

A VISIT TO THE OCEAN CENTRE

My family and I went to the Ocean Centre in my home town recently. It was one of the most amazing places I've ever been. We don't live near the sea, so I don't get much chance to see living sea creatures for myself.

Inside the Centre you go on what they call an ocean journey. It takes you from the smallest stream, through rivers, and out into the deepest ocean. Along the way you meet fish and other creatures that live in these places. And there are thousands of them - some pretty and peaceful, and others frightening and deadly.

Our guide told US that the Centre was originally set up to help look after the seas and protect the life within them. In fact, every entry ticket bought there helps the Centre to achieve this aim, so I felt my visit was in a good cause.

By chance, we arrived just at feeding time and watched staff give food to hundreds of fish. I wanted to do it too, but the staff wouldn't let me. But I'd still really recommend being there at feeding time. You'll see feeding times advertised at the ticket desk, or you can telephone in advance to find out when they are.

The most fascinating part of the visit for me was a new exhibition at the Centre that told the story of seahorses across the world. It has the biggest collection of these magical creatures in Europe, and almost as many as one in the USA. I found out about what they ate, and how a male seahorse managed to give birth to 1500 babies! And although our guide told us it was hard to see the young ones, we were lucky enough to catch sight of some in the tank!

We also went to one of the Centre's talks about the underwater world.

Ours was called 'Sharks', and the one on the following day was called 'Creatures of the Deep'. There are talks on other topics given on different days, so it's best to check which talk will take place on the day you go.

Once we'd bought our ticket, we could go in and out of the Centre as many times as we liked during the day. You can also buy an annual pass that gives you unlimited entry all year round. I'm saving up for one!

Questions 1-10

Look at the sentences below about a trip to an Ocean Centre.

Read the text on the opposite page to decide if each sentence is TRUE or FALSE.

1. Rebecca Hardy's home is close to the coast.
2. At the Ocean Centre, you can see fish from both seas and rivers.
3. All the creatures that are on display at the Centre are harmless.
4. The admission fee for the Centre goes towards environmental projects.
5. Rebecca was allowed to feed the fish at the Centre.
6. Rebecca had to book in advance to see the fish at their feeding time.
7. The Ocean Centre has the largest collection of seahorses in the world.
8. Rebecca was pleased that she was able to see baby seahorses in the exhibition.
9. Each day, the Centre holds lots of talks on different topics.
10. Rebecca found she could leave and return to the Centre during her visit without paying again.