



## Seals Jigsaw Activity Resource for KS2

Seals are very popular animals, but just how much do we know about them and what can we all do to ensure that they are not harmed by our actions?

This interactive jigsaw activity is designed to sort fact from fiction. Children will learn how seals are well adapted for living in their habitats, some key identification features, and differences and similarities between two species.

### **You will need;**

A large seal picture cut into 9 jigsaw pieces and labelled with the 'true' statements below. If you wish, you can make two additional 'false' puzzle shapes to add too. The numbered notes below will help you to run the activities.

### **The session;**

If you have space, this session works best if children are seated in a circle so the jigsaw can be completed in the centre of the circle. Alternatively, you may use the PowerPoint presentation which will follow the statement order below.

Start by asking who has seen a seal – was it in the wild or in a zoo or wildlife park, in a book, or on television?

As a group you are going to complete a seal jigsaw. If using the extra 'false' pieces, you must identify the true facts from the untrue fiction. Only the jigsaw pieces with facts on will complete the puzzle.

Put the centre jigsaw piece face up in the middle of the group circle and arrange the other pieces face down around it randomly. Ask one child to choose a jigsaw piece, turn it over and read the sentence on it together. One of the statements below will be on each piece so use the associated learning points and activities to enhance the learning. If it is a true statement add the piece to the puzzle and repeat with a different child choosing another jigsaw piece.

Continue until you have turned over all the pieces, identified the two 'fiction' pieces and completed the jigsaw.

<b>Jigsaw piece statement</b>	<b>Learning points</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Seals are mammals	Seals are mammals and belong to the pinniped family. Pinniped means 'fin – foot'	Can children name the features of a mammal; fur, warm blooded, live young, milk. Ask: How is a seal well adapted to its environment? (notes below 1) Use the mitten to help children envisage that a seal's flipper is a similar bone structure to a human hand, but padded and webbed.	Large mitten
Male seals are called bulls	This is true	Ask what a female/mother seal is called (a cow) Ask what a baby seal is called (a pup)	
Seals can be hurt by litter, nets and beach toys	Litter can cause injury to all animals – it can have sharp edges or can entangle them which then means they are unable to feed or swim properly.  Nets from fishing can entangle seals.  Burst balloons can look like food to sea creatures and will harm animals if swallowed. Ask children how the balloon may have ended up in the sea or on a beach which will lead to a discussion on balloon releases.  We can all take responsibility for preventing litter in the environment	Using the toy seal, demonstrate how litter and netting can entangle seals. Show how a ring frisbee can get stuck and explain the consequences.  Using a couple of pieces of the litter, find how long these take to decompose on the timeline.	Soft toy seal Various (clean & no sharp edges) pieces of litter. Burst balloon A hoop frisbee Piece of netting Decomposition times for litter used (notes below 2)
There are two species of seal in Britain	This is true, apart from very occasional visits from Arctic species, such as ringed or ribbon seals that have swum a bit far south!	Explain head and size shape identification features as well as seasonal pupping differences (notes below 3) Mark one side of the room or area as 'grey seals' and the other side as 'common seals'. Call out a feature of one and children run to whichever side they think is the correct answer. (notes below 3)	Photo of grey seal & photo of common seal

Common seals are common & grey seals are grey	X This is false	Common seals have suffered from diseases and pollution and their numbers are lower than they used to be. Grey seals and common seals can all be a range of colours from pale grey, shades of brown and even black.	
A happy seal is banana shaped!	A healthy, happy common seal will often lie on its side with its head raised and its rear flippers together raised too. Sometimes seals will flap their front flipper and it does look as though they are waving, but generally it is a sign that another seal, or you, are getting too close.	Spread out and see if everyone can lie like a happy seal!	Plenty of space
Seals are carnivores	This is true.	Can the children identify the seal prey types?  What sort of teeth do children expect the seal to have?	Photos of seal prey – British coastal marine fish, but also shrimps, squid, whelks, crabs and mussels  Photo of seal teeth
seals are cuddly	X This is false	Seals have very sharp teeth and will defend themselves (bite!) if they are scared. Ask children why they think seals might be frightened of people.	
Adult seals can hold their breath under water for as long as 1 hour	This is true – some species can hold their breath for longer, even for as long as an hour and a half	Depending on the group of children, and only with teacher's permission, use a stopwatch to see how long we can comfortably hold our breath for. Ensure no one over-does this!	Timer or stopwatch
People and dogs must keep at least 10 metres away from seals	This is true – we must be even further away near a rocky shore where seals cannot move away easily. 10 metres is a minimum distance – 50 metres away is best.  Seal pups will become abandoned if their mother seal is chased away. Seal pups can get squashed if frightened adults are rushing back into the sea away from people or dogs.	Use the tape measure to see what 1 metre looks like. If you have space, measure 10 metres to see how far it is.	Tape measure

## Notes to support seal activities;

### 1. Adaptations to their environment

- very streamlined shape
- webbed flippers so are great swimmers
- fatty blubber under their skin to keep them warm
- long bristly whiskers to help them find food in murky water
- nostrils that close when relaxed and special muscles to open them to breathe

### 2. Litter dangers & decomposition

Juice carton – 5 years

Aluminium can – 100 years

Plastic bottle – 450 years

Glass bottle – 1 million years

Styrofoam packaging – never!

Balloon and lantern releases aren't just a moment of fun as they have significant negative consequences when they fall back to earth. Balloons sold as "degradable" are known to last a number of months, even years, and pose a choking threat to wildlife at sea, and on land. Balloons, balloon string and sky lanterns create a dangerous hazard

### 3. Differences between grey seals and common seals

<b>Grey seals</b>	<b>Common seals</b>
Large arched muzzle (nose)	Small turned up muzzle (nose)
Parallel nostrils	V shaped nostrils
Pups born in the winter	Pups born in the summer
Pups have thick white fur	Pups Have short fur when born
Pups stay on land for at least 3 weeks when born	Pups can swim with their mothers soon after they are born
Like to lie in groups with other seals	Like their own space on the beach
Also known as Atlantic seals	Also known as Harbour seals
Their scientific name <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> means hook-nosed sea-pig	Their scientific name <i>Phoca vitulina</i> means calf-like seal

**Seal Jigsaw pieces labels**

**Seals are mammals**

**Male seals are called bulls**

**Seals can be hurt by litter, nets and beach toys**

**There are two species of seal in Britain**

**Common seals are common and grey seals are grey**

**A happy seal is banana shaped!**

**Seals are carnivores**

**Seals are cuddly**

**Adult seals can hold their breath under water for as long as 1 hour**

**People and dogs must keep at least 10 metres away from seals**

