

Name: _____

A Horse Is a Horse Unless It's a Seahorse

by Kelly Hashway

Seahorses get their names because of their profiles. From the side view, a seahorse resembles a horse. Of course, a seahorse really isn't much like a horse at all. Maybe that's because it's a fish. But oddly enough, this type of fish is a poor swimmer.

Unlike other fish, seahorses swim vertically, or upright. While they use fins to move through the water, they aren't able to maneuver as well as fish that swim horizontally. Seahorses use their dorsal fins on their backs. But there is a big difference between the dorsal fin on a seahorse and the dorsal fin on a shark. Seahorses



flutter their dorsal fins. They also use small pectoral fins. They don't have gills like other types of fish. They breathe through their dorsal fin. They eat sea grass. If seahorses are good swimmers.



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Seahorses share many characteristics with other animals. Their eyes can move independently of each other, like a chameleon's. Also like a chameleon, seahorses can change color. They can use this color changing ability to blend into their surroundings and escape predators. They can range in color, spanning white, red, yellow, black, brown, and gray.

Male seahorses have pouches like kangaroos, where they carry their young. Like armadillos, seahorses have long snouts, which suck up food. They are big eaters, grazing continuously throughout the day on plankton, crustaceans, and shrimp. Seahorses are even like stegosaurus in that they have bone plates covering their bodies. These bone plates are arranged like rings. This acts like a suit of armor to protect the seahorse from predators, but it also limits the seahorse's flexibility.

These amazing creatures can be found all around the world. And while they share features with many different animals, the seahorse is definitely a creature all its own.

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1. Where is a seahorse's pectoral fin located?
 - a. on it's back
 - b. on its tail
 - c. on its nose
 - d. behind its eyes
2. How does a seahorse's ability to change color help it survive?

3. Name _____



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4. A seahorse is a type of fish. Based on this information, which of the following is not true?
 - a. Seahorses cannot breathe air.
 - b. Seahorses have gills.
 - c. Seahorses are cold-blooded.
 - d. Seahorses are invertebrates.
5. What type of passage is this?
 - a. science fiction
 - b. realistic fiction
 - c. non-fiction
 - d. fantasy

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Vocabulary Activity



Fill in the missing letters to create a vocabulary word from the article. Then write the full word on the line. Be sure you spell each word correctly.

1. ___ ___ o f i ___ ___ s

hint: side views

2. ___ d ___ i

hint: s



3. ___ o

hint: le

4. ___ h a ___ ___ c t e ___ i ___ t ___ c s

hint: traits; properties

5. ___ ___ a ___ ___ l e o ___

hint: species of lizard that can change color

6. ___ r a ___ i ___ g

hint: eating continually throughout the day

7. ___ l e ___ i ___ i l ___ ___ y

hint: ability to move and bend

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A Horse Is a Horse Unless It's a Seahorse

In the article, "A Horse Is a Horse Unless It's a Seahorse", you learned many facts about seahorses.

Write paragraph about seahorses. Include some sentences that are opinions and some that are facts. Underline the facts with a green crayon. Underline the opinions with a blue crayon.



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ANSWER KEY

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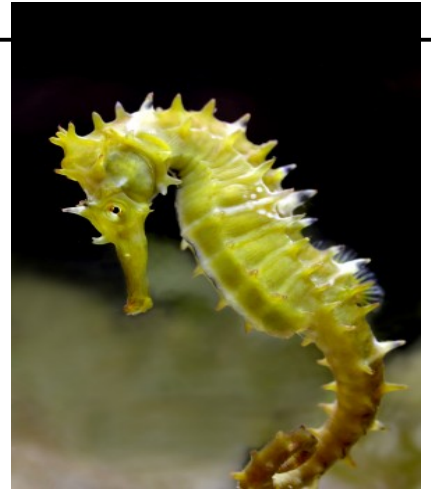
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Vocabulary Activity



Fill in the missing letters to create a vocabulary word from the article. Then write the full word on the line. Be sure you spell each word correctly.

1. p r o f i l e s

hint: side views

profiles

2. o d d l y

hint: s

oddl

3. h o r

hint: le



~ PREVIEW ~

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4. c h a r a c t e r i s t i c s

hint: traits; properties

characteristics

5. c h a m e l e o n

hint: species of lizard that can change color

chameleon

6. g r a z i n g

hint: eating continually throughout the day

grazing

7. f l e x i b i l i t y

hint: ability to move and bend

flexibility