

Ocean Currents Trivia: Questions, Answers, and Facts Printable Trivia Pack

Ocean Currents trivia explores the powerful streams of seawater that have shaped navigation, weather, marine life, and global climate for centuries. From the Gulf Stream to the thermohaline circulation, these questions offer a lively way to learn how the oceans connect distant coasts and influence life around the world.

HARD OCEAN CURRENTS TRIVIA

1. Which scientist helped explain the large-scale planetary waves that influence ocean circulation?

Answer: Gustaf Rossby

2. Name the oceanographer who coauthored the 1947 work 'Wind-Driven Ocean Circulation' with Harald Sverdrup.?

Answer: Walter Munk

3. What major international research program on ocean circulation began in 1990?

Answer: The World Ocean Circulation Experiment

4. CLIVAR expands to what full title?

Answer: Climate and Ocean: Variability, Predictability and Change

5. In physical oceanography, what name is given to the balance between pressure-gradient force and Coriolis force?

Answer: geostrophic balance

6. A Sverdrup measures volume transport equal to how many cubic meters per second?

Answer: 1 million cubic meters per second

7. Through which passage is the Antarctic Circumpolar Current commonly estimated at about 100 to 150 Sverdrups?

Answer: Drake Passage

8. Near the Florida Strait, the Florida Current transport is roughly what value?

Answer: 30 Sverdrups

9. Which quantity is approximately conserved for a moving water column when strong friction or mixing is absent?

Answer: potential vorticity

10. What phenomenon arises because the Coriolis parameter changes with latitude?

Answer: western intensification

11. Vertical motion induced by curl in the surface wind stress is known as what?

Answer: Ekman pumping

12. Which circulation features northward flow of warm upper waters and southward flow of

colder deep waters?

Answer: Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation

13. North Atlantic Deep Water forms mainly in which two regions?

Answer: The Labrador and Nordic seas

14. Which major water mass is the densest in the global ocean?

Answer: Antarctic Bottom Water

FUNNY OCEAN CURRENTS TRIVIA

1. What giant swirl is basically the reluctant landlord keeping the Great Pacific Garbage Patch in one place?

Answer: The North Pacific subtropical gyre traps the Great Pacific Garbage Patch.

2. If a major current is the highway, what do oceanographers call the smaller swirly side quest of water?

Answer: An eddy.

3. True or false: In the same ocean basin, eastern boundary currents usually win the speed race against western boundary currents.?

Answer: False

4. Which way does the Peru Current head as it hugs the west coast of South America: northward or southward?

Answer: Northward.

5. Name the current that belongs to the circulation of the southwest Indian Ocean and sounds like it already has its own passport stamp.?

Answer: The Mozambique Current.

6. Which current carries relatively warm Atlantic water toward the Norwegian Sea, like a marine delivery service with no tipping option?

Answer: The Norwegian Current.

7. What current slides cold water southward along Greenland's east coast, basically doing the opposite of a tropical vacation?

Answer: The East Greenland Current.

8. When the ocean decides the surface level is too crowded and shoves water downward, what is that process called?

Answer: Downwelling.

9. What wind-driven process can heap surface water up in the middle of subtropical gyres, like the ocean forgot to spread out its laundry?

Answer: Convergence.

10. What feature created by piled-up water helps balance wind stress in gyres?

Answer: Sea-surface slopes.

11. If winds push surface water away from a coastline, what ocean process commonly shows up like the sea saying, 'Fine, I'll send backup from below'?

Answer: Coastal upwelling.

12. Which current in the northeast Pacific is warm, despite sounding like it ought to arrive wearing mittens?

Answer: The Alaska Current.

13. The Alaska Current feeds which larger circulation feature?

Answer: The Alaska Gyre.

FUN OCEAN CURRENTS TRIVIA

1. Which ocean current gave Pixar a real-world inspiration boost for the speedy water ride in 'Finding Nemo'?

Answer: The East Australian Current inspired the fast-moving current in 'Finding Nemo.'

2. What is the movie named in the fact that the East Australian Current helped inspire?

Answer: Finding Nemo

3. Which current is famous for shedding giant rotating rings into the South Atlantic?

Answer: The Agulhas Current

4. About how fast can the Gulf Stream get in some areas?

Answer: It can exceed 2 meters per second.

5. If ocean currents held a strength contest, which one would take the title as the strongest current system on Earth?

Answer: The Antarctic Circumpolar Current

6. True or false: The Antarctic Circumpolar Current is the only current that flows completely around the globe.?

Answer: True

7. Oceanographers gave the planet-wide overturning circulation what conveyor-belt-style nickname?

Answer: The global conveyor belt

8. Which current sometimes goes by the dramatic nickname 'Black Current'?

Answer: The Kuroshio Current

9. The name 'El Niño' originally referred to a warm current noticed near which country around Christmas?

Answer: Peru

10. Strong coastal upwelling helps make one of the world's richest fishing regions off the coast of which country?

Answer: Peru

11. What do you call the narrow currents that race away from shore through the surf zone?

Answer: Rip currents

12. Which kind of current usually cruises roughly parallel to the beach instead of heading straight out to sea?

Answer: Longshore currents

13. What climate pattern affects current and temperature patterns in the Indian Ocean?

Answer: The Indian Ocean Dipole

OCEAN CURRENTS FAMILY TRIVIA

1. Which famous American helped chart the Gulf Stream back in the 18th century?

Answer: Benjamin Franklin helped chart the Gulf Stream in the 18th century.

2. Who published the book 'The Physical Geography of the Sea' in 1855?

Answer: Matthew Fontaine Maury published 'The Physical Geography of the Sea' in 1855.

3. What current flows through the Straits of Florida?

Answer: The Florida Current flows through the Straits of Florida.

4. Which current runs southward along the southeast coast of Africa?

Answer: The Agulhas Current runs southward along the southeast coast of Africa.

5. True or false: The Oyashio Current is a cold current in the northwest Pacific.?

Answer: True

6. Which current flows westward in both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans?

Answer: The North Equatorial Current flows westward in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

7. What is the name of the current that flows westward on both sides of the equator in several oceans?

Answer: The South Equatorial Current flows westward on both sides of the equator in several oceans.

8. Which current goes eastward between westward equatorial currents, almost like a watery hallway?

Answer: The Equatorial Countercurrent flows eastward between westward equatorial currents.

9. In the open ocean, Ekman transport describes net surface-water movement how many degrees to the wind?

Answer: Ekman transport describes net surface-water movement 90 degrees to the wind in the open ocean.

10. Whose name is attached to the Ekman spiral?

Answer: Vagn Walfrid Ekman gave his name to the Ekman spiral.

11. Which scientist helped explain why western boundary currents are narrow and fast?

Answer: Henry Stommel helped explain why western boundary currents are narrow and fast.

12. Who developed the Sverdrup balance for wind-driven ocean circulation?

Answer: Harald Sverdrup developed the Sverdrup balance for wind-driven ocean circulation.

EASY OCEAN CURRENTS TRIVIA

1. Which Atlantic Ocean current is warm and famous for moving heat northward?

Answer: The Gulf Stream is the warm Atlantic Ocean current.

2. What current flows southward along the west coast of North America?

Answer: The California Current flows southward along the west coast of North America.

3. Which warm current is found in the western North Pacific?

Answer: The Kuroshio Current is the warm current in the western North Pacific.

4. Name the cold current that carries water south along eastern Canada.?

Answer: The Labrador Current carries cold water south along eastern Canada.

5. The Gulf Stream helps make which region milder than other places at similar latitudes?

Answer: The Gulf Stream helps make Western Europe milder.

6. What mainly drives ocean surface currents?

Answer: Ocean surface currents are driven mainly by winds.

7. In which hemisphere does the Coriolis effect bend moving water to the right?

Answer: It bends moving water to the right in the Northern Hemisphere.

8. What do you call a large circular system of ocean currents?

Answer: A large circular system of ocean currents is called a gyre.

9. The Gulf Stream is part of which larger current system?

Answer: The Gulf Stream is part of the North Atlantic Gyre.

10. Which current flows all the way around Antarctica?

Answer: The Antarctic Circumpolar Current flows around Antarctica.

11. Which three oceans are linked by the Antarctic Circumpolar Current?

Answer: It links the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian oceans.

12. What process brings cold, nutrient-rich water toward the ocean surface?

Answer: Upwelling brings cold, nutrient-rich water toward the ocean surface.

13. The Peru Current is also known by what other name?

Answer: The Peru Current is also called the Humboldt Current.

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