompella

www.readinga-z.com

Words to Know
marine submersible
oceanographers tag
species water pressure

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Level L Leveled Book
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Deep Underwater

Imagine a trip to the deepest part of the ocean. What would you expect to see? Would it be dark or light? Would it be warm or cold? Would you find strange new animals and plants?
Sunlight warms the surface, or shallow parts, of the ocean. Plants and animals that need sunlight and warm water live there. Deep in the ocean, other animals live in water that is cold and dark.

The warm, shallow waters of tide pools are home to species of starfish, anemones, mussels, and tiny crabs.
Diving Deep in the Ocean

The deep ocean is freezing cold. The weight, or water pressure, of very deep water can harm you.

Sport divers wear air tanks for safety. Deep divers wear a special diving suit. Scientists ride in a small submarine called a submersible.

Oceanographers

Scientists who study the ocean are called oceanographers (oh-shuh-NOG-ruh-furs). They often live for months on a ship. Some study what a sea animal eats and where it lives.
Using Satellites for Tracking

Satellites can help to track sea animals’ travels. Scientists tag some animals. A satellite can track the signal from the tag. The signal shows where the animal goes.

Counting the Sea Animals

What animals live in the ocean? Where do they live? How many are there? Oceanographers studied and counted animals for ten years to find out.

The surprising report is called the Census of Marine Life.

Lionfish, or turkeyfish, swim among coral sea fans off the Solomon Islands. Their long, feathery spines can sting any predator that comes too close. Native to the South Pacific, lionfish were first spotted in United States’ waters in 2000.
The Census of Marine Life

The first surprise was where things lived: everywhere! Marine species lived in the hottest and coldest places. Some species lived in deep places without light or oxygen.

Living in Hot and Cold Water

The very cold Deep Ocean Zone has hot volcanoes in it. The water temperature at a volcano can be 400°C (752°F). Some species of shrimp, crabs, worms, and bacteria live in this very hot water.
Huge groups of Arctic sea life were also found living in freezing water. Some species of squid, cod, and jellyfish live under solid ice that is 700 meters (2,296 ft) thick.

What Did We Learn?

The marine census counted over 230,000 species. Over 6,000 new species had never been seen before! Some creatures were see-through. Some had warning lights that turned on and off. Others had long feelers instead of eyes.
What else lives in the deep ocean? Scientists keep finding new species and new facts. They think that only one-fourth of all marine life has been counted. So there are many more surprises to come!

**Explore More**

To learn more about the Census of Marine Life, A Decade of Discovery, go to its website at: www.coml.org

Each week, new discoveries are added to the marine census project using a map on Google Earth: www.comlmaps.org/census-on-google-earth

On the Internet, search terms such as: *deep sea species, nudibranch, blind lobster, or NASA oceanography*

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**Glossary**

- **marine** *(adj.)* of or relating to the sea (p. 10)
- **oceanographers** *(n.)* scientists who study the ocean and everything in it (p. 8)
- **species** *(n.)* groups of living things that are physically similar and can reproduce (p. 11)
- **submersible** *(n.)* a small vessel that can operate under water, especially at deep levels (p. 7)
- **tag** *(v.)* to put a label on an object to tell something about the object, such as who owns it or where it belongs (p. 9)
- **water pressure** *(n.)* the force that water puts on an object (p. 7)