



PLATYPUS CROSSWORD

Learning about the platypus using a crossword puzzle



GRADE 4

KEY WORDS

- duckbill
- mammal
- webbed
- burrows

STANDARD

- SCI.4.3.2

OBJECTIVE

- Students will learn about key characteristics of a platypus.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- The Australian platypus is related to the spiny anteater (also known as the echidna), which it hardly resembles at all! The two-foot long platypus is a mammal with a flat tail and a big snout, which is shaped like a duck's bill. For this reason, it is sometimes called a "duckbill" platypus.
- Platypus comes from a Greek word meaning "flat-footed." Both toes and fingers on this mammal are webbed, enabling it to swim quite well. Although it spends most of its time in rivers and creeks, the platypus can't stay underwater very long. It quickly gathers its food, and then comes back from air.
- The platypus digs very long tunnels, or burrows, in the banks of streams. It brings wet leaves to the burrow to keep its eggs from drying out. A platypus is one of the few mammals that lays eggs. However, once the eggs hatch, the babies are nursed with the mother's milk, like most other mammals.

PROCEDURE

- Have students complete the attached crossword puzzle in order to learn about platypus characteristics.

RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT

- Check to be certain students have placed the correct words in the blanks.

ANSWER KEY

ACROSS:

1. swim 2. Mammal 6. anteater 7. platypus 9. Duckbill 10. wet 11. burrow

DOWN:

1. snout 3. Australia 4. Flat 5. milk 8. underwater



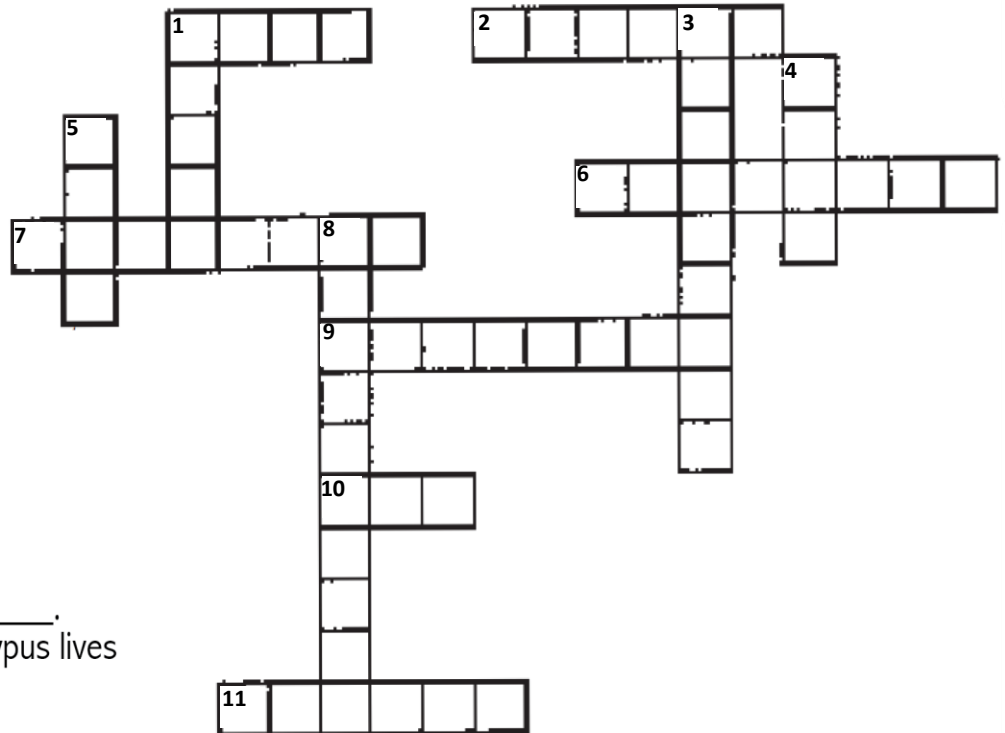
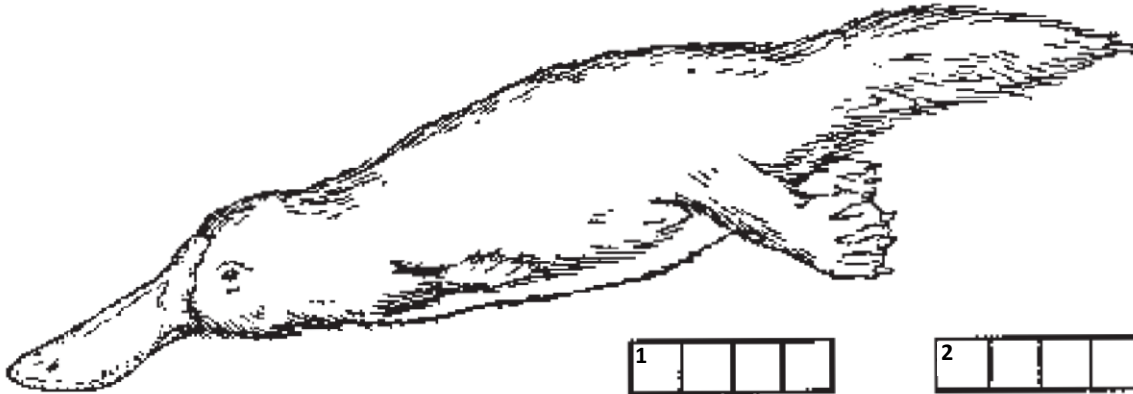


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Place the word in the blank that correctly matches the given clue about the platypus.

Name _____



DOWN

1. The platypus has a big _____.
3. The country in which the platypus lives
4. The platypus' tail is _____.
5. What a baby platypus drinks
8. Where do platypuses find their food?

ACROSS

1. Webbed feet help the platypus to _____ well
2. Although it is a _____, the platypus lays eggs.
6. The platypus is related to this animal
7. Animal whose name means "flat-footed"
9. Another name for platypus
10. Moist, not dry
11. Tunnel beneath the ground

