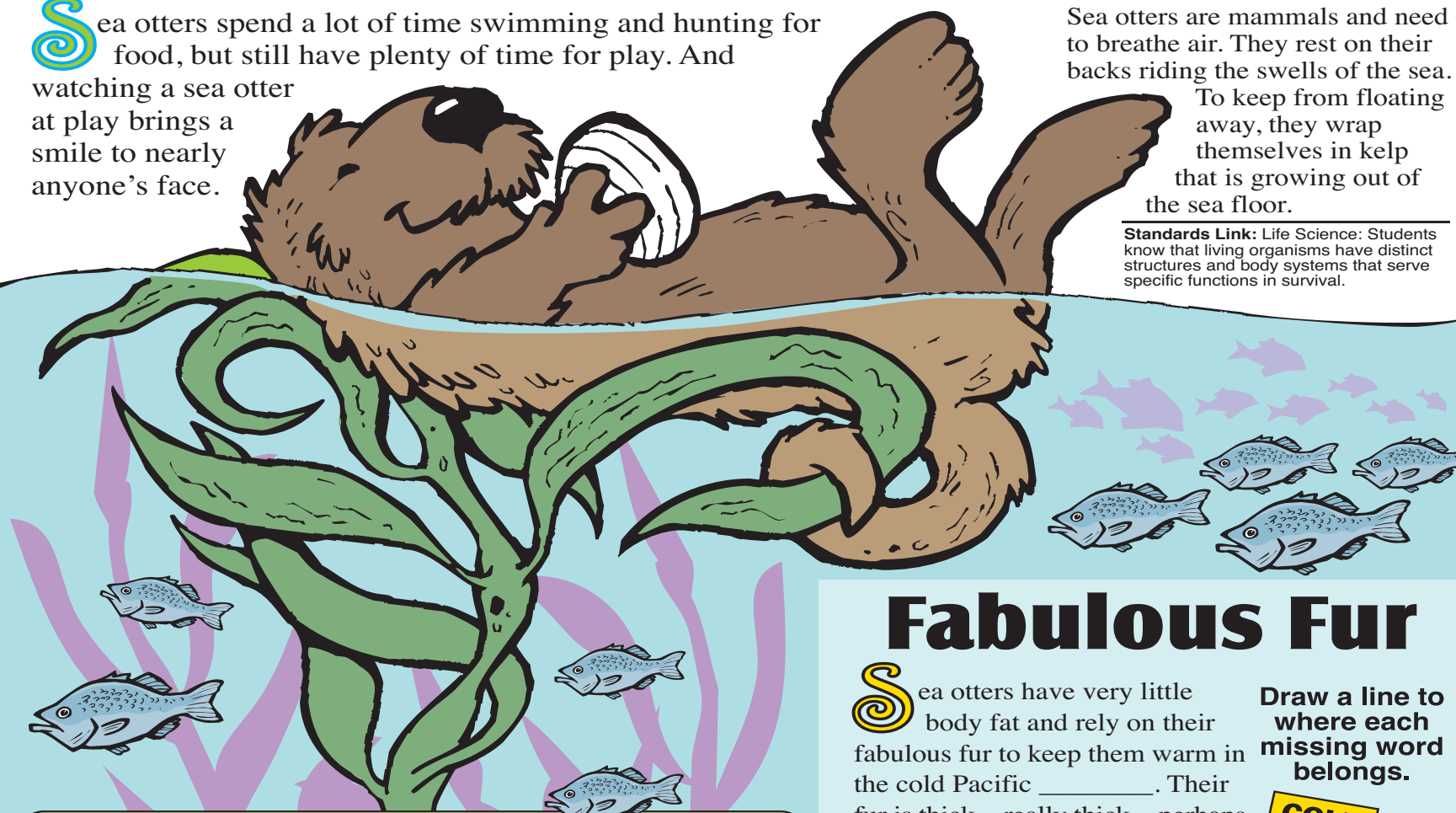


Otters: Oodles of Fun!

Sea otters spend a lot of time swimming and hunting for food, but still have plenty of time for play. And watching a sea otter at play brings a smile to nearly anyone's face.

Sea otters are mammals and need to breathe air. They rest on their backs riding the swells of the sea. To keep from floating away, they wrap themselves in kelp that is growing out of the sea floor.

Standards Link: Life Science: Students know that living organisms have distinct structures and body systems that serve specific functions in survival.



Are you an eagle-eyed reader? Read the articles below and correct the eight spelling and grammar errors you find. The first one is done for you.

Potential Fur-tastrophe!
 Sea otters once ranged from Baja California to Canada.

Today, they are only found in a small area of California's central coast. ^{Coast} ~~Cost~~ Wear there were once hundreds of thousands, there are now less than 3,000.

Hunted
 In the 1700s, European and Russian sailors discovered sea otters along the west coast of the United States and hunted them for their thick, warm fur. Over the course of nearly 200 years, hundreds of thousands of sea otters were killed. In 1911, so few were left that people agreed to stop hunting them. By 1938, many scientists thought they had died out and become extinct.

In March of 1938, Howard Sharpe, an author who lived on the California coast, saw a small group of otters. That discovery jump-started an effort by scientists and environmentalists to help this little colony grow.

Endangered Otters
 Today, there is still a struggle to keep otters from becoming extinct. Pollution from pesticides and waste from humans and their pets wash into the sea. These make otters sick. California passed a law to stop pet waste from being dumped into the ocean. Coastal Cleanup Days also help protect sea otters.

Standards Link: Editing: Edit drafts to correct spelling and grammar.

Food Rocks!

Sea otters eat crabs, clams and red sea urchins. Cracking the hard shells of these animals is a challenge, but the sea otter has found a solution. It is one of the few animals to use a tool.

A hungry sea otter finds a rock on the sea floor, tucks it beneath a flap of loose skin under a forelimb, grabs a few clams and swims to the surface. Once there, the otter rolls over onto its back and places the rock on its chest. It bangs a clam against the rock until it breaks open then scoops out and eats the morsel of meat.

Circle what should come next in each row.

Fabulous Fur

Sea otters have very little body fat and rely on their fabulous fur to keep them warm in the cold Pacific. Their fur is thick—really thick—perhaps the _____ fur in the world. If you were to put a penny on a sea otter, it would _____ about 250,000 hairs. That is more than twice the _____ of hair on your entire head.

Draw a line to where each missing word belongs.

- COLD
- COVER
- OCEAN
- DENSEST
- DIRTY
- AMOUNT

Otter fur holds tiny air bubbles, which serve as insulation against the _____.

If a sea otter's fur gets _____, it won't hold air as well. These creatures clean themselves often so that their fur can do its job.

Extra! Extra! The Outstanding Letter 'O'

Imagine a world without the letter O. Using an article from today's newspaper, cross out all the words containing the letter O. Give the article to a friend. Can your friend understand the article?

Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Understand word meanings from context clues.

Find the otter that is different from the others.

Kid Scoop Puzzler

Otter Appetite

Each day, a sea otter eats one-fourth of its own weight in food.

That would be like:

- a 60-pound person eating $5 + 5 + 5 =$ _____ pounds of food in one day.
- a 100-pound person eating $10 + 12 + 3 =$ _____ pounds of food in one day.
- a 148-pound person eating $15 + 17 + 5 =$ _____ pounds of food in one day.

Do the math to find out how many pounds of food each person would eat if he or she were a sea otter!



Standards Link: Number Sense: Solve problems using addition.

Kid Scoop Word Search

- OTTERS
- PACIFIC
- KELP
- URCHINS
- CLAMS
- TOOL
- DENSEST
- MORSEL
- SWELLS
- SOLUTION
- BUBBLES
- WEIGHT
- SMILE
- HAIR
- ROCKS

Find the words by looking up, down, backwards, forwards, sideways and diagonally.

B	M	S	L	L	E	W	S	P	L
U	O	S	M	A	L	C	S	A	N
B	R	N	W	Y	I	F	R	S	O
B	S	I	E	F	P	L	E	K	I
L	E	H	I	S	L	O	T	C	T
E	L	C	G	M	T	O	T	O	U
S	A	R	H	I	O	T	O	R	L
P	E	U	T	L	R	I	A	H	O
R	S	T	S	E	S	N	E	D	S

Standards Link: Letter sequencing. Recognized identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

Kid Scoop VOCABULARY BUILDERS

This week's word: **INSULATE**

The verb **insulate** means to cover or surround with something that stops the movement of heat.

Air bubbles in their fur **insulate** sea otters from the cold.

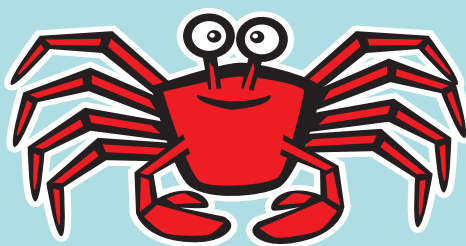
Try to use the word **insulate** in a sentence today when talking with your friends and family.

FROM THE Kid Scoop LESSON LIBRARY

Otter Home

Read the classified ads listing homes for sale. Based on what you learned from today's *Kid Scoop* page about otters, write a classified ad describing the perfect home for an otter.

Standards Link: Writing Applications: Write brief descriptions about objects.



What is the best way to catch a crab?

ANSWER: Have someone throw it to you.

Write On!

Talking Otter

You have been asked to interview a talking otter on a television show. Write up this imaginary interview. What will you ask the otter? What will the otter say in response?

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