OCEAN ZONES
Before children read “The Ocean,” pages 4-13, ask them to describe how the ocean is like a birthday cake. List their ideas on a piece of paper. Then ask children to think about the “birthday cake” question as they read the article. Once they have read “The Ocean,” ask the question again. (Answer: The ocean has layers). Briefly identify the three layers (called zones) mentioned in the article, and as a together complete the Family Page called “In the Zones.”

ECOSYSTEM IQ
In “What’s Your Ocean IQ?” on pages 14-17, children can test their knowledge of some ocean-dwelling creatures. What is the major ecosystem where you live? Forest, wetland, shoreline, desert, or something else? Have your children write their a story using their new knowledge and encourage them to add their own illustrations.

SEA HOMES
At the conclusion of “Coral Condos,” pages 18-23, children learn what happens to corals when they get stressed and expel their algae. Have your children learn more about coral bleaching, answering the following questions.

- What percentage of the world’s reefs are impacted by this phenomenon?
- How is marine life affected?
- What are scientists doing to save coral reefs?
- What can students do to help save coral reefs?

ZOOM IN ON BIODIVERSITY
Collect a sample of water from your closest stream or pond and take turns looking at it with the naked eye or with a magnifying glass. Draw them draw what they see. Now read or reread about marine plankton in “Super (Small) Heroes,” pages 26-30. Look at a fresh sample or the same sample again. Can they find any plankton? Plankton represent amazing biodiversity because there are so many different kinds. Investigate local biodiversity with something a little bigger and easier to count. For example, discover how many different species of trees there are in your neighborhood or a local park, using the tree shapes, differences in leaves and bark, and leaf buds specified in field guides.

TRASH CENSUS
After reading “Trash Tracker,” pages 31-35, do some trash tracking of your own. Organize a clean-up project at a park, beach, or trail in your area. Keep a running tally of the objects they collect. Which kinds of trash are most abundant? Can you determine the sources of some of these items? For instance, are people littering at the site, is litter washing or blowing in from somewhere else, or is there some other explanation?
Use what you learned from reading “The Ocean” (pages 6–15), as well as information from other resources, to complete the following chart about zones in the ocean.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ZONES (FROM TOP TO BOTTOM)</th>
<th>HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THIS ZONE?</th>
<th>WHAT PLANTS AND ANIMALS LIVE IN THIS ZONE?</th>
<th>WHAT INTERESTED YOU MOST ABOUT THIS ZONE?</th>
<th>WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU HAVE ABOUT THIS ZONE? (LIST AT LEAST TWO PER ZONE.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUNLIT ZONE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TWILIGHT ZONE</td>
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<tr>
<td>MIDNIGHT ZONE</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**BONUS ACTIVITY**: Select two of the questions in the last column of your chart. Write the questions on the back of this paper: one question at the top of the page and the other in the middle of the page. Now go online to explore the questions. Under each question, write your findings.
In “Coral Condos,” on pages 18–23, you see how fish and other animals live in every nook and cranny of a coral reef. Imagine if your bedroom were as busy as a coral condo (and filled with seawater, of course). Draw the room below, with fish and other coral reef creatures living in every available space.

1. How is the bedroom in your drawing like a real coral condo?

2. How is it different?
UNDERWATER VIEW

Summer is a great time to head for a wet place. Make a special scope for peering underwater, and then go see what’s living in a pond, stream, or lake near you!

Make an Underwater Scope
1. Find a plastic tub with a snap-on lid, such as a large yogurt container.

2. Ask a grown-up to help you use scissors to cut off the bottom of the container and to cut a circle out of the lid, leaving the rim intact.

3. Put a piece of clear plastic wrap over the top of the container. Place a rubber band around the container to hold the plastic wrap in place.

4. Put the lid back on the container to help hold the plastic wrap on. Your scope is done!

To Use the Scope:
Dip the scope into the water with the plastic-wrapped end down. Look through the opening in the top. The water will bend the plastic wrap into a lens, giving you a clear and magnified view of what’s under the water’s surface.

Draw and describe what you see through your scope.