

Zebra Mussel Colouring and Activity Book

Have you ever heard of zebra mussels?

They're not zebras and they're not "muscles", but this creature is called a zebra mussel!



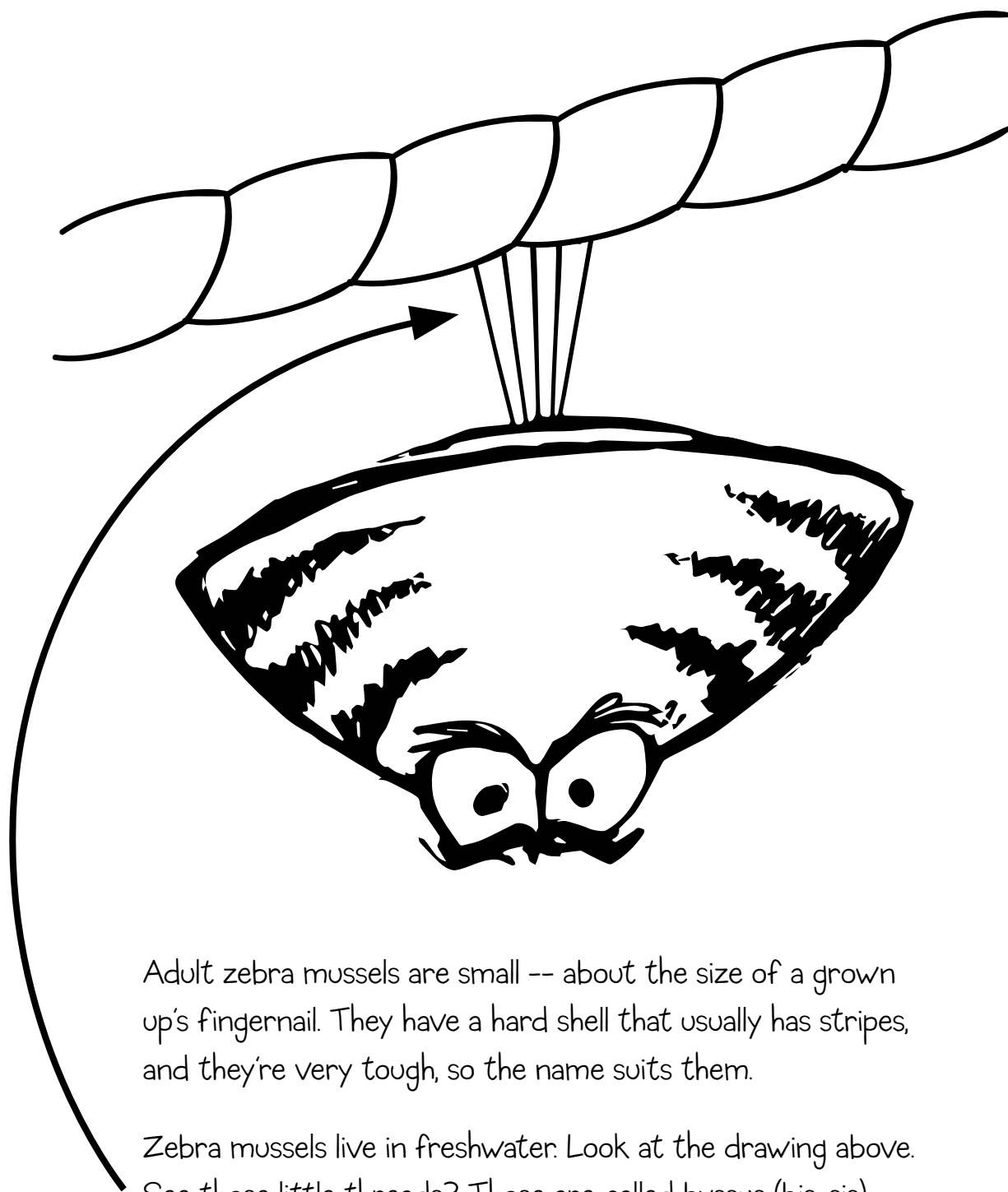
Not me!



Or me!



That's me!



Adult zebra mussels are small -- about the size of a grown up's fingernail. They have a hard shell that usually has stripes, and they're very tough, so the name suits them.

Zebra mussels live in freshwater. Look at the drawing above. See those little threads? Those are called byssus (bis-sis). Byssus is like really strong glue. That's how zebra mussels attach to things in the water such as rocks, boats, even your toys.

If you had byssus, what would you want to stick to?

Zebra mussels are not "native" to Manitoba's lakes and rivers. That means they're not a natural part of our environment. But zebra mussels have invaded our water and can be found in some of our lakes and rivers now. That's NOT good.

Word Search

zebra mussel

native

environment

stripes

lake

glue

byssus

river

invaded

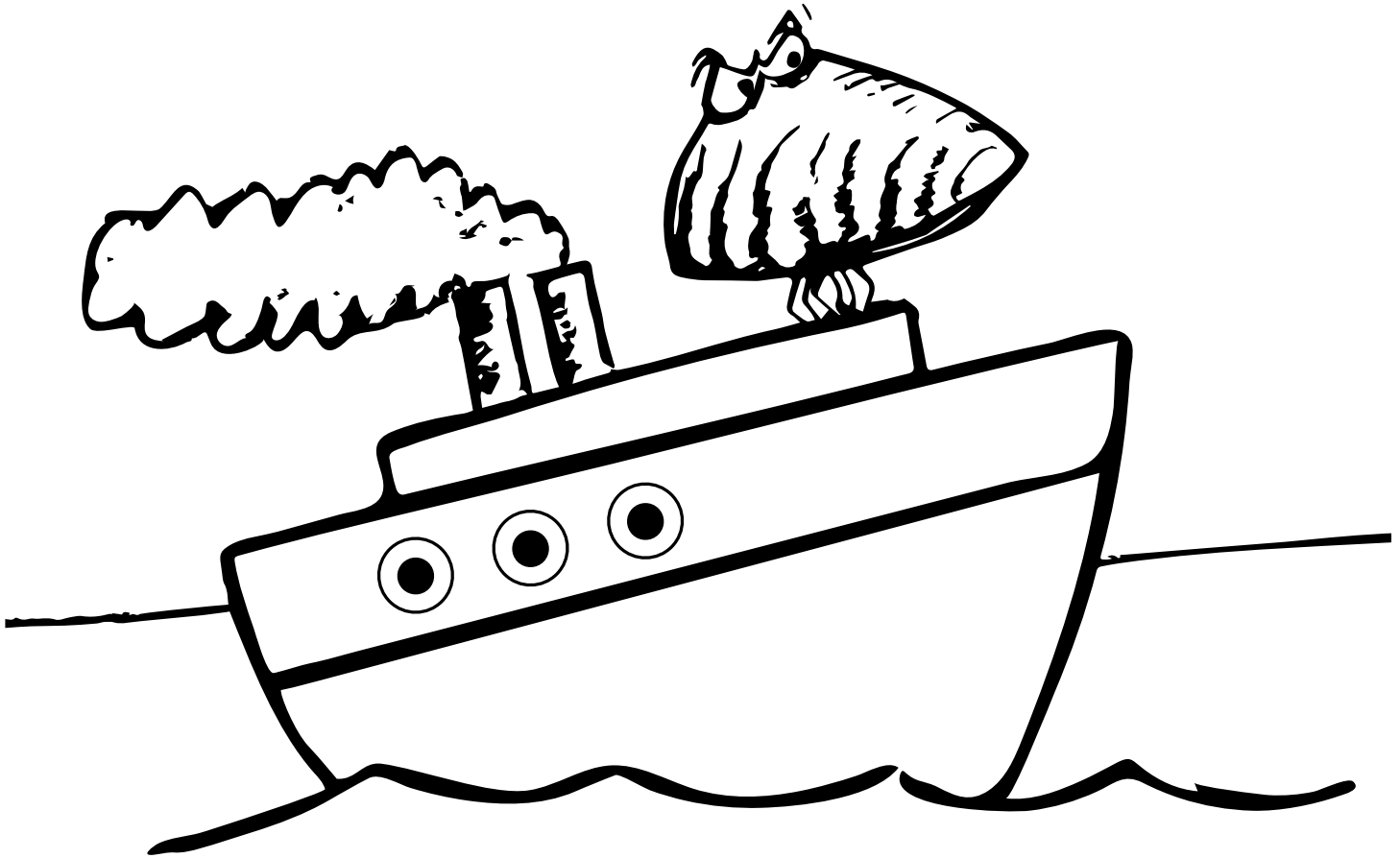
Manitoba

fish

L	A	F	D	E	D	A	V	N	I	Z
G	E	I	V	L	U	B	O	T	E	J
B	Y	S	E	H	S	O	I	L	N	S
E	K	U	S	M	A	T	R	M	V	E
I	V	G	L	U	D	I	E	N	I	P
T	S	I	P	O	M	N	V	I	R	I
G	L	U	E	F	N	A	I	W	O	R
P	O	R	S	A	H	M	R	A	N	T
Z	E	N	R	S	T	I	E	B	M	S
E	K	T	I	O	Y	S	A	K	E	A
M	A	F	E	H	S	B	Y	A	N	Z
D	L	E	V	I	T	A	N	F	T	C

How did they get here?

Zebra mussels love catching rides. To get to Canada, they caught rides on large ships that came from across the ocean.. They began to settle in the Great Lakes. Their families started to grow quickly. An adult female zebra mussel can produce more than one million eggs each year! Can you imagine if you had that many brothers and sisters?!



Are zebra mussels bad?

Sadly, they are. They're bad because:

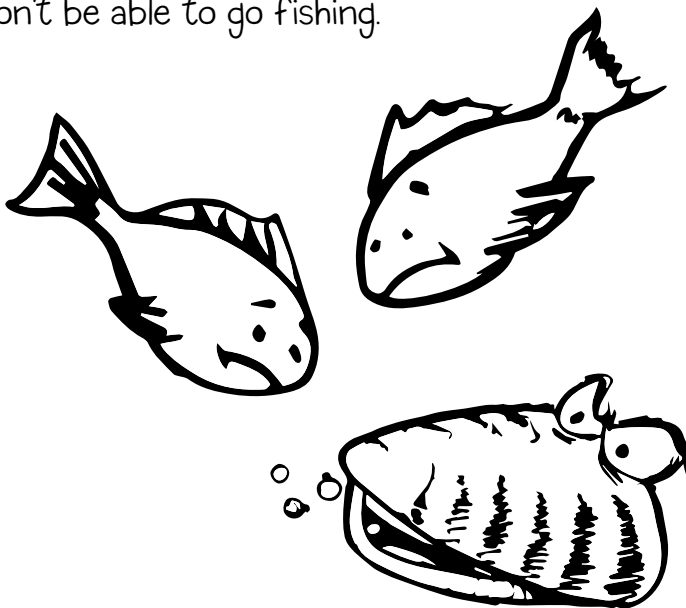
1. When they're out of water for a long enough time, they die. When they die, they're really smelly -- worse than your brother's, sister's or best friend's smelliest pair of socks! Who wants to play on the beach if there are smelly zebra mussels everywhere?



2. Their shells have very sharp edges. If you're playing in the sand or walking in bare feet and there are dead zebra mussels on the shore, your feet might get cut.

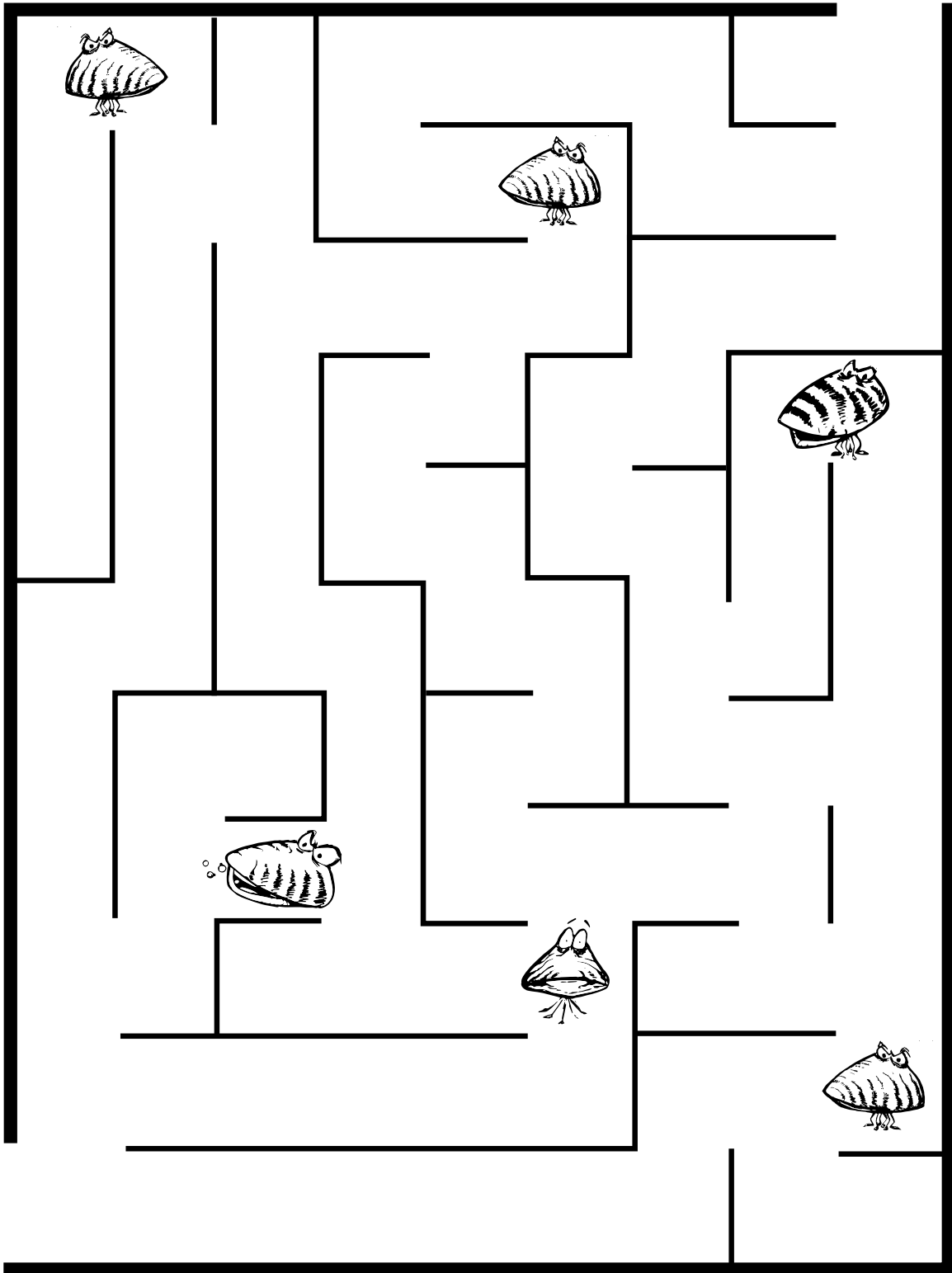


3. They eat all the plankton in the water. Plankton are super teeny plants and animals that float in the water. Fish also eat plankton. But if zebra mussels eat it all first, then there is no food left for the fish. And if there are fewer fish, you won't be able to go fishing.



Maze Game

Get from one end to the other without stepping on a zebra mussel.



Can we do anything to stop zebra mussels from invading all our lakes and rivers?

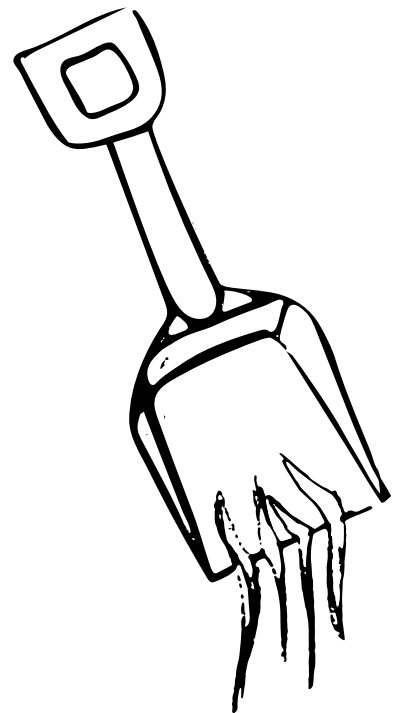
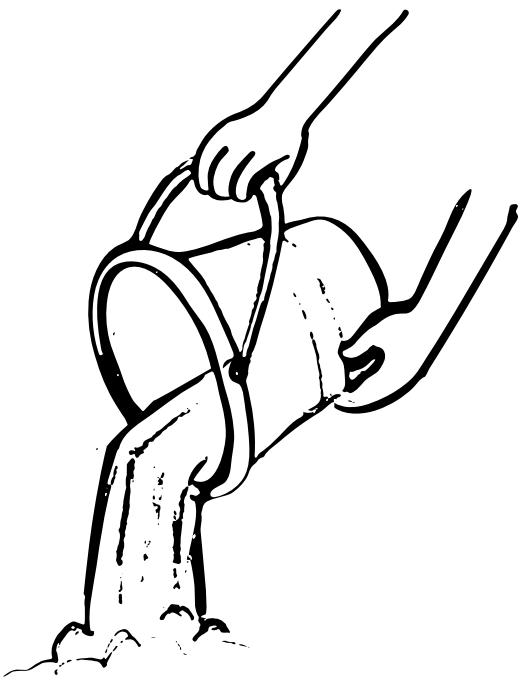
Yes! When zebra mussels are born, they're so small, you can't even see them. Baby zebra mussels, called "veligers" (vel-li-gerz), love floating in water. So before you leave the lake, make sure you clean, drain, dry.

CLEAN - if there's any grass or seaweed stuck to your toys, remove it.

DRAIN - dump all the water out of your toys.

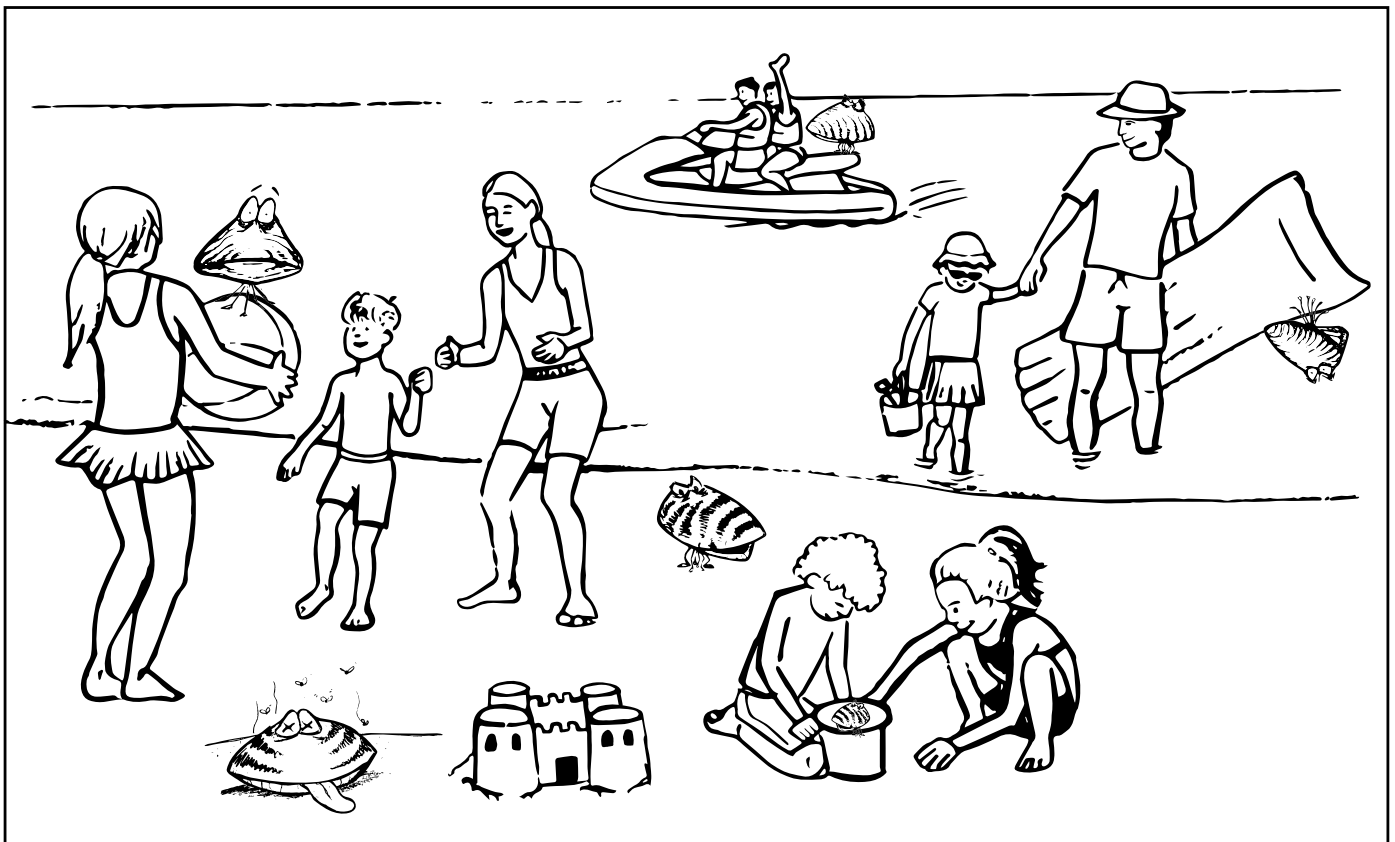
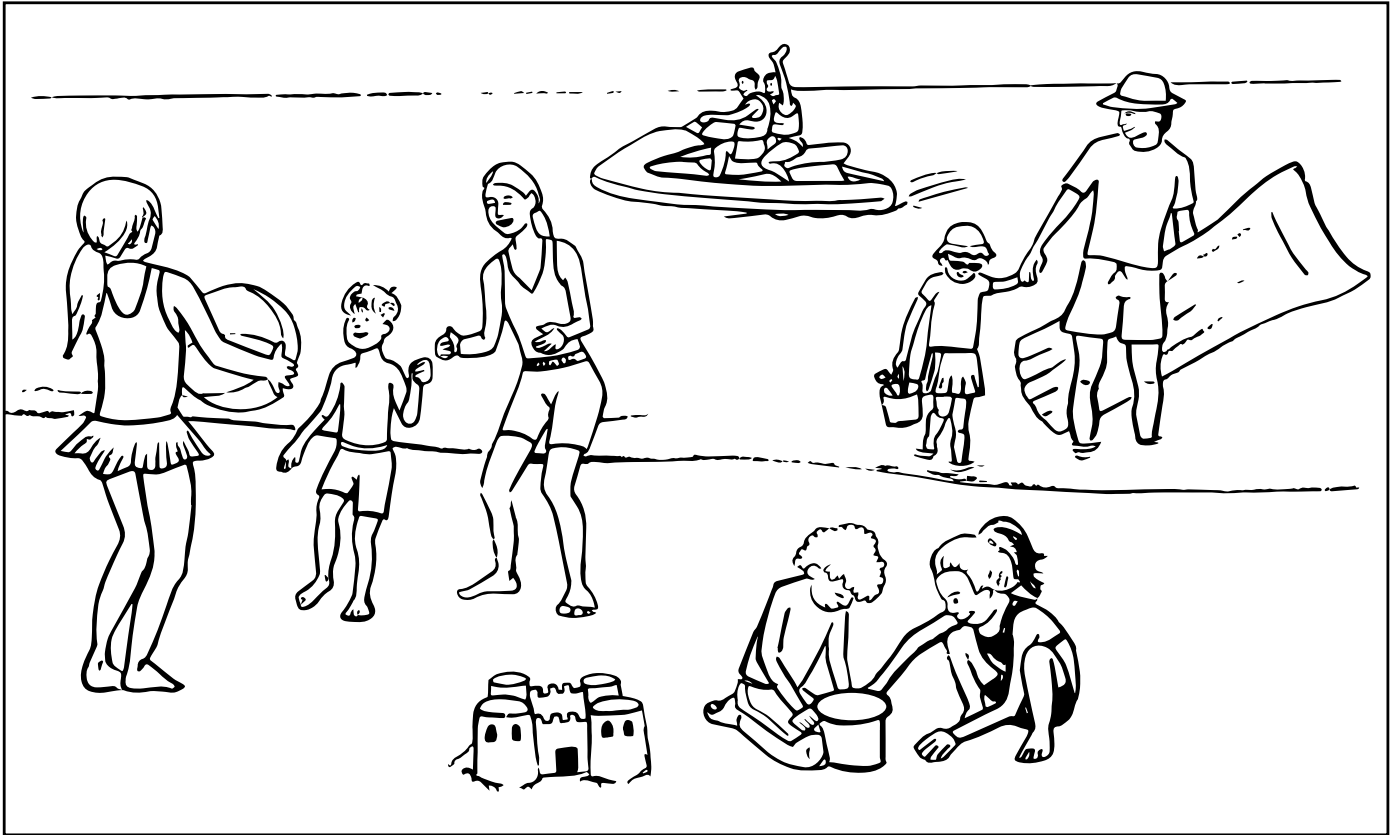
DRY - ask your mom or dad for an old rag so you can dry off your toys.

Veligers are so tiny, there could be a hundred of them in a single drop of water!



Spot the difference

(There are six differences between these two pictures).



Word Scramble

Clean, drain and dry everything you use or play with in the water.

Can you unscramble the words below to identify some things used in the water?

— — — —
a o t b

— — — — — — — — — — — — — — — —
h i s g i f n d o r

— — — — — — — — — — — — — — — —
e o d o n l

— — — — — — — — — — — — — — — —
o g s g e g l

— — — — — — — — — — — — — — — —
a h b c e a l l b

Choose the correct word and fill in the blank.

(hint: the answers are found in this booklet)

Zebra _____ (muscles / mussels) usually have _____ (stripes / strips), which is what gives them their name. They're very small, but their byssus makes them quite _____ (strange / strong) and allows them to stick to things in the water.

Baby zebra mussels are called _____ (villages / veligers). They're so _____ (smiley / small) that humans can't see them. Zebra mussels are bad for our lakes and rivers because they eat all the _____ (planks / plankton) and there's no food left for the fish. They also wash onto the shore and _____ (die / dye). That's bad because they're very _____ (smelly / smiley) and have _____ (sharp / shape) edges that can cut your feet.

If we want to stop zebra mussels from invading our lakes and rivers, we must clean, _____ (drone / drain) and dry everything we used in the water that day.

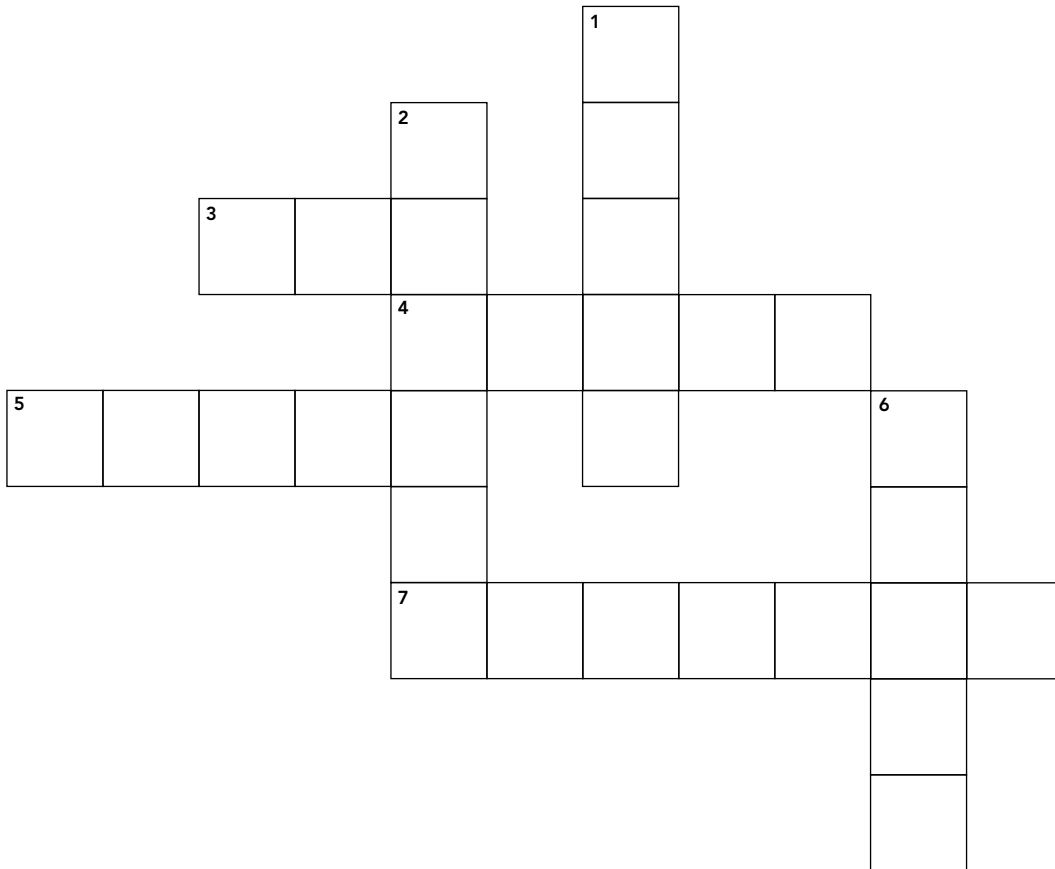
Crossword Puzzle

Across:

- 3 The third thing you should do when you take your toys out of the water.
- 4 Peee-ewww. Dead zebra mussels _ _ _ _ _ .
- 5 Zebra mussels hitched a ride on these to come to Canada.
- 7 This feature of a ZEBRA mussel is one reason it isn't called a DOT mussel.

Down:

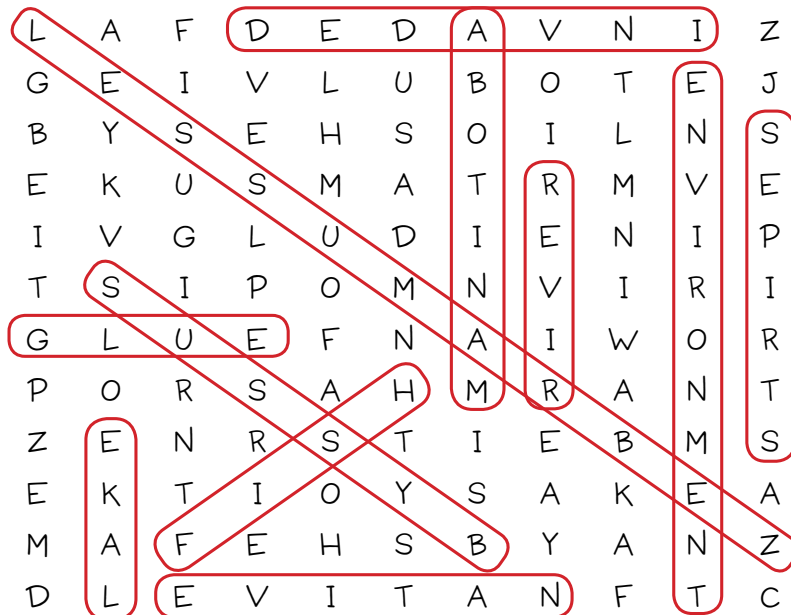
- 1 What's the second thing you should do when you take your toys out of the water?
- 2 It's as sticky as glue.
- 6 What's the first thing you should do when you take your toys out of the lake?



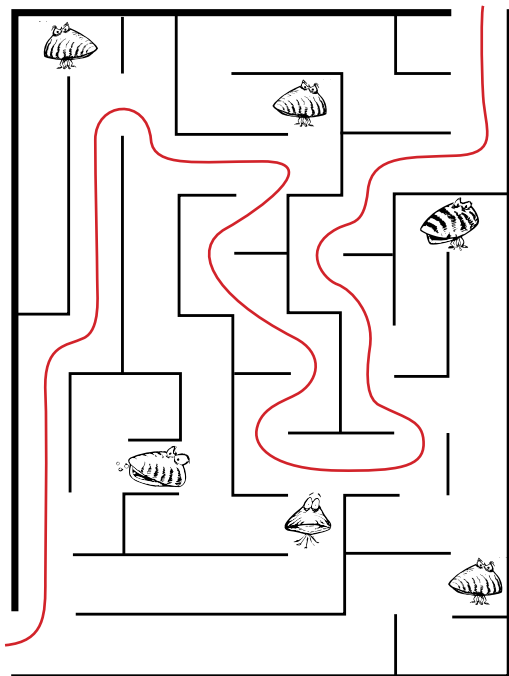
**Draw a picture of your favourite thing
to do at the beach.**

Want to check your answers?

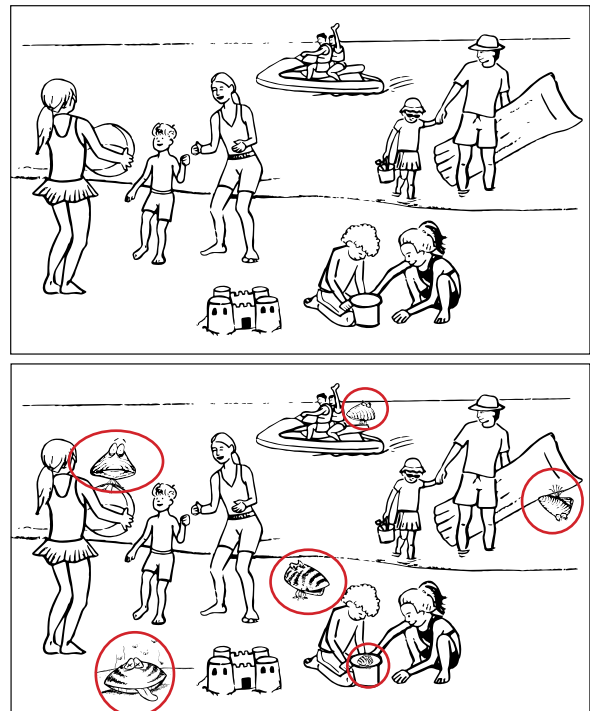
Word Search, page 4:



Maze Game, page 7:



Spot the Difference, page 9:



Word Scramble, page 10:

boat, fishing rod, noodle, goggles, beach ball

Fill in the Blanks, page 11:

mussels
stripes
strong
veligers
small
plankton
die
smelly
sharp
drain

Crossword Puzzle, page 12:

