**Extra Credit Assignment: Children’s Pool Excursion**

**850 Coast Boulevard, La Jolla, 92037**

**(between Eads Ave & Jenner St)**

**Background**

The Top of Form

Children's Pool offers a cement walkway with a protected guard rail that allows tourists and locals to basically walk out into the ocean and experience the sounds of the waves crashing. The walkway also provides a fantastic vantage point for the seals that have taken over this beach originally designed as a play area for children. Perhaps its protected cove location appeals to the water mammals much as it was designed for youth.

An article published in the San Diego Union newspaper, “Harbor Seals in the Children's Pool”, delved into the issues surrounding the location and the seals frequenting this beach. San Diego City Council voted to investigate an attempt to reduce the number of harbor seals that use the small pocket beach to rest, reproduce and molt, a behavior also known as "hauling-out." San Diego Animal Advocates, the Institute for Animal Rights Law, the International Society and private citizen Marjane Aalam filed a lawsuit against the City of San Diego in reaction to the vote.

  Children's Pool in La Jolla, a region of the city of San Diego, was once a coastal bluff called Seal Rock Point. Its features included a shallow water plus a large offshore rock called Seal Rock.  La Jolla philanthropist Ellen Browning Scripps donated the funds in 1931 to build a sea wall in an attempt to close off the channel and create a safe bathing area for children. Seals began using the beach as a winter haul-out site during the 1970s. Seals and people shared the beach until 1997 when high bacteria levels from the seals' excrement deemed this beach unsafe for human use. It was roped off and seals have dramatically increased in numbers, dashing any hope of people gaining access to their once beloved Children's Pool and play beach.

Children's Pool Beach offers the closest look at wild harbor seals anywhere on the west coast of North America. It offers the harbor seals their only high and low tide sheltered pupping and nursing haul out area.  The harbor seal population has dropped slightly in California with one count around 27,500. Places such as Seal Beach, 100 miles north of La Jolla in Orange County, have tried to attract seals. They honored the seals by naming their city after the seals, yet they still cannot get them to come back. Up to 100,000 visitors per month flock to Children's Pool Beach in the summer months, walking along the causeway with its vantage point to study the seal behavior up close.

**To Confirm Extra Credit**: Take some pictures, with YOU in the picture. Write a

short, one paragraph reflection: Was it fun? Who did you go with? What did you think of the seals? Should the seals be kicked out and the cove reestablished for little children? Etc.