

NEWS BREAK

Wednesday's News Break selects an article from Monday, February 22 of The Seattle Times e-Edition for an in-depth reading of the news. Read the selected article and answer the attached study questions. **Please remember to always preview the content of the article before sharing with your students.**

Wasting Away (Main, page A1).

Pre-Reading and Vocabulary

1. Before you read this article, as a class discuss what you think this story will be about. Write down any keywords from the title, which you used to make your predictions. Also discuss what clues the photos accompanying the article might give you.

2. Vocabulary: Match the words to the numbered definitions below.

- A. barren
- B. bereft of
- C. coincided
- D. constellation
- E. coves
- F. die-off
- G. epidemic
- H. lesions
- I. link
- J. mortality
- K. observation
- L. outbreak
- M. prevalence
- N. virulent
- O. virus

- 1. a small area of ocean that is partly surrounded by land
- 2. an injured or diseased spot or area on or in the body
- 3. an extremely small living thing that causes a disease and that spreads from one person or animal to another
- 4. having very few plants
- 5. to show or prove that a person or thing is related to or involved with something
- 6. something you notice by watching and listening
- 7. a group of people or things that are similar in some way
- 8. extremely dangerous and deadly and usually spreading very quickly
- 9. not having (something that is needed, wanted, or expected)
- 10. to die one after another so that fewer and fewer are left
- 11. a sudden start or increase of fighting or disease

12. the death of a person, animal, etc.
13. an occurrence in which a disease spreads very quickly and affects a large number of people/animals
14. to happen at the same time as something else
15. common or widespread

Comprehension

1. What first alerted biologist Steven Franklin that something was terribly wrong with at Starfish Point at Olympic National Park when he observed them in June of 2013?
2. What was the next thing he noticed on the skin of the usually colorful starfish?
3. The observation biologist Steven Franklin made was the first reported sighting of the starfish wasting disease – **true or false?**
4. Scientists working to understand the outbreak have published the first evidence of a link between what and the starfish wasting disease?
5. Scientists discovered that while younger starfish took longer to show symptoms of the disease, that once they did what happened?
6. Some locations where the starfish wasting disease showed up saw complete _____ of starfish. **(Fill in the blank)**
7. According to the article, which were hit with the disease first – adult or juvenile starfish?
8. Explain what has happened with green urchins a prime food for starfish, because of starfish wasting disease?
9. The starfish wasting disease in 2013 and 2014 devastated more than _____ species of sea stars from Alaska to Mexico. **(Multiple Choice – choose the best answer)**
 - a) 10
 - b) 20
 - c) 30
 - d) None of the above

Additional Activities

1. Read the article and watch the PBS video about the work scientists are doing to identify the virus at the heart of the starfish wasting disease at:
<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/scientists-solve-mystery-of-west-coast-starfish-deaths/>
2. Using your school library or the Internet, research to find out more about sea stars (starfish) and how they live in the world's oceans. What makes sea stars unique? What are they famous for being able to do that we humans can't? Are they carnivores or omnivores? How long do they normally live? Write one to two paragraphs about what you learned from your research about sea stars. Below are some websites to help get you started:
<http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/invertebrates/starfish/>
<https://kidskconnect.com/animals/starfish/>
<http://marinelife.about.com/od/invertebrates/tp/seastarfacts.htm>

3. Read the following quote from the article: *“As important as the ecological effects of the disease are, the starfish meltdown affects people, too. The first ocean creatures many kids see or touch, starfish are an ambassador to an unseen world that needs all the friends it can get, James said. How do you connect kids to the ocean without the tidepool life?”* How do you think the starfish meltdown affects people? Have you ever seen a starfish close-up or touched one? If so, how did that experience make you feel? Do you think sea stars are an important way to connect kids to the ocean? What other ways can you think of to connect to the ocean and the many marine animals that call the ocean home?

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Answer Key to Vocabulary

- A. 4
- B. 9
- C. 14
- D. 7
- E. 1
- F. 10
- G. 13
- H. 2
- I. 5
- J. 12
- K. 6
- L. 11
- M. 15
- N. 8
- O. 3

Answer Key to Comprehension Questions

- 1. Starfish arms walking off on their own.
- 2. He noticed (white) lesions on the skin of the starfish.
- 3. True
- 4. Warmer ocean temperatures.
- 5. They died right away.
- 6. mortality
- 7. Adult starfish were hit with the disease first.
- 8. There are a large number of green urchins now and they are mowing down algae and other vegetation.
- 9. b) 20