

DISCOVER  
OUR AMAZING  
WORLD  
CLIL READERS

# The Bottlenose Dolphin

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# The Earth's Oceans

**A**bout 70% of the Earth's surface is covered in water. More than 97% of this water is found in the Earth's oceans and seas. The water in the oceans and seas is saltwater. Some scientists believe that life on Earth began in the sea, and all living creatures on Earth today evolved from sea creatures.

The oceans affect the weather and the temperature on Earth. They absorb the heat of the sun and move it around the planet. The ocean is always moving. It heats the land and air in the winter and cools it in the summer. Without the oceans, no life on Earth would survive.

The Earth's oceans and seas are all connected. There are five oceans and many smaller seas. The five oceans are the Pacific, the Atlantic, the Indian, the Southern and the Arctic Ocean. The largest seas are the Philippine Sea, the Coral Sea, the Arabian Sea, the South China Sea, the Caribbean Sea and the Mediterranean Sea.



Pacific ocean



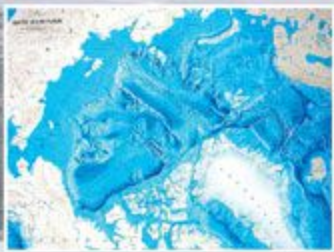
During winter, the Arctic Ocean is almost completely covered in sea ice.



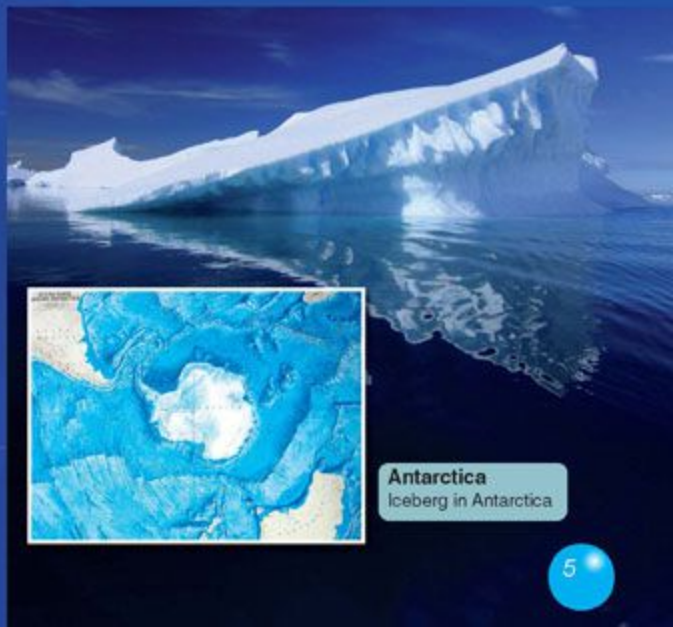
Indian ocean  
Maldives



Atlantic ocean  
Waterfront on Madeira



Arctic ocean



Antarctica  
Iceberg in Antarctica

# Ocean Zones

Scientists have studied the ocean for many years, and have divided it into five different zones, or layers. Each of the five zones receives a different amount of sunlight, from the lightest zone, near the surface of the ocean, to the darkest zone, at the very bottom of the ocean. Different creatures live at different depths in the ocean. The deeper zones are home to some very strange but amazing creatures.

## The Sunlight Zone

(Epipelagic Zone)

The layer of the ocean nearest the surface is known as the Sunlight Zone, because this is the layer which gets the most light from the sun. The Sunlight Zone extends from the surface of the ocean to about 200 meters down. This layer has a wide range of temperatures from 40 to -2 degrees Celsius. Although the Sunlight Zone is the smallest zone in the ocean, it is home to the largest number of sea creatures and plants. Sharks, jellyfish, seals, stingrays, sea turtles and seaweed all live in the Sunlight Zone. Some of the creatures which live in the Sunlight Zone have counter-shading on their bodies. This means that the top part of their body is a dark color and the bottom part of their body is a light color. This helps to camouflage and protect them from predators. When a predator looks down on a counter-shaded creature, the creature's dark top side blends in with the dark waters of the ocean below. When a predator looks up at a counter-shaded creature, the creature's light underside blends in with the lighter waters of the ocean above.

## The Twilight Zone

(Mesopelagic Zone)

The Twilight Zone extends from about 200 meters below the surface of the ocean to about 1000 meters down. The light in this zone is not very strong. This zone is home to some of the ocean's bioluminescent creatures. Bioluminescent creatures use the chemicals in their bodies to produce light. Hundreds of species of ocean creatures have adapted to live in the darkness in this way.

## The Midnight Zone

(Bathypelagic Zone)

The Midnight Zone reaches from about 1000 meters below the surface of the ocean to about 4000 meters down. The only light in this zone is produced by the many bioluminescent creatures which live there. Although this zone is very dark with high water pressure, a large number of creatures manage to survive here. Most of these creatures are dark in color, so they are camouflaged in the water.

