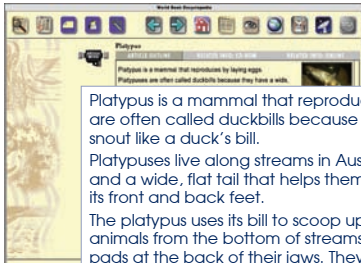


Approach: Station  
 Focus: Finding information in a reference text  
 Resources: Information card, answer booklet

Year: 4 & 8

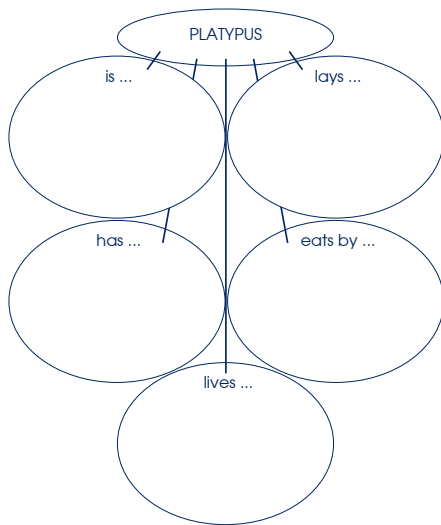
Questions / instructions:

1. Look at the information about the platypus. It comes from the World Book Encyclopaedia.



Platypus is a mammal that reproduces by laying eggs. Platypuses are often called duckbills because they have a wide, flat, hairless snout like a duck's bill.  
 Platypuses live along streams in Australia. They have webbed feet and a wide, flat tail that helps them swim. The platypus has claws on its front and back feet.  
 The platypus uses its bill to scoop up worms, small shellfish, and other animals from the bottom of streams. They crush their food with horny pads at the back of their jaws. They have a thick coat of brown fur.  
 Platypuses live in burrows that they dig in the banks of streams. Except for female platypuses with their young, each animal lives in its own burrow. During the breeding season, the female platypus builds a nest of leaves and grass at the end of her burrow. Before laying her eggs, she blocks the entrances to the burrow with dirt. Female platypuses lay from one to three eggs at a time. Platypus eggs hatch after about 10 days. Young platypuses stay in their mother's burrow for about four months and feed on their mother's milk.

2. Use the information to fill out a story map with facts about the platypus.



Information given:

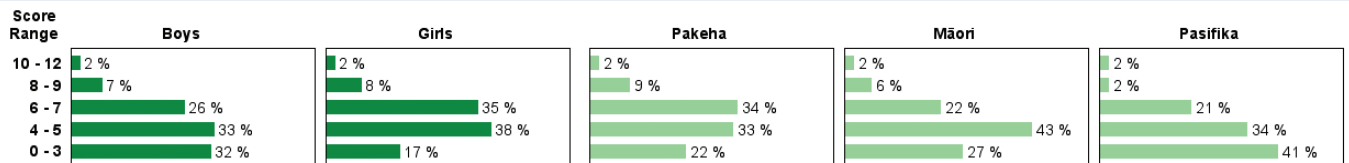
A platypus...

		% response 2009 ('05)	
		year 4	year 8
is ...	a mammal	82 (77)	92 (87)
has ...	a wide, flat, hairless snout: yes, mentions "snout" plus one or two of "wide", "flat", "hairless"	7 (9)	18 (13)
has ...	webbed feet	14 (8)	26 (25)
	a wide, flat tail	39 (43)	52 (50)
	claws	29 (32)	42 (35)
	thick brown hair [fur]	23 (20)	45 (34)
lives ...	in Australia	16 (21)	21 (23)
	along streams	51 (56)	50 (60)
	in burrows	62 (56)	74 (75)
lays ...	eggs	48 (48)	68 (60)
eats...	by crushing food with horny pads at the back of their jaws	93 (94)	93 (94)

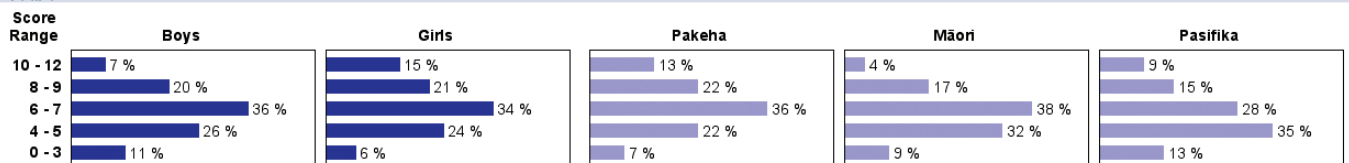
Total Score:	10-12	2 (1)	11 (11)
	8-9	8 (8)	20 (15)
	6-7	30 (27)	35 (40)
	4-5	36 (40)	25 (25)
	0-3	25 (25)	8 (9)

Subgroup Analyses:

Year 4



Year 8



Commentary:

Most children got the basics of this task involving a story map, but many were not particularly effective at elaboration on the basic approach. Girls slightly outperformed boys. There was modest improvement from year 4 to year 8; performance levels were similar in 2005 and 2009.