

Literacy

Reading Level 15



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Animals from around the world

Acknowledgement: Bonnie Kline's resources: Stories to read
and take home - 1993



1: Anacondas

An anaconda is a snake that lives in the Amazon jungle. The Amazon is a big river in South America. The jungle has big trees and many vines. The trees and vines grow along the river.

Birds and insects live in the trees and vines. The jungle is a good home for birds, insects, snakes and other animals like monkeys and jungle cats.

The anaconda seldom hunts for food on land. It is very long and heavy. Getting around on land is a problem so it floats in streams. The water helps support its body.

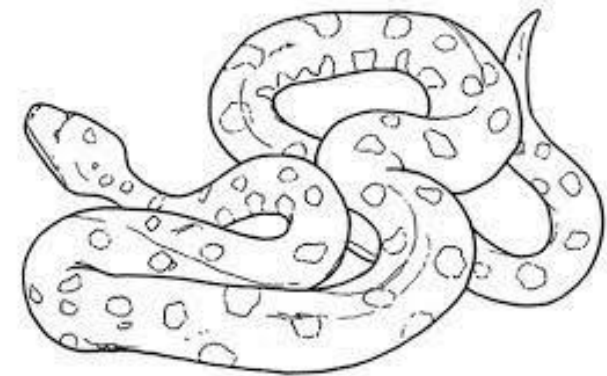
The Amazon is a hot place, but in a cool jungle stream the anaconda can get away from the heat.

The bank of the stream is the place where animals come to drink, so the anaconda floats and waits. It just looks like a log floating in the water. But when an animal

comes by, it grabs the animal with its sharp teeth.

After the anaconda grabs the animal, the anaconda wraps its body around the animal. It will squeeze so hard that the jungle animal cannot breathe, and it will soon die. The snake eats its meal by swallowing the animal head first!

It takes a long time for an anaconda to grow to its full size. Some may grow to be nine metres long (or about thirty feet). That's longer than two cars put end to end!



Anacondas Activities

In your workbook:

1. Draw the plants you would find in the Amazon jungle.
2. Draw the animals you would find in the Amazon jungle.
3. What does an anaconda eat?
4. Does the anaconda like to be hot or cool?
5. What does the anaconda look like when it floats in the water?
6. How does the anaconda kill the animal? (Choose the correct answer.)
 - a) poison
 - b) wraps around to stop the breathing

7. What does the anaconda use its sharp teeth for? (Choose the correct answer.)
 - a) chewing and eating the animal
 - b) grabbing the animal
8. Which part of the animal does the anaconda swallow first?
9. Find a word from the story to rhyme with each of these words:
 - a) boat
 - b) pines
 - c) ground
 - d) baits
10. Draw an anaconda killing an animal.

2: Beavers

Beavers are brown furry animals that live on the banks of rivers and streams. They live in North America and Europe. They are in the same family as rats and mice.



They have thick fur, webbed feet like a duck and flat tails. They have strong jaws and strong teeth, which they use to cut down trees in order to build homes and dams. Beavers are always busy at work.

A beaver is a good swimmer. When a beaver makes its home, it builds a big dam on the river bank. It makes an under-water tunnel into the home.

The beaver swims through the tunnel to its home. The tunnel keeps enemies away because it is filled with water. Most of the

beaver's enemies, like wild cats, foxes and hawks, cannot swim.

The beaver's home is called a lodge. It has many rooms, a front door and a back door that are under water. The front door leads to the living room and the back door is used to get away from enemies. A large lodge can have more than one exit so the beavers can make a speedy get-away.

It takes many hours for a beaver to make a lodge. The beavers pile up tree branches and sticks and cover them with mud. The mud freezes in winter. It keeps out wind, rain and snow and keeps the heat in. No mud is put on the very top. A hole is needed so the beavers can breathe fresh air. The beaver's home is safe, warm and dry.



Beavers Activities

In your workbook:

1. What colour are beavers?
2. What is their fur like?
3. What are their feet like?
4. What are their tails like?
5. What is a beaver's home called?
6. What does the beaver use to build the home?
7. The underground tunnels to the beaver's home are filled with _____.
8. The home must have an exit to get away from _____.
9. Name three of the beaver's enemies.
10. Draw the beaver's home.
11. What does the beaver use its strong jaws and teeth for?

12. Read and copy these words and underline the **ea** in each word:

beaver

stream

breathe

leads

13. Read and copy these words and underline the **ee** in each word:

feet

teeth

speedy

keeps

freeze

2: Giraffes

Giraffes are the tallest animals in the world. They can grow to be as tall as three men standing on top of one another. That's very tall!

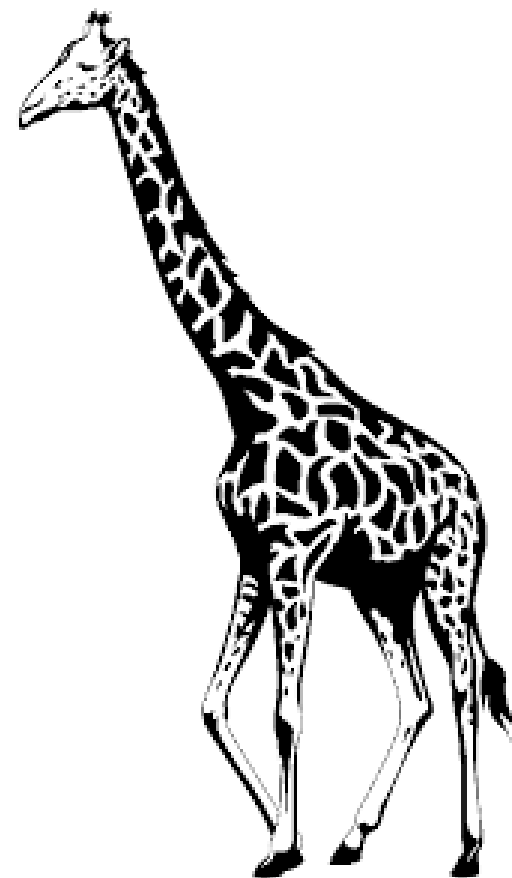
Giraffes have long necks so they can reach up to eat the leaves on trees. Giraffes also have long legs, which also help them reach the leaves on trees, but the long legs make it hard for a giraffe to eat grass. In order to eat grass, or get a drink of water, a giraffe must spread out its legs. Giraffes can go a long time without needing a drink.

Giraffes are very fast runners. They can run about 50 kilometres an hour, (or thirty miles an hour). That's about as fast as a car driving through a city.

Giraffes live in Africa. They live in parts of Africa where there are trees and grass. It is sometimes hard to see a giraffe under the

trees because the shadows of the trees blend in with the giraffe's brown patches.

Giraffes use their long necks and sharp eyes to look out for enemies like lions. If they see one, they run away very fast.



Giraffes Activities

In your workbook:

1. A giraffe can be as tall as ____ men standing on top of one another.
2. What do giraffes like to eat?
3. Draw a giraffe eating leaves.
4. Draw a giraffe drinking from a stream.
5. It could be hard to see a giraffe under the trees because its brown patches blend in with the _____ of the trees.
6. What is an enemy of the giraffe?
7. Which parts of a giraffe's body are good for looking out for enemies?

8. Choose and write the words that rhyme with tall:

tail small until call

9. Copy and underline the *two* letters that make the 'ar' sound in these words:

part

hard

sharp

10. Copy and underline the *one* letter that makes the 'ar' sound in these words:

giraffe

grass

fast

3: Hawks

Hawks are bird of prey. That means they hunt other birds and small animals for food. Some of the small animals they like to eat are lizards, snakes, fish, rabbits and mice. They have sharp eyes and can see a long distance.

When a hawk sees an animal on the ground, it folds its wings and quickly swoops down to catch the animal in its claws. Hawks use their claws to take the animal away to a safe place, and then eat the animal.

The female hawk is usually bigger than the male. Both have long legs, a curved beak and sharp claws. Both the male and female help to make the nest, hatch the eggs and care for the young.

Hawks like to live in places where there are trees. You will often see them perched high up on a branch. There they can spot their next meal.



Hawks Activities

In your workbook:

1. What does a hawk like to eat?
2. What is special about a hawk's eyes?
3. What does the hawk use its claws for?
4. Where could a hawk go to eat its dinner?
5. The female bird is bigger / smaller than the male. (Choose the right word.)
6. Draw a hawk. Draw its wings, long legs, curved beak and sharp claws.
7. Who looks after the chicks?
8. Where do hawks like to perch?

9. Copy these words and underline the soft 'c':

mice

distance

places

10. The hawk is a bird of prey. Prey is the living food that the hawk catches. What is the other way to spell this word? What does it mean?

11. In the word hawk, the **aw** sounds like 'or'. Copy these words where 'aw' sounds like 'or' and underline the 'aw'.

hawk saw law lawn dawn

4: Pandas

It is fuzzy and black and white. It has a white head with black eyes and ears. It has a white back and tummy and a black rump. It is a panda.

Pandas are not like most other bears. They do not sleep all winter like many other bears. Pandas live in the misty mountain forests of China. It is very cold and snowy there. There are no pandas living in the wild anywhere else in the world.

There are less than 2000 pandas living in the wild today. Some pandas live in zoos, but pandas do not like zoos. They do not have many babies when they are in zoos.

Pandas are in danger of becoming extinct. That means that all pandas could die if we don't find ways to save and protect them. We must not cut down the forests where they live.

Pandas like to be alone. If you were to visit China, you would probably not see a panda in the wild. They like to climb trees to hide and stay out of the way of people.

Pandas like to eat plants. They eat the stems, twigs, leaves and fresh young shoots of the bamboo plant. They spend more than twelve hours a day eating. They also drink a lot of water.

The people of China like pandas. They often decorate their shirts and jackets with pictures of pandas.



Pandas Activities

In your workbook:

1. Draw a panda.
2. Pandas are different from many other bears because they do not _____ in winter.
3. Where do pandas live?
4. What does 'extinct' mean?
5. How can we stop pandas from becoming extinct?
6. Can pandas climb trees?
7. What do pandas eat?
8. How long do they spend eating each day?
9. Draw a tee shirt with a panda on it.

10. Read and copy these words. The 'y' at the end makes the 'e' sound:

fuzzy

tummy

misty

snowy

probably

11. Write the word for more than one:

One panda two pandas

One eye two _____

One baby two _____

One leaf two _____

5: Rays

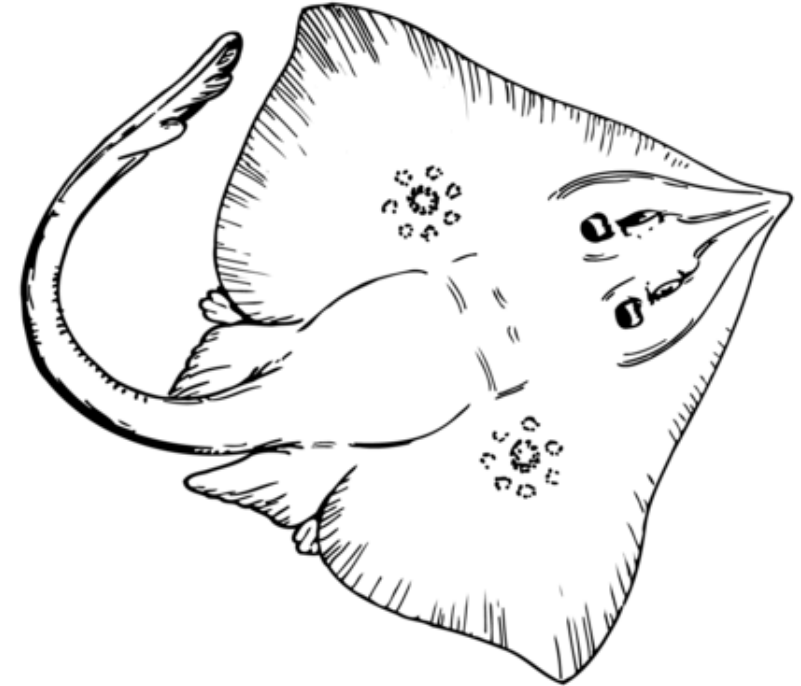
Rays are in the same family as sharks. They have fins on the sides of their bodies. This makes them look much like a pancake. Their eyes are on top of the body and the mouth is underneath.

There are many kinds of rays. One kind is a stingray. It has a long tail with sharp spines. The spines have teeth with glands that contain poison. If you step on a sting ray, it will swing its tail to protect itself. Its sting can be as bad as a snake bite. Sting rays live in the sandy or muddy bottom of an ocean bay where the water is warm.

The electric ray will send a shock to the thing that disturbs it. Swimmers and fishermen have to look out for them.

Manta rays are the biggest rays. They are not harmful to humans. They do not have stings on their tails. They flap their fins as they swim, as if they are dancing.

Rays feed on shrimp, clams and other shellfish.



Rays Activities

In your workbook:

1. Which family do rays belong to?
2. Where are the eyes?
3. Where is the mouth?
4. What does a sting ray have on its tail?
5. Is the sting of a sting ray as bad as a snake bite?
6. Do sting rays like warm water or cold water?
7. What can an electric ray do?
8. Which is the biggest ray?
9. Can these rays hurt humans?
10. What do manta rays do that makes them look like dancers?
11. What do rays eat?

12. Make two words out of each of these words:

pancake

stingray

shellfish

fishermen

13. Write the missing word:

a) A swimmer could get a _____ from an electric ray.

b) Stingrays live in the _____ bottom of an ocean bay.

c) Stingrays have _____ in their tail.

d) Manta rays are not _____ to humans.

6: Sharks

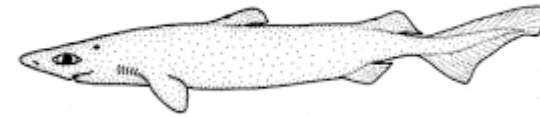
Sharks are fish. They are the biggest fish in the world. They have gills to help them get air from the water. They can swim fast, but if they stop swimming they will sink.

Sharks can be big or not so big. The whale shark is the biggest shark. The dwarf shark is NOT big. In fact, it is so small it could be held in your hand.

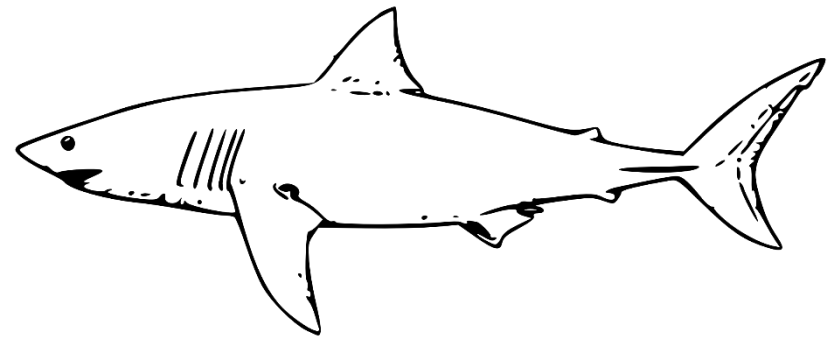
Sharks eat other fish and plants. They can get so hungry that they will grab anything. They could grab a log or another shark. They go after ships to get the scraps that get dumped into the water.

Sharks can smell very well. They can smell blood from far away. When they smell the blood, many sharks rush to that spot!

Some sharks live in warm seas and some sharks live in cold seas. The basking shark lives in the Arctic. It is very cold there.



Dwarf shark



Sharks Activities

In your workbook:

1. How does a shark breathe?
2. What happens if a shark stops swimming?
3. Which shark is the biggest shark?
4. Which shark is the smallest shark?
5. What do sharks eat?
6. Why do sharks sometimes follow ships?
7. What happens when there is blood in the water?
8. Name a shark that lives in very cold water.
9. Draw a shark and put an arrow to show its gills.
10. Find three words that rhyme with shark. (*starting letters: b, d, p*)
11. What is another word for *dwarf*?
12. Find out where the Arctic is. What other animals could you find in the Arctic?
13. Are sharks harmful to humans?

7: Spiders

Spiders are so interesting. They make webs that shine. They spin fine silk nets and catch insects.

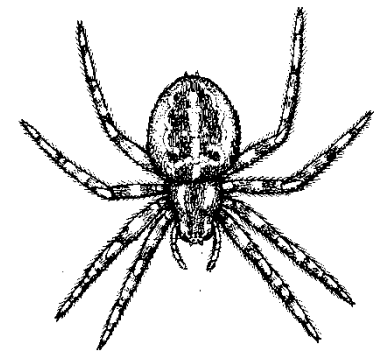
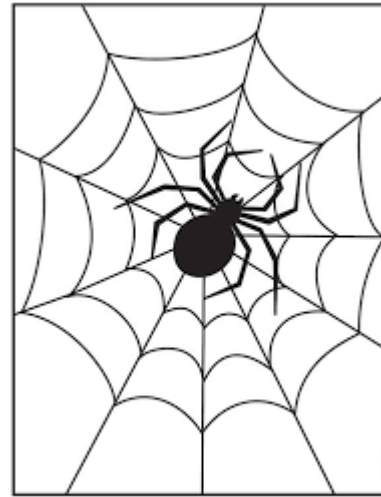
Spiders are not insects. Insects have six legs but spiders have eight legs. Spiders like to catch and eat insects. That helps us get rid of garden pests.

A spider's web is strong. Spider's webs trap insects. Some webs are in the shape of funnels. Some webs are like the spokes of a wheel. Spiders trap insects and sometimes they save them to eat later.

Spiders use a silk case to store their eggs. The eggs will be safe until they hatch. One female spider takes her eggs with her. She is the wolf spider. She protects the eggs until they hatch. The tiny spiders ride on the female's back until they get bigger.

Jumping spiders jump at insects, a bit like the way that a cat jumps at something. Fishing spiders live close to ponds, where they can get insects or catch tadpoles.

Next time you run into a spider's web, think of the interesting spinner that made that web.



Spiders Activities

In your workbook:

1. What do spiders catch in their webs?
2. What are the webs made from?
3. Are spiders insects?
4. How many legs do spiders have?
5. How many legs do insects have?
6. What helpful job does a spiders do for us?
7. Draw two different kinds of spider's webs.
8. How do female spiders protect their eggs?
9. Which spider allows her babies to ride on her back?
10. Where do fishing spiders live?

11. Write three words that rhymes with **shine**. (*starting letters – f, l, p*)
12. Write another word for *tiny*.
13. Write four words that rhyme with **hatch**, starting with letters b, c, m and p.
14. A spider spins a web with silk, so she is called a _____.

8: Zebras

What animal has stripes on its body and stripes on its legs? If you said 'zebra' you are right.

A zebra is a member of the horse family. It is a horse that lives in Africa. A zebra has black or dark brown stripes. The stripes go from the rump to the tummy and from the back of the head to the neck. The stripes help the zebra to hide from its enemies. You could say that a zebra is a horse in striped pyjamas.

Zebras live of the grassy plains of Africa. A zebra spends much of its time eating grass. Its lips grab the grass and its strong teeth bites and chews the grass.

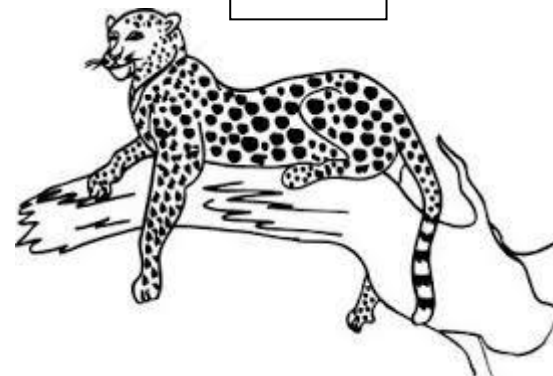
Zebras are never far from a spot to get a drink, but they must be careful when they drink. Enemies often wait in the shady bushes along the river bank.

Lions, leopards and cheetahs are enemies of zebras. These cats eat meat, so they have to hunt animals like zebras.

When zebras stay in the shade of the trees, they are hard to see because their stripes blend in with the shadows of the trees.



cheetah



lion

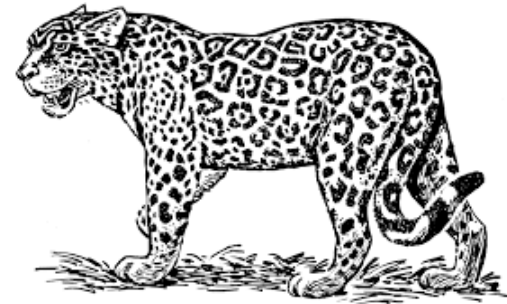


Zebra Activities

In your workbook:

1. Which animal family does the zebra belong to?
2. Draw a zebra.
3. Where does a zebra live?
4. What does a zebra eat?
5. Which animals are the enemies of the zebra?
6. Why are zebras sometimes hard to see?
7. Which other large animal lives in Africa, eats plants and has the same enemies as the zebra?

8. A zebra must be careful when getting a drink because _____ might be hiding in the shady bushes along the river bank.
9. A zebra has strong teeth for eating _____.
10. Name three cats in this story.
11. Which two cats have spots?



leopard

9. Camels

A camel is a large, strong, desert animal with unusual humps on its back. Bactrian camels have two humps, while a camel with one hump is a dromedary.

Camels can travel for many days with little food or water.

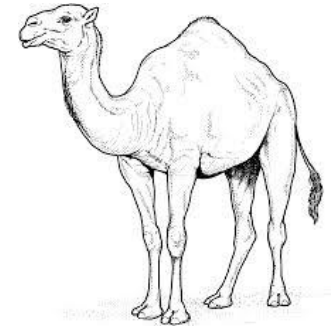
A camel's hump does not store water, as many people believe.

It is a food store and only contains fat. Camels lose very little of their body water as they do not sweat.

Camels have very wide feet with fleshy pads to stop them sinking into the sand.

They have long, sharp teeth for eating tough desert plants.

They also have special features such as long, curly eyelashes that give protection in a sandstorm.



People use camels to carry their food, water and belongings when they travel across deserts.

This is the reason the camel is called “the ship of the desert”.

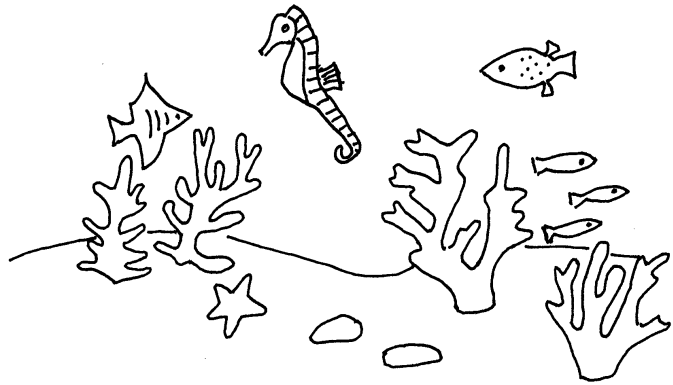
Activities

1. Draw a picture of a one-humped camel including as many of the features you can from the text. Use arrows to label the body parts.
2. Why are camels so helpful to people traveling across the desert?
3. What is stored in the hump?
4. Why can camels go for a long time without water?

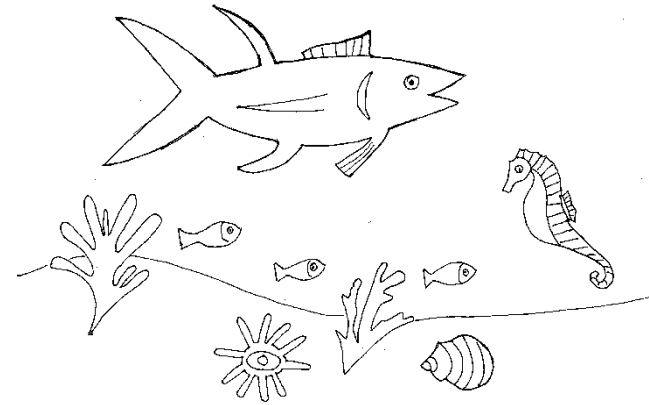
Creatures of the Sea

The Little Seahorse

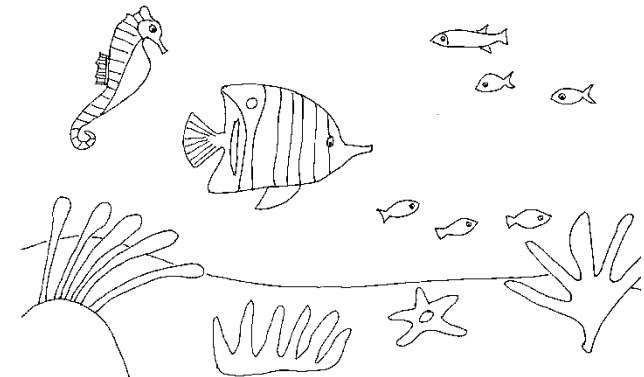
A little seahorse lived under the sea, on a beautiful coral reef.



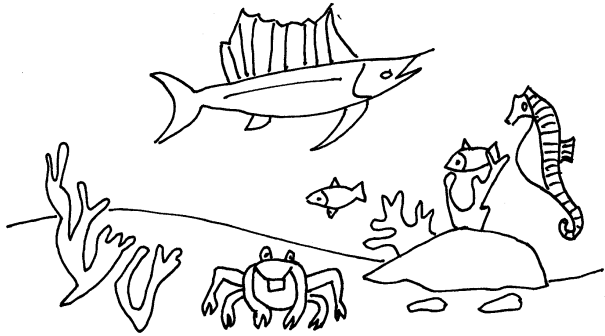
“I am so small,” he thought to himself one day. “I wish I could be big and strong like the tuna fish.”



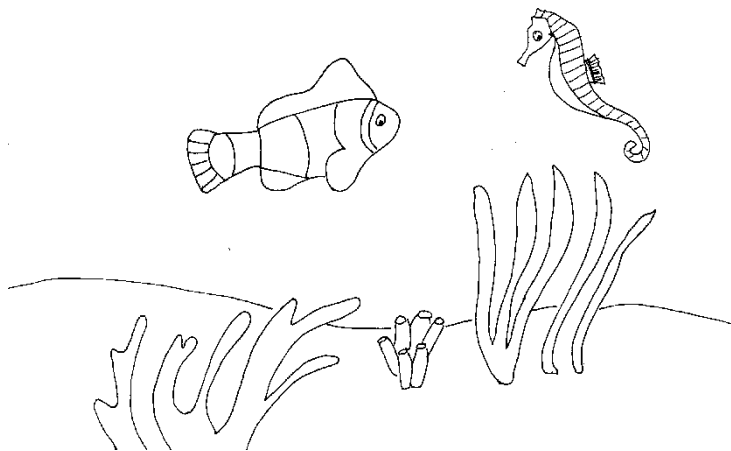
“I am not pretty,” he thought. “I wish I could be colourful like the butterfly fish.”



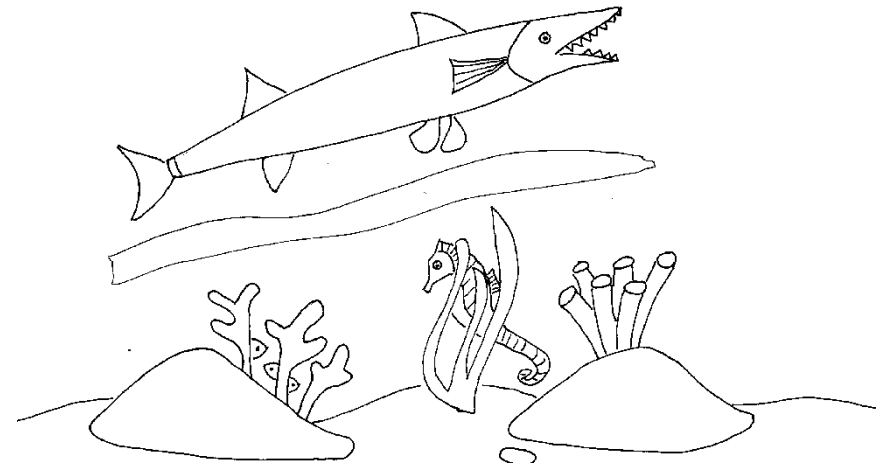
“I am not very fast. I wish I could be a fast swimmer like the sail fish.”



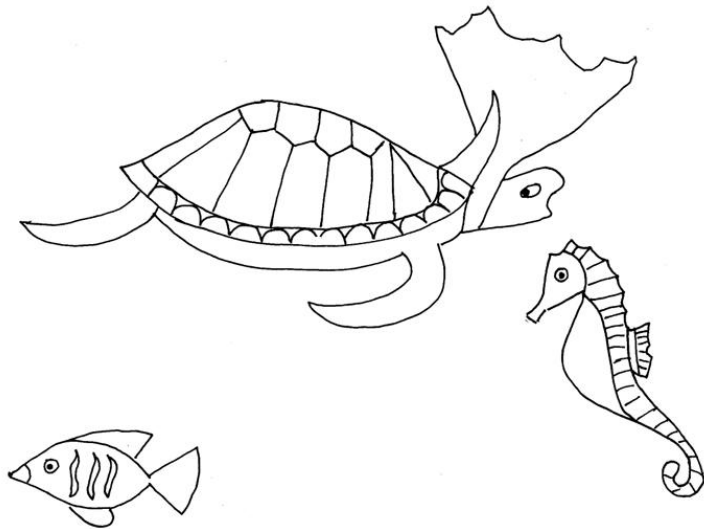
“And I wish I could make people laugh like the clown fish!”



One day the little seahorse was swimming in the sea, when he noticed a huge dark shadow above him. It was the big bad barracuda!” Barracuda fish love to eat smaller fish. Swimming as fast as he could, the little seahorse went to warn his friends. All the fish on the reef quickly went into their hiding places.

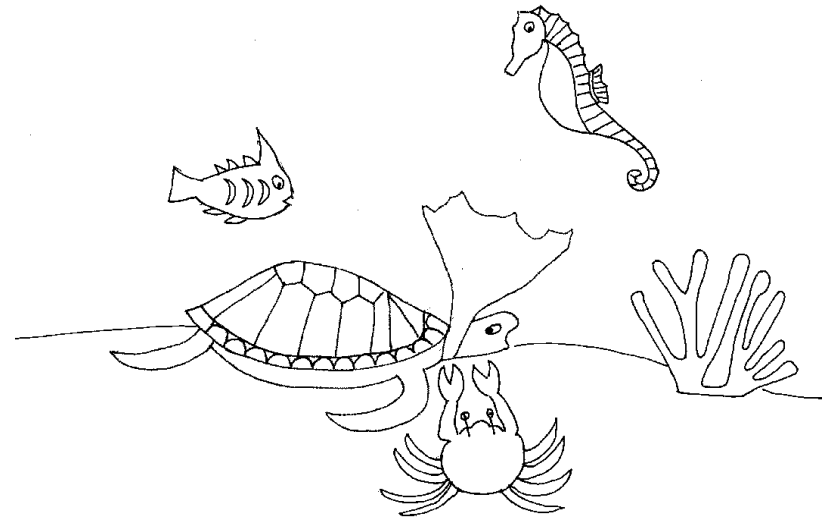


Another time, he noticed a turtle in trouble. The turtle had a plastic bag caught around its neck. The sea current was pulling the plastic bag tighter and tighter around the turtle's neck.



“Don’t worry,” the little seahorse said to the turtle. “Follow me and I will get some help.” The turtle followed the little seahorse to the bottom of the ocean where a friendly crab used its sharp claws to slowly and

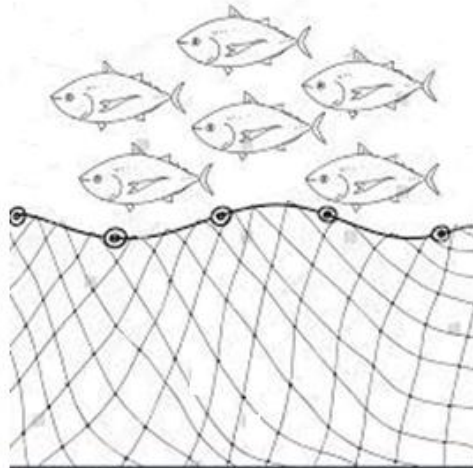
gently, pull away the plastic bag from around the turtle’s neck. Finally, the turtle was free!



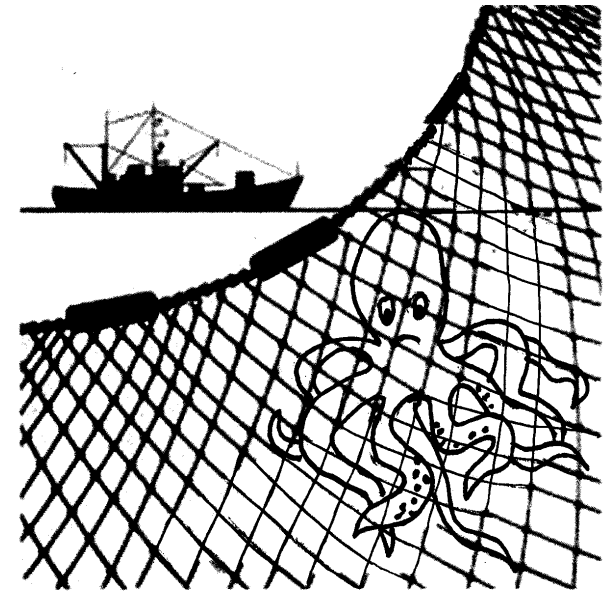
Then the little seahorse thought to himself... “I may not be big like the tuna fish. I may not be colourful like the butterfly fish. I may not be fast like the sail fish. I may not be able to make people laugh like the clown fish ... but I can be a helper. I can care for my friends. I can be the best helper under the sea!”

The very clever octopus

A little octopus was swimming in the beautiful blue sea, looking for food. He was so busy looking for food that he did not notice a fishing net.



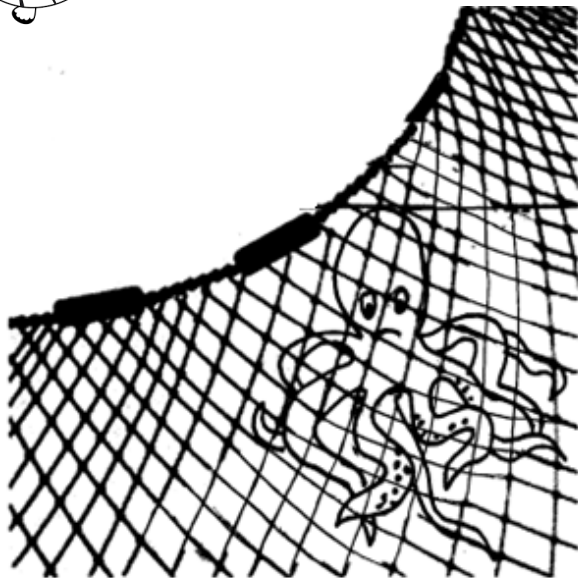
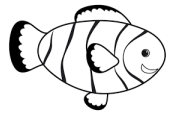
The octopus swam right into the net and became tangled. He tried to get free. He moved his eight arms up and down and all around. But the more he tried to get free, the more tangled he became.



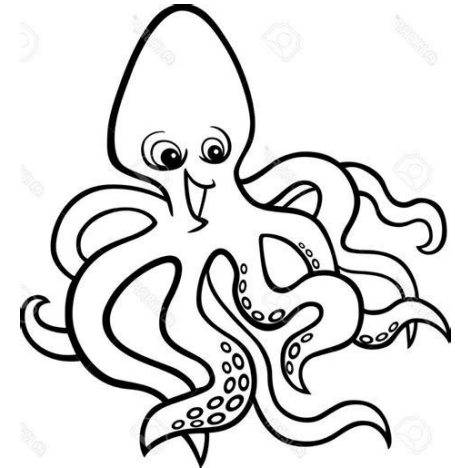
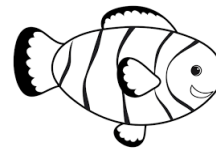
Then a kind little fish swam by and saw the octopus.

“Would you like me to help you?” asked the kind fish.

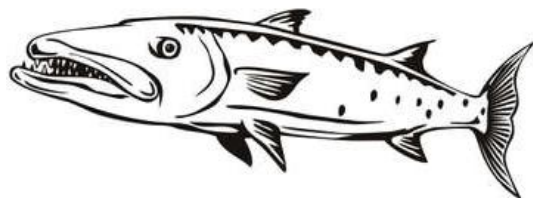
“How could a little fish like you help me to get out of this mess,” said the octopus.



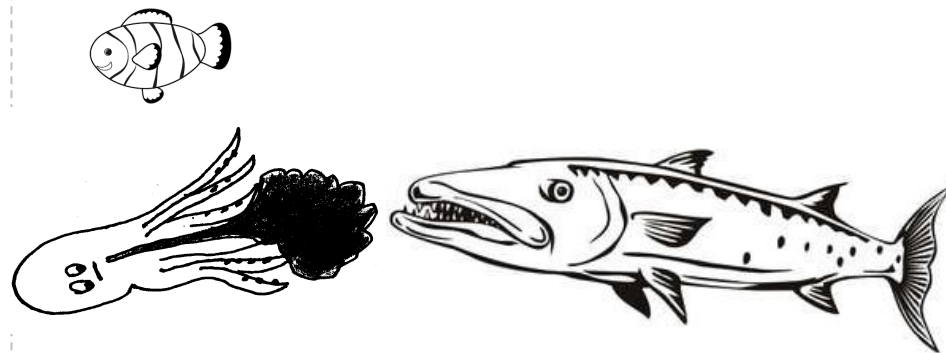
“I have very sharp teeth,” said the kind fish. The little fish nibbled at the net until the octopus was free! The octopus swam back to his home at the bottom of the sea, feeling very happy.



A few days later the octopus was out again, swimming in the beautiful blue sea. He saw a great big fish chasing a little fish. Can you guess who the little fish was? The little fish was the kind fish that had rescued the octopus from the fishing net.



The octopus bravely swam towards the big fish and squirted his ink into the eyes of the big fish. Now the big fish could not see anything!



The kind little fish and the octopus both swam as fast as they could, back to their home at the bottom of the sea. The octopus and the kind fish became best friends, and from that day on, always looked out for one another.

