

## **Vocabulary**

Abyss- a deep space, gulf, or cavity that extends from 4,000 to 6000 meters

Abyssal plain- pile of sand and sediments at the base of the continental slope; curves down from the slope to the ocean floor (4,000-6,000 meters deep)

Continental shelf- the land of around the edge of a continent that is under the shallowest water (150-200 meters deep)

Continental slope- the steep drop-off in the seafloor that extend from the shelf down to the rise (200-4,000 meters deep)

Crest- the top of a wave before it breaks

Currents- streams of water within the ocean; can be caused by wind or water temperature and salinity deeper in the ocean

Depth- the distance below the oceans surface

Gulf Stream- a major ocean current on the east coast of the United States

Midnight Zone- the area that extends from 1,000 to 4,000 meter; pitch black due to no sunlight at all; extreme pressure due to depth

Ocean ridges- mountains found on the ocean floor where plates of the Earth pull apart

Ocean trenches- deep cracks in the flat bottom of the ocean floor (up to 11,000 meters deep)

Phytoplankton- plant-like organisms that produce most of the earths oxygen and serves as the base of the ocean ecosystem

Plankton/zooplankton- small floating organisms that eat the phytoplankton

Salinity- a measurement of the amount of salt dissolved in water

Seamount- an underwater mountain that lies completely below the sea (also called an ocean ridge)

Sunlight Zone- the area that extends to a depth of 200 meters; well lit by sunlight and most of the oceanic food is produced and found there

Tides- the rise and fall of the oceans due to the gravitational pull of the moon and, to a lesser degree, the sun

Trench- deep valley on the bottom of the ocean

Trough- the bottom portion of a wave

Twilight Zone- the area that extends from 200 to 1,000 meters; some light is found there (most organisms there are consumers and come up to the Sunlight Zone to feed)

Wave- a disturbance seen on the surface of the water caused by winds