

STEM at HOME

SCIENCE ★ TECHNOLOGY ★ ENGINEERING ★ MATH

PRESENTED BY: **girlstart**

Seal Pups

Seals provide the Inuit with food, clothing, lamp fuel, and even tools! Learn all about the magnificent (and adorable) Harp seal as you create a seal pup from a sock.

**We recommend that you do this activity after Animal Blubber.*

TEKS:

SCI 5.1 C: Within the living environment, students learn that structure and function of organisms can improve the survival of members of a species. Students learn to differentiate between inherited traits and learned behaviors.

SCI 7.12 A: The student is expected to investigate and explain how internal structures of organisms have adaptations that allow specific functions such as gills in fish, hollow bones in birds, or xylem in plants.

Materials:

- Cotton balls or pillow filling
- Craft glue
- 2 googly eyes
- 6 2-inch pieces of brown or black string/yarn
- Rubber band
- Ruler
- Scissors
- Small black pom pom
- White felt, foam, or cardstock
- White sock

How To:

1. Cut the white felt, foam, or cardstock into two 4x2-inch ovals. These will be your seal pup's flippers!

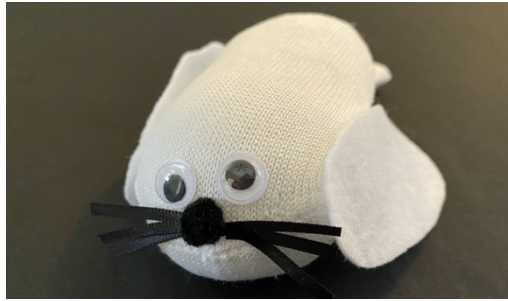


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2. Fill the sock $\frac{3}{4}$ full of cotton balls or pillow filling. Close off the end with a rubber band.
3. The toe seam of the sock will act as your seal's mouth. Use craft glue to attach a pom pom as the nose and googly eyes above it.
4. Glue three short pieces of string on each side of the nose to make the seal's whiskers.
5. Finally, glue the white foam/felt flippers on each side of the sock. Your seal pup is done!



STEM Explanation:

Although many Arctic animal species are important to the Inuit hunting lifestyle, seals have a special importance. Archeological evidence suggests that Inuit in Canada have been hunting seals for at least 4,000 years! Seal meat is an important source of fat, protein, and vitamins in the Inuit diet and seal skin is used to make warm clothing and shoes and waterproof boats and tents. Seal fat can be cooked down into oil to use in a crescent-shaped stone lamp called a kudlik, providing the Inuit with both light and heat, and seal bones provide building material for tools and utensils.

The seal pup you just created represents a harp seal. Let's channel our inner marine biologist and learn some fun facts about seals! Harp seals live in the northernmost part of the Atlantic Ocean and the Arctic Ocean. They are earless seals with a silver-gray body and pure black eyes. When pups, or baby seals, are born they have yellow-white fur that changes to completely white after three days. Adult seals usually live about 30 years in the wild and can be between five and six feet long and weigh up to 400 pounds! Because harp seals have no ears, vision is their most important sense. Their eyes have large spherical lenses that help them focus on objects and a mobile pupil so that they can adapt to the sun glaring off the ice. Harp seals love being in the ocean and spend as little time as possible on land. They usually live in very large colonies and are known to be social animals because they can make a lot of noise.



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Career Connection:

Marine Biologists study organisms that are found in the ocean and other bodies of water. Most marine biologists focus on a single sub-field such as coral reefs, coastal habitats, oceanic trenches, or microscopic marine life. These scientists work to study and preserve ocean life while also educating people about it.

Resources:

<http://tippytoecrafts.blogspot.com/2012/01/harp-seal-pups.html>

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/h/harp-seal/>

Image Sources:

<https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/new-threat-harp-seals>

<https://oceana.org/marine-life/marine-mammals/harp-seal>

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