



Name _____

Date _____

THE OCTOPUS

The word *octopus* means eight feet. That is how the octopus got its name. The octopus is an animal that has eight arms that extend from the center. It eats small crabs and scallops along with fish, turtles, and crustaceans. It is even known to eat other octopuses. The octopus is able to catch its prey with its long arms. It then bites the prey and poisons it with a nerve poison. This poison softens the flesh and the octopus is then able to suck the flesh of the animal out of its shell or outer covering.

The octopus can mostly be found hunting during nighttime. Some people fear the octopus, but there is only one octopus that has been known to have a poison that is strong enough to kill a person. This is the Australian blue-ringed octopus.

Along with its eight arms, the octopus has a head with two eyes on either side. It has very good eyesight. The octopus does not have hearing. Each arm has suction cups in two rows. These suction cups help the octopus hold things. It is true that if the octopus loses an arm it will grow back. The octopus also has blue blood.

The octopus lives in dens and crevices of the ocean floor. This protects the octopus from its main predator, the moray eel. It also provides a place for the octopus to lay its eggs. The octopus can squirt black ink as a defense against its enemies.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. After reading this passage, what can you infer about why the octopus would squirt black ink?
 - a. The octopus is trying to show dominance.
 - b. The octopus uses the ink to hide from its predators.
 - c. The black ink brings good luck.
 - d. The octopus squirts black ink to scare the predator.
2. This passage is mostly about . . .
 - a. the description of and eating practices of the octopus.
 - b. how an octopus eats.
 - c. anatomy of the octopus.
 - d. how the octopus defends itself.
3. What is the meaning of the word *extend* as used in the passage?
 - a. ingest
 - b. spread
 - c. ignore
 - d. arrange