



Third Grade
MSTEP Homework Packet # 10

Sent home on _____

Return by _____

Student's Name

Name _____ Date _____

Reading Complex Text

Read the article “Adventures of an Aquanaut.” As you read, stop and answer each question. Use evidence from the article to support your answers.

Adventures of an Aquanaut

If you wanted to become an explorer today, where could you go? European explorers of the past sailed off in search of new continents. They discovered Asia, Africa, and North and South America. Later explorers discovered the North and South Poles. They navigated icy waters and frozen land to reach those remote places. For the modern explorer, it might feel like everywhere on earth has already been discovered.

You might think you have to travel to space to discover new places. However, there is somewhere much closer to home, and it covers most of the earth. It’s the ocean. The ocean is deeper than anyone has ever been able to go. In some places the ocean is seven miles deep, which leaves most of it unexplored.

Just ask Sylvia Earle, underwater explorer or “aquanaut.” Diving down deep below the ocean’s surface, Earle has seen spectacular seascapes. She has visited underwater mountain ranges, plains, and caverns. She has explored places no sunlight reaches.

1 What does the word *explorer* mean as used in the section above?

Diving into the ocean, says Sylvia Earle, is “like falling into a galaxy of little stars or the Fourth of July fireworks.” Brilliantly colored fish and plants light up this world like fireflies. You can come face to face with whales as big as school buses. You can see giant 1800-pound tunas and beautiful seahorses and dolphins.

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Earle has discovered plants and animals no one ever knew existed. She has dived deeper than almost anyone else.

Her adventures, however, have shown her that the ocean is in trouble. People once thought the ocean was so large it would never get too polluted or run out of fish. But people are eating or destroying more fish than the ocean can replace. They are putting too many chemicals into the ocean and taking out too many fish. Many of these fish are gone forever. Others are very close to being gone.

2 Why are many fish gone or close to being gone forever?

The ocean makes life on earth possible for all living things, in the sea and on land. Much of the air we breathe is made by tiny plants in the ocean. The ocean also shapes the earth's climate and weather.

When fish disappear, this affects the whole ocean. It eventually affects us, too. Take sharks as just one example. So many sharks have been fished out of the ocean that in some places they are gone forever. This means that some of what the sharks eat have gotten too numerous. Since sharks eat jellyfish, for example, parts of the ocean now have too many jellyfish. This causes problems for many smaller fish. Jellyfish eat a large amount of organisms called plankton. Smaller fish also eat plankton. Because there are more and more jellyfish, now many smaller fish cannot get enough plankton to survive. This affects the humans who rely on the smaller fish as a food source.

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3 What problem does overfishing of sharks cause for smaller fish?

This chain reaction goes on and on. It moves from humans, to sharks, to jellyfish, to smaller fish and plankton, and back to us. What we do affects the ocean. And if the ocean is in trouble, so are we.

4 What is the main idea of this article? What details does the author provide to support the main idea?



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Writing Opinions

Writing Opinions

Read the prompt and plan your response.

Exercise is an important part of a healthy life.

Think about some reasons why it is important to get some exercise each day.

Now write to persuade other third graders that it is important to get some exercise each day.

Planning Page

Use this space to make your notes before you begin writing.
The writing on this page will NOT be scored.

Name _____ Date _____

Writing Opinions

Begin writing your response here. The writing on this page and the next page WILL be scored.

Name _____ Date _____

Writing Opinions

