

# ALL ABOUT PLANKTON



**DID YOU KNOW** plankton is one of the most abundant life forms on Earth!

Everyone take two breathes and slowly exhale

– we can thank plankton for giving planet earth a significant amount of the oxygen we breathe!

The majority of our planet's oxygen production is produced through **PHYTOPLANKTON** photosynthesis, contributing to more than half of the oxygen in the earth's atmosphere.

**THE WORD PLANKTON COMES FROM THE GREEK WORD *PLANKTOS*, WHICH MEANS 'WANDERING' OR 'DRIFTING'.**

Many sea creatures come from this wondrous world of drifters, and start their life off as **ZOOPLANKTON** floating with the tides & currents than eventually settle to the seafloor and develop into their adult forms, including crabs, urchins, sea snails & slugs, sea stars, jellies, marine worms, and many more!

Plankton dominates the well-lit surface layers of the world's oceans & plays a crucial role in the marine **FOOD WEB**. Without plankton, the Great Barrier Reef wouldn't exist

– the largest and most complex coral reef system on the planet!

Many organisms of the reef rely on plankton for food, from sea squirts and sponges to fishes and sea turtles.

Additionally, plankton is an incredibly important energy source in the earth's marine ecosystems and provides **SUSTENANCE** to some of the tiniest animals in the sea, including krill & copepods – to some of the largest animals on the planet, like the Whale shark & Blue whale!

**SO LET'S FOCUS OUR MICROSCOPES & EXPLORE THE WATERY WORLD OF PLANKTON!**

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## Book List by Grade

### Preschool & Kindergarten

Peanut Butter & Jellyfish by Jarrett J. Krosoczka

Ocean Meets Sky by Terry Fan

### First & Second

I Am Not a Fish! by Peter Raymundo

Jellyfish: Fun Facts & Pictures for Kids by Lillie Carle

### Third & Fourth

The Most Amazing Creatures in the Sea by Brenda Z. Guiberson

How Does the Food Chain Work? Science Book for Kids 9–12 by Baby Professor

### Fifth & Sixth

Weird Sea Creatures by Erich Hoyt

Citizens of the Sea: Wondrous Creatures From the Census of Marine Life by Nancy Knowlton

### Seventh & Eighth

Ocean Drifters, a Secret World Beneath the Waves by Richard Kirby

Plankton: Wonders of the Drifting World by Christian Sardet

### Ninth & Up

Spineless: Portraits of Marine Invertebrates, the Backbone of Life by Susan Middleton

Jellyfish: A Natural History / Stung! On Jellyfish Blooms and the Future of the Ocean

by Lisa-ann Gershwin

*"The heart of man is very  
much like the sea,  
it has its storms,  
it has its tides, and in its  
depths it has its pearls, too."*

— Vincent Van Gogh