

# LIFE IN A DROP OF SEAWATER

Plankton are small plants and animals that live in the top layer of the ocean.

## Plankton

### Phytoplankton

Phytoplankton are tiny **microscopic plants**, that can only be seen under a microscope.

They are **primary producers**, which means they are eaten by lots of marine creatures - they are the grass of the ocean.

Phytoplankton produce **50% of the world's oxygen**, and remove up to **50% of the carbon dioxide** from the atmosphere.

### Zooplankton

Zooplankton are **animals** ranging from microscopic organisms to larger animals like jellyfish.

They are **primary consumers**. They eat phytoplankton and are eaten by larger animals like fish and whales.

#### Did you know?

Some plankton glow through a process called **bioluminescence**.

## Problems with Plankton

### Algal Blooms

when there are too many nutrients in the ocean, phytoplankton can grow into massive blooms.

### Ocean Acidification

when the ocean absorbs more  $\text{CO}_2$ , it becomes acidic and dissolves shells and corals.

### Microplastics

Zooplankton accidentally eat small pieces of plastic, that can move up the food chain and could end up in human food.

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## Activity: Wordsearch

N M K P C E T L N G J Y N P S  
J C I V Z O N V A F L O T L E  
O L X C X L A Q P M T H D A Q  
W A K Y R K L U P K I T F N D  
V R G D C O P T N C Q N F K V  
C E O K R B S A O Q H O A T J  
N O B R A C L C N B O W T O F  
F P M B L P Y L O I I G Z N U  
A H P R O F J S S P I L I O A  
Y H N T V P M S D O I O D I U  
O I Y K T D C N I Y N C A U Z  
G H O K R X R X T B K N S Z H  
P Z J F M B O U I Z M E A P T  
G N I D N T R H D S Z O F C G  
Z O O P L A N K T O N Q P F B

ANIMAL  
CARBON  
FOOD  
MICROSCOPIC  
OXYGEN  
PHYTOPLANKTON  
PLANKTON  
PLANT  
ZOOPLANKTON

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# Answers

