Elephant Seal INFORMATIONAL ARTICLE



insulate

prevent the loss of heat



thrust

push



milk fat

fat found in milk



pect[illegible] fi[illegible]

fin near the chest [illegible]uscle



blub[illegible]er

[illegible]e f[illegible] o[illegible] an[illegible]s



marine mammal

a mammal that depends on the ocean for food



molt

a loss of feathers, skin, or hair, as a part of an animal's life cycle



carnivore

an animal that eats meat

Vocabulary



Websites

This animal article comes with a Google Site that students can use for further research. The Google Site contains the same URLs as the QR Codes.

Google Site: h[illegible]me
or: http://bit.l

If you find any links that do not work, please email me and I will fix it promptly. Videos are from a variety of websites, including YouTube (via SafeShare or SafeTube). There are two pages of QR Codes. One page has the YouTube link and the other page has the SafeTube link. Make sure you can access YouTube or SafeTube at your school.

Websites

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Includes link to a Google Site



Websites

Elephant Seal

Videos

preview

Internet Resources

Elephant Seal INFORMATIONAL ARTICLE

Elephant Seal

Elephant seals are very large marine mammals. There are two types or species: the northern elephant seal and the southern elephant seal. Elephant seals get their name from their long noses which are a little like the trunks of elephants. Males are called bulls, females are called cows, and their babies are called pups.

Elephant seals spend 80 percent of their time in the water and can hold their breath underwater for 100 minutes. The deepest recorded dive of an elephant seal is 7,835 feet, but they usually dive to about 1,000 to 2,000 feet. Their favorite foods are skates, rays, squid, octopuses, eels, small sharks, and large fish. The male southern elephant seal is the largest carnivorous animal in the world.

Appearance

Elephant seals are huge compared to other seals. The bulls are usually as long as 16 feet and weigh up to 6,600 pounds. The cows are much smaller; they usually measure about 10 feet long and weigh about 2,000 pounds. Northern elephant seals are a bit smaller than southern elephant seals.

Their large size is partly because they have large amounts of blubber – a thick layer of fat just below the skin. This helps protect them from the very cold water.

Elephant seals have fur which they shed or molt once each year. When this happens, the seals feel the cold much more so they stay on land for several weeks. Elephant seals have eyes that are large, round, and black. They use these underwater to help catch their prey.

Elephant seals do not have rear legs, but have tails like all seals. The tails are used to thrust the seal forward when swimming. The seals do not use their rear flippers to swim. Instead, they use their tails while they are swimming, but these are not very little. Instead, they use their rear flippers as support and push themselves forward. They can do this to reach speeds of up to 5 mph.

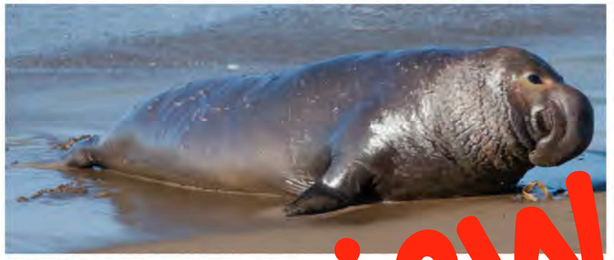
Offspring

Female elephant seals are pregnant for about 11 months. The pups are born with completely black fur. Their coats cannot protect them from the cold water, but they do insulate the pups from the cold air. To get a coat that insulates them from cold water too, the pups need to molt. After molting, the coats turn gray and brown.

The milk produced by mothers for their pups is very high in milk fat compared to other mammals; it is over 50 percent milk fat. Cow's milk is only 3.5 percent milk fat. Female elephant seals live 22 years, but males usually only live about 14 years.

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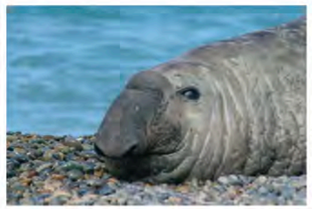


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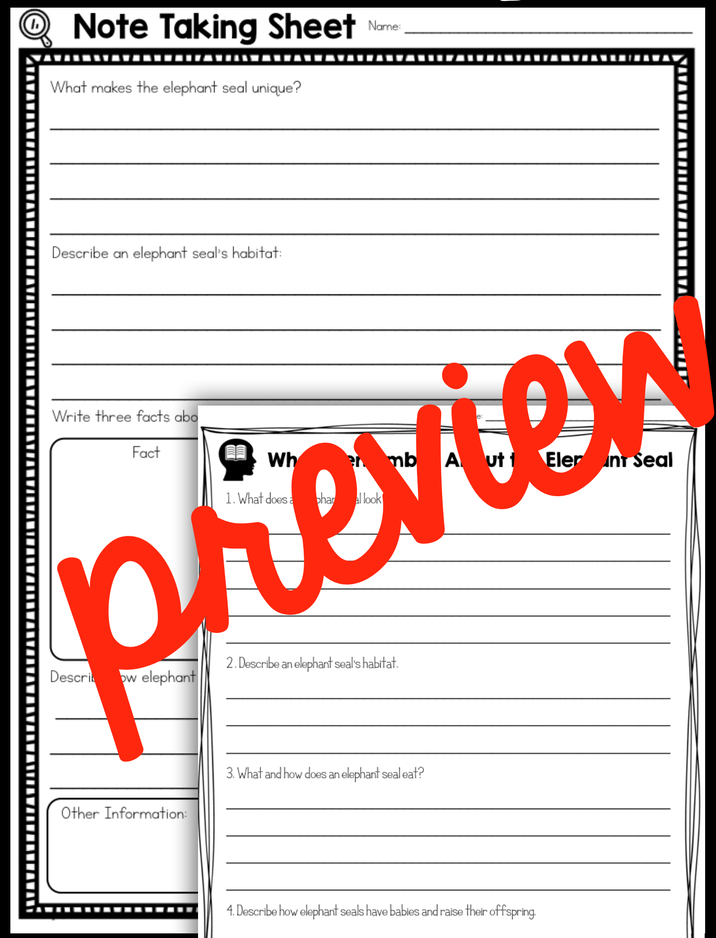
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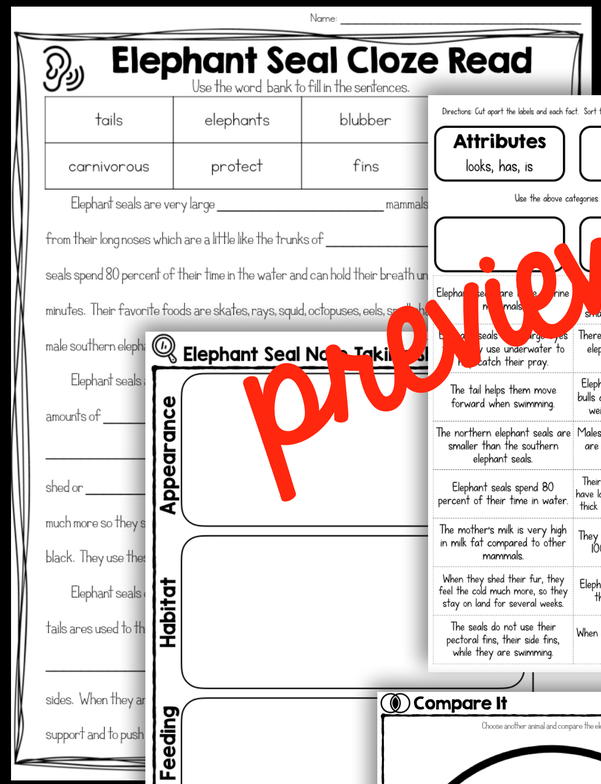
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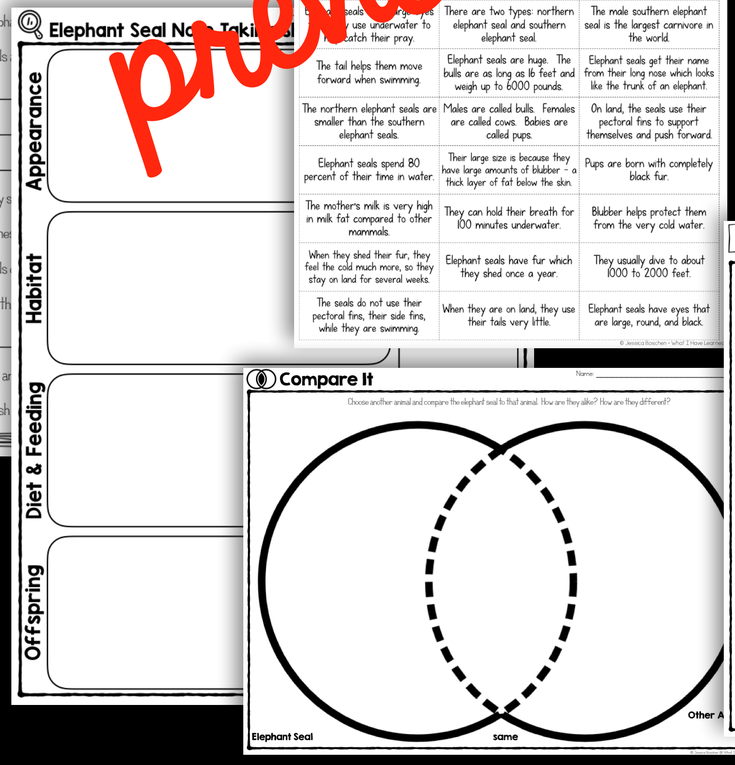
Consistent format for all animal articles

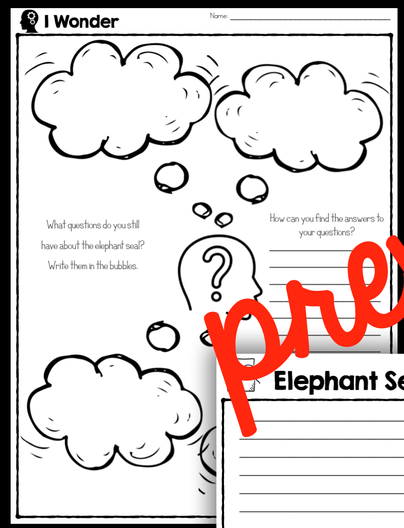
Text in Two Formats

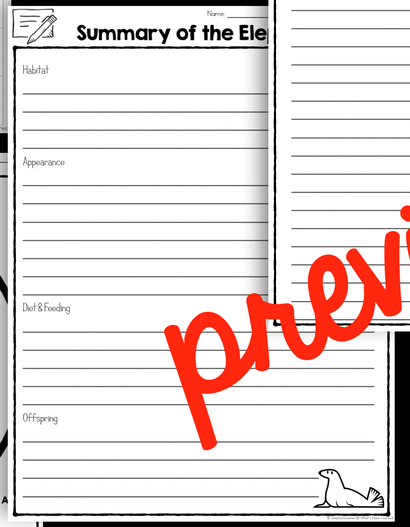
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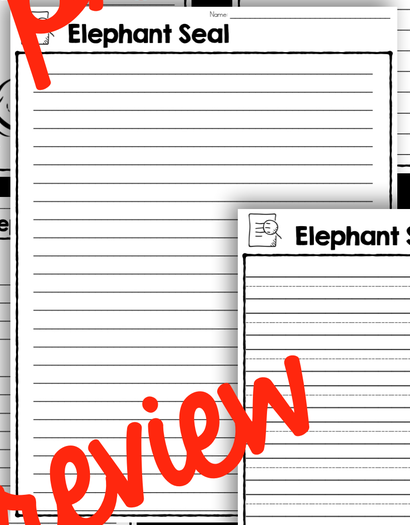


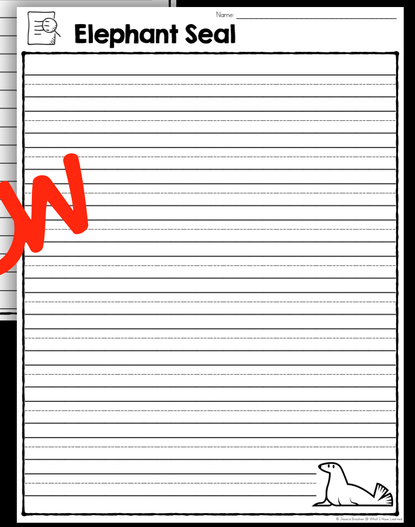












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Comprehension & Report Resources

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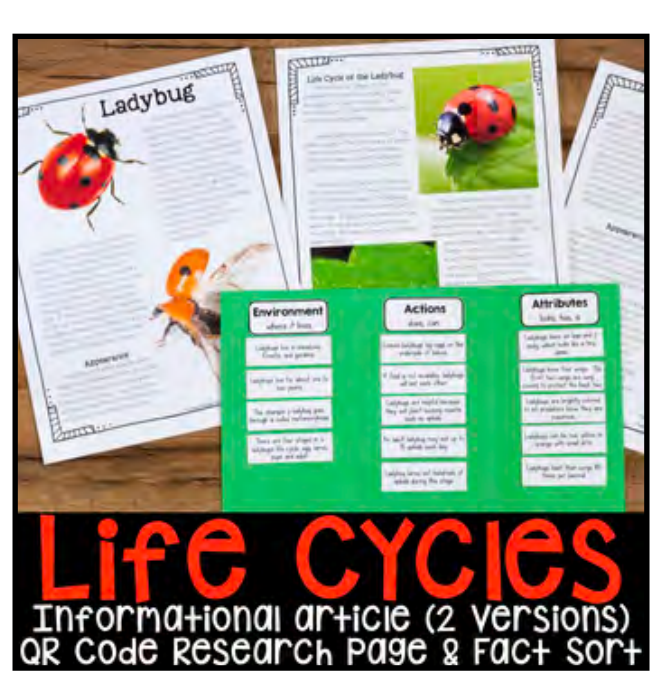
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More Animal Articles

Each animal is available individually and as part of a habitat set.



Informational article (2 versions)
QR Code Research Page & Fact Sort





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Teacher Notes

The following article is written at a second and third grade reading level. It follows a similar format to other Animal Articles and can be used for animal reports, informational reading, or text analysis. The sentence length, structure, and vocabulary have been controlled to make the text easier for young readers to understand.

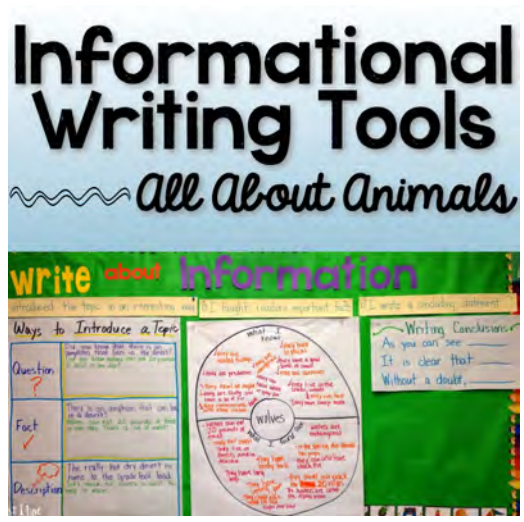
The article comes in two formats: One full-page black-and-white article and one two-page article with colorful pictures. The articles have the same text. The only difference is the pictures.

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The fact sort sheets contain facts taken directly from the text. I use them to help students organize information from the text when writing about the animals. Either use the provided categories or have students do an open sort and create their own categories.

I often use these articles during our informational writing unit. You can find more about this unit in this blog post.





Elephant seal



Informational article & comprehension activities

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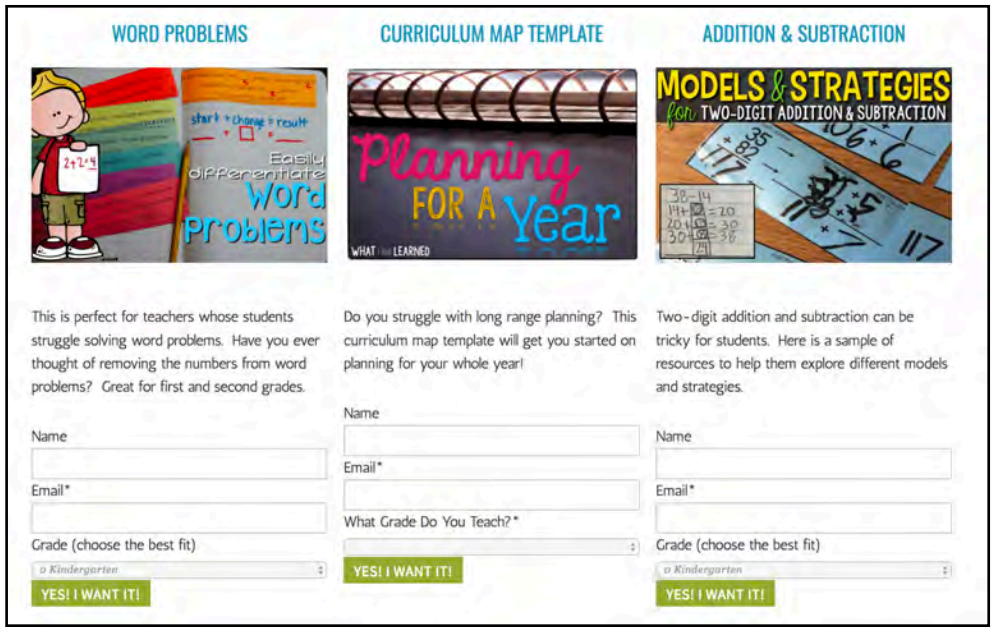
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