

# Manta Ray vs. Stingray



Grades 4-5

Integrating Information  
& Combining Texts



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<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/> Manta Ray  
photo by Dean Croshere. and Stingray photo by J Bongio

Flesch-Kincaid level: 5.8

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[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.9](#)

Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.9](#)

Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.



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name \_\_\_\_\_

## Manta Ray vs. Stingray

# Manta Ray

Manta rays are found in tropical and temperate oceans around the world. Since they like warm waters, they are never found in icy cold places. Many live near the equator. They come to coral reefs quite often to be cleaned by the fish that live there.

Humans have no reason to fear mantas. Manta rays have more reason to fear humans than humans have to fear manta rays. They are gentle filter-feeders; their diets are creatures like shrimp, krill, and plankton. They do have small flat teeth, but they are not well-suited to chewing so they must eat tiny creatures.

Manta rays are the largest rays in the ocean. Due to their size, they have few predators other than orcas and very large sharks. They are flat-bodied fish with triangular-shaped fins related to sharks. They have no bones, only cartilage. They have tails, but no stingers like other rays. Considering their very large size, they don't really need stingers. They can weigh nearly 3000 pounds, so it is wonderful that they are mild-mannered and not aggressive! Most mantas are grey, black, and white with spots on their under-bellies. Their spots are like fingerprints. No two mantas are just alike, and they can be identified by those spots. Scientists are still learning about manta rays; however, one particular manta that visits the Great Barrier Reef has been identified by its spots. It is over 40 years old and is named, Taurus. Taurus was first photographed in 1983.

Female mantas have one or two "pups" every few years. Mantas are ovoviviparous. The strange thing about the manta's pups is that they grow inside eggs, but hatch within the mother's bodies so they are actually born alive!



name \_\_\_\_\_

## Manta Ray vs. Stingray

# Stingray

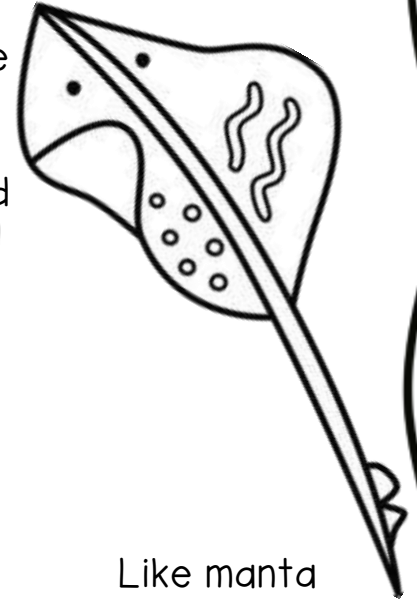
Like manta rays, stingrays live in tropical and temperate waters around the world. They prefer shallow coastal waters. Some species live in freshwater, such as rivers. They live from 15-25 years. One of their favorite spots to be is in coral reefs. There they feed on the sandy bottoms and dig under the sand to wait for their prey. When prey swims past, they can detect small electrical charges coming from the animals and then they ambush them.

Prey for the stingrays includes small fish, shrimp, shellfish like clams and oysters, as well as other crustaceans. Their strong jaws are used to crush their meals.

Stingrays have barbed venomous spines on their tails for defense, which can be very dangerous to humans. One popular zookeeper and conservationist named Steve Irwin, was killed in a freak accident when he was stung in the chest by a bull stingray on September 4, 2006. He was shooting a segment for a television program called, *The Ocean's Deadliest*.

There are 70 different kinds of stingrays. They are a variety of sizes and colors. They are all related to sharks like manta rays. They have no bones. Their skeletons are made of cartilage. Stingrays are around five or six feet long, but some can be larger. They are roundish and flat with fins that go the whole length of their bodies. They swim by moving their bodies in wavy motions so it seems like they can "fly" through the water.

Stingrays do have enemies. Sharks, large fish, seals, sea lions, and orcas are among their predators. Stingrays are on the menu in several countries such as Japan, Singapore, and Malaysia.



Like manta rays, Stingrays are ovoviviparous. Their young develop in yolk-filled eggs. The eggs hatch inside their mothers and are later born alive. Stingrays moms can birth up to seven pups in a litter.

name \_\_\_\_\_

# Manta Ray vs. Stingray

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Manta Ray

BOTH

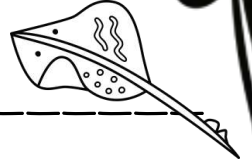
Stingray

name \_\_\_\_\_

Manta Ray vs. Stingray



# My Comparison of Manta Rays & Stingrays



A series of horizontal lines for writing, consisting of a solid top line, a dashed middle line, and a solid bottom line, repeated down the page.

name \_\_\_\_\_

Manta Ray vs. Stingray

## Manta Rays & Stingrays Text-Dependent Questions

1. Explain the reason why humans probably do not need to fear manta rays.

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2. Why are stingrays considered more dangerous than manta rays?

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3. Which of the two rays likely live longer? How do you know?

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4. Describe the coloration of the two rays.

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5. Explain how are the diets of the two rays are different

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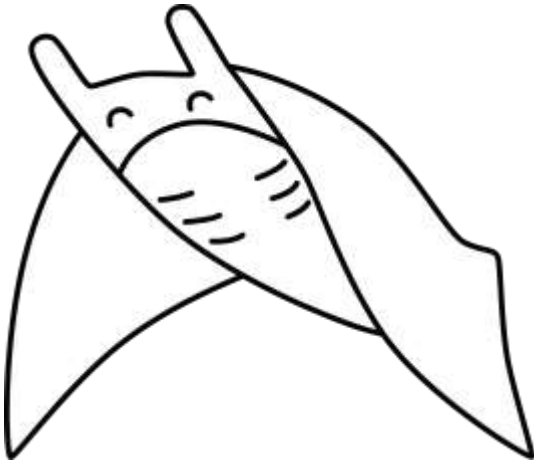
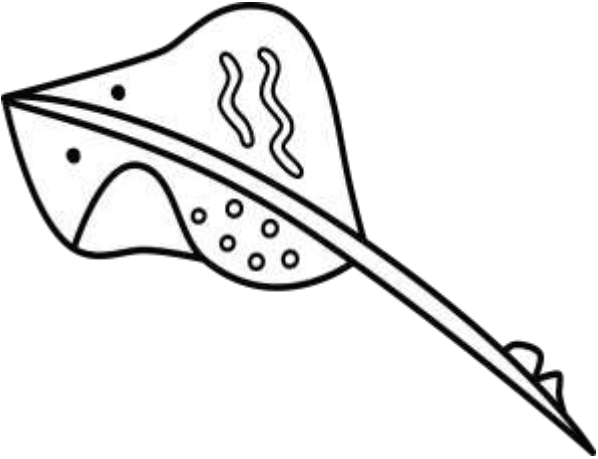
6. What is the difference between the predators of the two rays?

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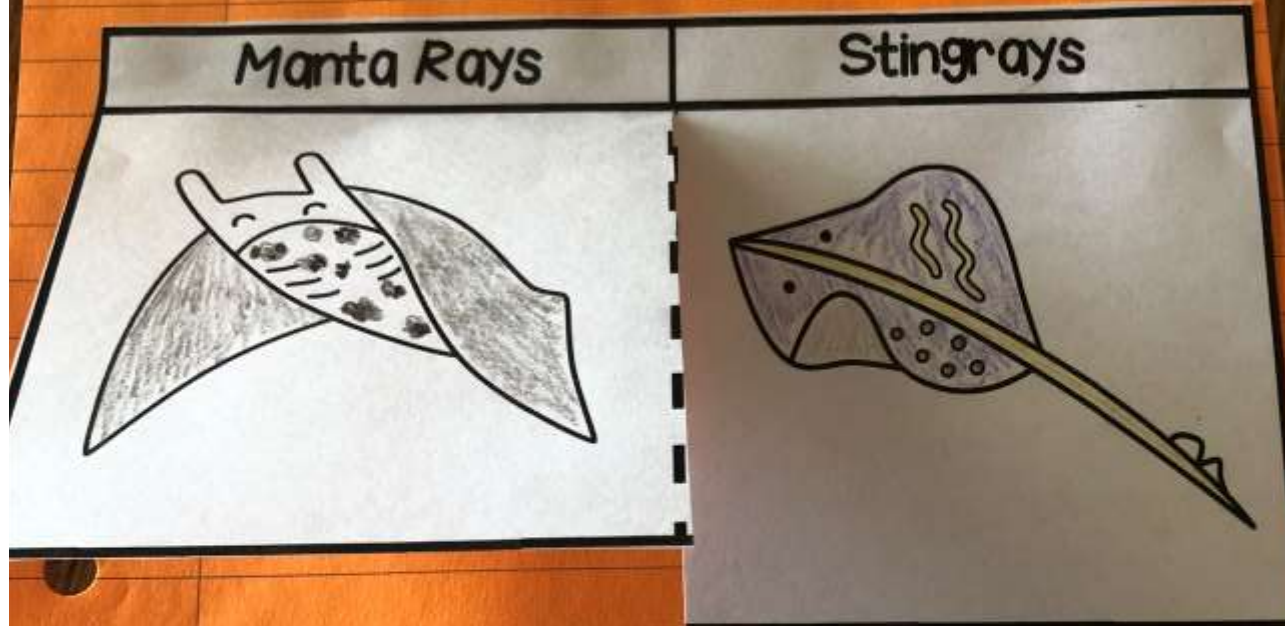


# Manta Rays & Stingrays Facts Interactive Foldable

Manta Rays	Stingrays
 A line drawing of a manta ray, showing its large, flat body and two large, wing-like pectoral fins. The head is small and pointed, with a few small details like eyes and gills.	 A line drawing of a stingray, showing its diamond-shaped body and a long, thin tail with a sharp, serrated stinger at the end. The head is pointed, and there are some wavy lines on the side of the body.



Glue on the back of the top part of the foldable behind the ray's names.



Students can make a list of facts under each "flap". This can be used as an alternative graphic organizer. This is a way to differentiate for those students who struggle with the three-column compare/contrast organizer.