

Reading 2

WHITE SHARKS OR THE GREAT WHITES

This is an extract from a science report about WHITE SHARKS. Read and answer the questions.



For thousands of years, sharks have fascinated humans; with their strength, their reputation and, of course, their mystery. The most fascinating and mysterious of all sharks is the white shark. But how much do we know about their lives? Not very much. Their behaviour is hard to predict, as we never know where they move. Their moves

differ between males, females and juveniles: some move to the coastline, some choose to stay in the wider ocean. Scientists haven't even seen them mating or giving birth. As a result, scientists aren't sure how many white sharks exist, but they agree they're a vulnerable species with their numbers decreasing.

Great white sharks can be found throughout the world's oceans. They are the largest predatory fish¹ on our planet. On average, they grow to around 4.6 m long, but some great whites are over 6 m long, that's half the length of a bus! They weigh over 2,000 kg and guess what, they can move through the water at over 60 km per hour! Great white sharks are grey with a white underbelly, from where they get their name. They're incredibly good at hiding themselves, mainly because of their colouration.



Any creature unlucky enough to find itself in the mouth of a great white shark will be horrified! Because this mouth has a set of 300 sharp, triangular teeth organized in up to seven rows. Many think they are man-eaters, but humans are not on the great white's menu. There are around 5-10 attacks a year, but researchers believe that they don't hunt humans to eat, the sharks simply like taking a "sample bite" out of curiosity. So what do they eat? Well, when they're young, they eat small prey, such as fish and rays. But when they're older and bigger, they generally eat sea mammals such as sea lions, seals, sea turtles and small whales.

¹ Fish that eat other fish or animals.

When a great white gives birth, she usually has two to ten youngsters, called “pups”. But she shows no care for her pups. Actually, she may even try to eat them! Taking care of themselves, the newborn pups will immediately swim off into the ocean.

Other animals won't kill white sharks. Sadly, however, they are in danger because of human activity. Illegal hunting and overfishing have meant that today great white sharks are a vulnerable species on the IUCN² Red List.

21. Which TWO statements are NOT true? White sharks are...

- A. as fascinating as other sharks.
- B. fascinating animals.
- C. found in all the oceans.
- D. in danger.
- E. predictable animals.
- F. quite a mystery for humans.

22. White Sharks...

- A. are always under 6 metres long.
- B. are the largest predatory animal on our planet.
- C. can be as long as a bus.
- D. weigh more than 2,000 kg.

23. White Sharks can speed through the water at _____ Kph.

24. White Sharks...

- A. enjoy eating humans.
- B. have 7 rows of 300 teeth each.
- C. have the same diet until they die.
- D. rarely attack humans.

² International Union for Conservation of Nature

25. When white sharks eat humans they do it because they...

- A. are very hungry.
- B. hate strange animals.
- C. they like the taste of humans.
- D. want to try something new.

26. Find in the text at least 5 animals white sharks eat: _____, _____, _____, _____ and _____.

27. In which TWO paragraphs can we find information about the situation and number of white sharks?

- A. Paragraph 1.
- B. Paragraph 2.
- C. Paragraph 3.
- D. Paragraph 4.
- E. Paragraph 5.

28. Sharks...

- A. look after their pups happily.
- B. move from their mothers after a year.
- C. have only one or two pups.
- D. take care of themselves from the moment they are born.

29. Who wrote this text?

- A. A shark hunter.
- B. A biology teacher.
- C. An ecologist.
- D. A scientist.

30. One title for this article could be...

- A. WHITE SHARKS, an enigmatic animal.**
- B. WHITE SHARKS, the man-eaters.**
- C. WHITE SHARKS and overfishing.**
- D. WHITE SHARKS, the omnivorous fish.**