

Name: _____

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Dolphins are excellent divers! They can hold their breath for as long as 15 minutes and dive down deep to catch their prey. Their bodies are sleek and slender allowing them to soar through the water quickly. Typically, they swim 3-5 miles per hour. But when in danger, they can swim as fast as 18 mph. Since they are mammals, they have to come up to the surface to breathe air.

They are very social and intelligent mammals that eat, live, play, and travel in pods, or groups, of 5-25. They are very playful animals often seen jumping out of the water and over each other's heads. Traveling in pods protects them from predators like large sharks and killer whales.

Dolphins also talk to each other through whistling, clicking, and high-pitched squeals. They use their "voices" to communicate and to find their food.

Echolocation is the process that dolphins and bats use to locate prey through the use of sounds and echoes that bounce off of objects. They will keep making noises until they can pin point the exact location of their prey.

Dolphins have a layer of thick blubber that acts as an extra protection from heat loss in the cold water. It also stores extra calories for when food is tough to find.

But it's the color of their skin that really protects them from predators both above and below the water's surface. To observers looking down into the water, the dark gray hides the dolphin well. The white belly of the dolphin looks like the sun's reflection peeking through the surface of the water that camouflages them from predators swimming underneath them.

Do dolphins sleep? Yes, they let half of their brain sleep at a time. As they swim or drift slowly, they come up to the surface from time to time to get air and keep from drowning.

How does traveling in pods protect dolphins?





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Directions: Read the article about dolphins then answer the questions that follow. Use details and evidence from the article to support your answer.

1. How does diving help a dolphin to survive?

2. How does a dolphin's skin help camouflage him?

3. What is echolocation and how does it help dolphins?

4. How are dolphins and bat alike?
