What do you think of when you picture an octopus? A scary sea creature? A shy underwater animal hiding in dark cracks and crevices? An underwater magician that escapes predators in a cloud of ink? Let’s learn what octopuses are really like!

Octopuses live in all the oceans of the world but are most commonly found in warm tropical water. Octopuses do not have backbones and are therefore classified as invertebrates. Because they do not have backbones, they can quickly change the shape of their bodies. This incredible skill allows them to move freely into tight spaces which makes it
easier for them to hide from predators. When they are not able to scurry away from their predators fast enough, they camouflage themselves to blend in with their surroundings. They can change their color to gray, brown, green, blue, or even pink! This serves as a way for them to quickly ward off threats.

Another defense mechanism that octopuses use is their ability to

Octopuses are closely related to squid, which also use ink as a defense tactic. Scientists have recently discovered that all octopuses are venomous; this helps explain how they hunt and kill their prey.

Unlike most animals, octopuses have the ability to regenerate limbs that are lost. This gives them an advantage because when defending themselves from predators if a limb is lost in battle, it grows back! That’s a pretty handy trick!

About the Author

Belinda Givens is an ASHA certified Speech Language Pathologist with an endorsement in Reading. She is a published children’s book author and her passion is language and literacy. She is the mother of three amazing young boys who inspire her in incredible ways. You may enjoy reading Belinda’s books, The Adventures of Demdem the Garbage Truck - Watch Out for the Bumps and I Am Blessed to Have You.
The Clever Octopus
By Belinda Vickers Givens

1. Based on the information you read in the article, where do octopuses live?
   a. Indian Ocean       b. Pacific Ocean
   c. Caribbean Sea      d. all of the above

2. In the article, you learned that octopuses are carnivores. Circle the animals below that make up a part of an octopus's diet.
   squid  shrimp  sharks  crab  lobster

3. ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________

4. Which of the following is a recent discovery scientists have made about octopuses?
   a. Octopuses do not have a backbone.
   b. Octopuses are venomous.
   c. Octopuses can live for one hundred years.
   d. Octopuses migrate thousands of miles.

5. Identify one way an octopus uses its limbs.
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
   ____________________________
The scrambled words below are vocabulary words from the article. Unscramble each word and write it on the line. Please be sure each word is spelled correctly.

1. ______________________________  n c i e r v a o s r
   hint: animals that eat meat

2. ______________________________  c r s u y r
   hint: scamper away

3. ______________________________  l i x f b l e e
   hint: able to bend easily without breaking

4. ______________________________  g e r t e n a e r e
   hint: regrow

5. ______________________________  m o u a c g e f l a
   hint: an animal's ability to blend in with its surroundings

6. ______________________________  s t a p e r o d r
   hint: animals that prey on other animals

7. ______________________________  e m v u a r n e
   hint: move around carefully and skillfully

♦ Now Try This: Find each vocabulary word above in the article and highlight it.
In the article, “The Clever Octopus,” you learned many interesting facts about this clever sea creature that lives in all the oceans of the world. One of the facts you learned is that the octopus is closely related to the squid.

On the lines below, write about three similarities between octopuses and squid. Write the names of any sources you used for your research at the bottom of this page.

_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
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Research source(s) I used: _____________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
ANSWER KEY

The Clever Octopus
By Belinda Vickers Givens

1. Based on the information you read in the article, where do octopuses live?  **d**
   - a. Indian Ocean
   - b. Pacific Ocean
   - c. Caribbean Sea
   - d. all of the above

2. In the article, you learned that octopuses are carnivores. Circle the animals below that make up a part of an octopus’s diet.
   - squid
   - shrimp
   - sharks
   - crab
   - lobster

3. Describe three defense tactics the octopus uses against predators.
   1. An octopus will change its shape to fit in tight spaces as a way of escape.
   2. An octopus will camouflage itself to blend in with its surroundings.
   3. An octopus will shoot out ink to confuse its predators so it can escape.

4. Which of the following is a recent discovery scientists have made about octopuses?
   - a. Octopuses do not have a backbone.
   - b. Octopuses are venomous.
   - c. Octopuses can live for one hundred years.
   - d. Octopuses migrate thousands of miles.

5. Identify one way an octopus uses its limbs.
   - An octopus uses its limbs to maneuver around the ocean floor.
The Clever Octopus
By Belinda Vickers Givens

The scrambled words below are vocabulary words from the article. Unscramble each word and write it on the line. Please be sure each word is spelled correctly.

1. carnivores
   hint: animals that eat meat

2. scurry
   hint: scamper away

3. flexible
   hint: able to bend easily without breaking

4. regenerate
   hint: regrow

5. camouflage
   hint: an animal's ability to blend in with its surroundings

6. predators
   hint: animals that prey on other animals

7. maneuver
   hint: move around carefully and skillfully