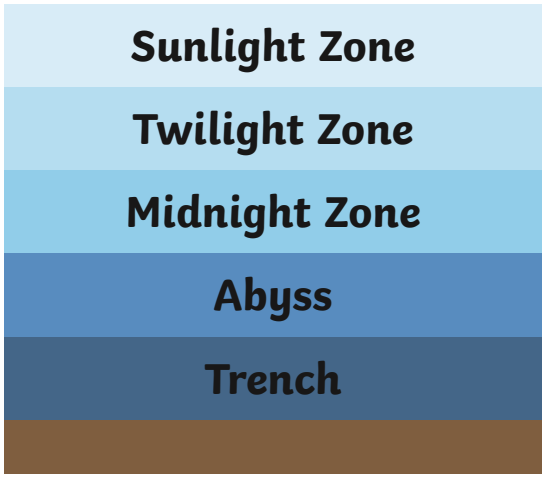
The Layers of the Ocean

Ocean Layers

Oceans cover two thirds of our Earth. There are five main oceans: the Arctic Ocean, the Atlantic Ocean, the Indian Ocean, the Pacific Ocean and the Southern Ocean.



Ocean Layers

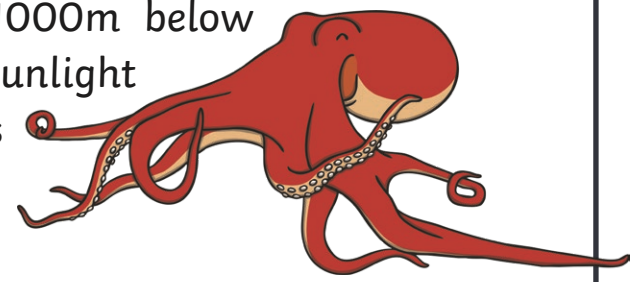
The ocean is deeper in some places than others. We call these different depths **layers**. Each layer has it's own characteristics and unique set of animals which live there. Read on to find out about the different layers...

The Sunlight Zone

The Sunlight Zone is up to 200m below the surface of the ocean. Sunlight can reach this layer. Most of all ocean life is found here and many plants, such as seaweed, live here. The water is warm because of the sun. Both humans and fish play and explore here.

The Twilight Zone

The Twilight Zone is up to 1000m below the surface of the ocean. The sunlight cannot reach this layer so it is very dark. Creatures that live here often have large eyes to help them see.



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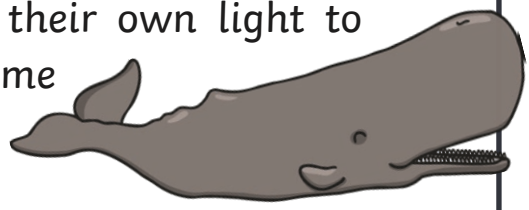
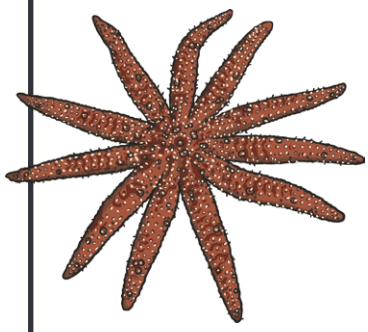
The Midnight Zone

The Midnight Zone is up to 4000m below the surface of the ocean. Sunlight cannot reach this layer, which means it is pitch black. Many creatures make their own light to help them to hunt their prey. Some creatures dive to these depths to hunt, for example, the sperm whale.



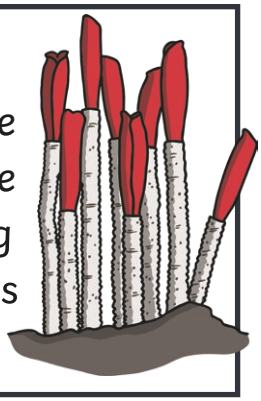


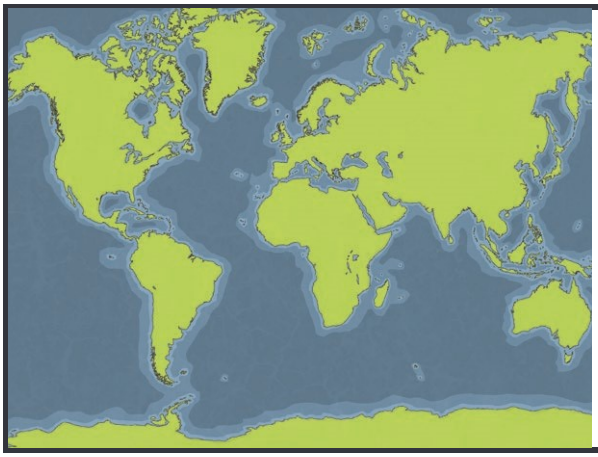
The Abyss

The Abyss is up to 6000m below the surface of the ocean. The sunlight cannot reach this level at all and water in this layer is near freezing. Very few creatures live here, mainly invertebrates, such as sea stars.

The Trench

The Trench is up to 11,000m below the surface of the ocean. The Trench is also known as the ocean floor. This zone can only be explored using special scientific equipment. The temperature is near freezing.





Did You Know?

The Pacific Ocean is the largest and deepest of all the oceans. It is so deep in places that the world's tallest mountain, Everest, would sink without a trace!

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Questions

1. How much of the Earth do oceans cover? Tick **one**.

   ○ one third
   ○ two thirds
   ○ half

2. Number these ocean layers in order of how **deep** they are, with 1 being the closest to the surface.

   ☐ The Twilight Zone
   ☐ The Sunlight Zone
   ☐ The Midnight Zone
   ☐ The Trench
   ☐ The Abyss

3. Fill in the missing words.

   Many creatures in the _____ Zone make their own light to help them to _____ their prey.

4. Find and copy **two** adjectives used to describe equipment.

   _____ _____

5. Which is the largest and deepest of the oceans?

   _____

   _____

6. Which ocean layer would you most like to explore and why? Give **two** reasons for your answer.

   _____

   _____