

# For Creative Minds

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## Slimy Animals True or False?



1. Slime is bad!
2. Corals are animals.
3. Jellyfish are fish.
4. Hagfish can bite through the skin of their prey.
5. In the ocean, all snails crawl on the sea floor.
6. Moray eels have scales like fish.
7. Some animals in the ocean also use slime as sunscreen.
8. The teeth of the parrotfish are fused together so they look like a parrot's beak.
9. Slime can help prevent animals in the ocean from getting sick.
10. Many sea slugs are brightly colored to scare off predators.

Answers: 1. False. In the ocean, sea creatures use slime in lots of ways that are helpful. 2. True. 3. False. Jellyfish are not fish, but their name makes it confusing. Jellyfish are related to corals. 4. False. Hagfish do not have jaws and only have small teeth on their tongues. They cannot bite through the skin or scales of fish. 5. False. The pteropods or sea butterflies spend their entire lives swimming in the water. Their foot has evolved into one or a pair of tiny, wing-like fins for swimming. 6. False. Moray eels' bodies are coated with slippery goo. 7. True. 8. True. 9. True. 10. True. Many sea slugs are brightly colored; this acts as a warning to predators. It is like a sign saying, "Don't eat me or you will be sorry."

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## Why Slime?

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What are some reasons that YOU might want to use slime? How do those reasons compare to why animals use slime?

It is Slippery!

Which is easier and more fun to slide down, a wet or dry slide? The water makes the slide more slippery so you go down faster and smoother (and you don't get stuck). Slime makes it easier to travel over the sea floor or sand.

It is Sticky!

What would you use to trap bugs crawling on the floor, a regular piece of paper or one with glue on the surface?

The gluey one of course! Slime can be used like sticky paper or gooey bubble gum to capture things that crawl, float, or swim by.

It Floats!

If you blow air through a straw into a tall glass of water, where do the bubbles go?

They go up to the surface because air is lighter than water.

Bubbles made of slime and air rises to the water's surface and help animals to stay afloat.



It Keeps Away Predators!

Shooting slime at your enemies is a good way to make them go away. Or you could fool them with a cloud of slime that looks like you, giving you a chance to slip away unnoticed.

It Protects!

Wrapping yourself in a blanket of mucus deters enemies. If you coated yourself with slime, not too many people would want to get very close. And, like the antibiotic ointment you put on cuts, slime keeps bad bacteria out.

It Cleans!

Which would work better to get mud and dirt off, a blast of air or a hose with soapy water?

Soap makes water slippery and sticky, almost like slime. Some ocean animals coat themselves with slime. When they get dirty, they just make some more slime and the old, grimy slime slides off. Slime is good for washing.



## Lifestyles of the Wet and Slimy



Within the ocean there are many different types of habitats. These are the places or environments that animals call home.

A habitat can be as small as a single **sea anemone** or one blade of grass or as big as the **ocean's surface**, where the wind, sun, and waves meet.



In the ocean, seaweed and algae grow where there is enough sunlight. Some undersea animals are grazers and feed on algae and seaweed, the ocean's plants.

**Coral reefs** are where colonies of coral polyps grow and live together. They typically like warm, clear water with plenty of sunlight.

**Kelp beds** are like towering underwater forests with lots of hiding places. Kelp is a fast-growing brown algae that lives in cold, rocky areas.

**Sea grasses** create undersea meadows in the shallow parts of the ocean. Lots of small fish, crabs, and other animals live among the blades of these ocean pastures.



As the ocean gets deeper, there is less and less sunlight. There is just a little bit of light in the area called the **twilight zone**.

In the **deep sea** there is no light. Animals that live here must find a way to adapt to and live in total darkness.

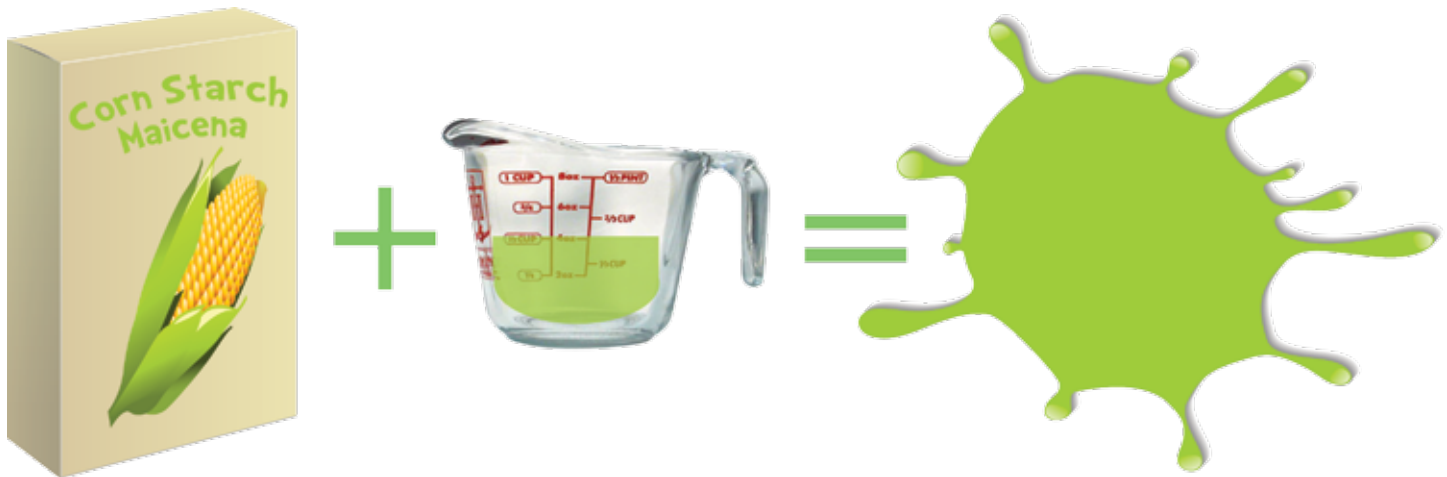


Animals in the ocean live in a variety of habitats. Many animals stay in their home habitats all their lives, but other creatures may swim or crawl from one habitat to another.

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## Make Your Own Slime—It's Fun and It's Messy

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### What You Will Need:

- box of cornstarch (16 oz.)
- measuring cup
- water
- food coloring (optional, but fun)
- large bowl
- large spoon and small hands
- newspaper, plastic tablecloth, or good cleaning supplies

### Here's How:

- First, cover your workspace with newspaper or a plastic tablecloth.
- Measure 1/2 cup of water into a bowl. If you want to make colored slime, add food coloring to the water now.
- Measure 1 cup of cornstarch.
- Slowly add the cornstarch to the water in the bowl, mixing as you go.
- Add additional cornstarch until you have the thickness of slime you desire! Dive right in with your hands for better mixing and to test the slime factor.
- Dig in and feel the **SLIME!** How does it feel in your hands? Pass it back and forth, or drip it into the bowl—have some fun!
- When you are finished, put the slime in the trash. Do not dump the slime down the drain or you might have to call a plumber.

### Food for thought:

- How would you describe your slime?
  - What does it look like?
  - What does it feel like?
- Are there things at school or around your house that might be slimy? If so, what?
- Why do you think those things might be slimy?
- What could you do with your slime?