Name: _____ Date: _____

Sea Otters and Their Stone Tools

Circle group

A sea otter lives in the ocean almost all its life. It eats, sleeps, and raises its young in the water. How does it stay safe and warm?

An otter has very thick fur. The fur holds tiny bubbles of air close to the skin. This keeps the cold water out. The otter spends a lot of time grooming, or cleaning and fluffing, its fur. Then the air stays in.

An otter also uses tools. It dives for a clam or a crab. Then it floats on its back with a flat stone on its chest. It bangs the shell on the stone until the shell cracks. Then it eats the meal inside. Some otters keep a favorite stone in a pocket of skin under the arm.

When otters rest, they sometimes wrap themselves in kelp. Kelp is a long sea plant. It works like an anchor. The otters do not drift away while they sleep. A mother and baby may hold paws, too.

Questions

1. Where does a sea otter live almost all its life?

_____

_____

2. What does an otter's thick fur hold close to its skin?

_____

_____

3. What does an otter use to crack a shell?

_____

_____

4. What do otters wrap around themselves when they rest?

_____

_____

5. Why does an otter spend a lot of time grooming its fur?

_____

_____

6. Why is kelp like an anchor?

_____

_____

Words to know

grooming: cleaning and fluffing fur
kelp: a tall sea plant that grows in the ocean
anchor: something heavy that holds a boat in place
clam: a small sea animal with a hard shell in two parts
drift: to be carried slowly along by water

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Sea Otters and Their Stone Tools

Triangle group

A sea otter spends almost its whole life in the ocean. It eats, sleeps, and raises its young in the water. How does it stay safe and warm there?

An otter has the thickest fur of any animal. Its fur traps tiny bubbles of air close to the skin, and that keeps the cold water out. The otter spends a lot of time grooming, or cleaning and fluffing, its fur so the air stays in.

An otter also uses tools. After it dives for a clam or a crab, it floats on its back with a flat stone on its chest. It bangs the shell against the stone until the shell cracks open. Then it eats the meal inside. Some otters keep a favorite stone in a loose pocket of skin under the arm.

When otters rest, they sometimes wrap themselves in long strands of kelp, a sea plant. The kelp works like an anchor, so the otters do not drift away while they sleep. Mother and baby may hold paws, too.

Questions

1. Where does a sea otter spend almost its whole life?

_____

_____

2. What does an otter's thick fur trap close to its skin?

_____

_____

3. What does an otter use to crack open a shell?

_____

_____

4. What do otters sometimes wrap around themselves when they rest?

_____

_____

5. Why does an otter spend a lot of time grooming its fur?

_____

_____

6. Why is the kelp like an anchor?

_____

_____

Words to know

grooming: cleaning and fluffing fur
kelp: a tall sea plant that grows in the ocean
anchor: something heavy that holds a boat in place
clam: a small sea animal with a hard shell in two parts
drift: to be carried slowly along by water

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Sea Otters and Their Stone Tools

Square group

A sea otter spends nearly its entire life in the ocean, where it eats, sleeps, and raises its young. How does such a small animal manage to stay safe and warm in the cold sea?

An otter has the thickest fur of any animal. The fur traps tiny bubbles of air close to the skin, and those bubbles keep the freezing water from reaching the otter's body. To make sure the air stays in, the otter devotes a great deal of time to grooming, which means cleaning and fluffing its fur.

An otter is also a clever user of tools. After diving for a clam or a crab, it floats on its back with a flat stone resting on its chest. It bangs the hard shell against the stone until the shell cracks open, and then it eats the meal inside. Some otters even keep a favorite stone in a loose pocket of skin under the arm.

When otters rest, they sometimes wrap themselves in long strands of kelp, which is a large sea plant. The kelp acts like an anchor, so the otters do not drift away while they sleep. A mother and her baby may also hold paws.

Questions

1. Where does a sea otter spend nearly its entire life?

_____

_____

2. What does the otter's fur trap close to its skin?

_____

_____

3. What does an otter bang a shell against to crack it open?

_____

_____

4. What do otters sometimes wrap themselves in when they rest?

_____

_____

5. Why does the otter devote so much time to grooming its fur?

_____

_____

6. In what way is kelp like an anchor?

_____

_____

Words to know

grooming: cleaning and fluffing fur
kelp: a tall sea plant that grows in the ocean
anchor: something heavy that holds a boat in place
clam: a small sea animal with a hard shell in two parts
drift: to be carried slowly along by water

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

For the teacher: Sea Otters and Their Stone Tools

Each student sheet carries a shape, not a level. The same topic and facts, written three ways.

Circle: Sea Otters and Their Stone Tools

Easier · 164 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2

1. In the ocean.
2. Tiny bubbles of air.
3. A flat stone.
4. Kelp.
5. So the air stays in and the cold water stays out.
6. It keeps sleeping otters from drifting away.

Triangle: Sea Otters and Their Stone Tools

This passage · 172 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.8

1. In the ocean.
2. Tiny bubbles of air.
3. A flat stone.
4. Long strands of kelp.
5. So the air stays in and keeps the cold water out.
6. It keeps the sleeping otters from drifting away.

Square: Sea Otters and Their Stone Tools

Harder · 200 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 5.8

1. In the ocean.
2. Tiny bubbles of air.
3. A flat stone.
4. Long strands of kelp.
5. To keep the air in so the freezing water cannot reach its body.
6. It keeps the sleeping otters from drifting away.