

## Decodable Texts: R-Controlled (er)

*"This nonfiction story teaches about river otters. Look for 'er' pattern words like 'river,' 'diver,' and 'clever' as you learn about these playful animals!"*



### What Is a River Otter?

A river otter is a furry swimmer that lives near water.

It uses its tail to steer and dive under the surface.

Otters eat fish, frogs, and small crabs.

Their whiskers help them hunt, even in murky rivers.

River otters are fast, clever, and love to play.

They slide down snow or mud like little surfers.

Otters are great movers in cold weather!

After reading the story, have your child point to and slowly sound out each practice word.

river

diver

surfer

clever

otter



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## What Is a River Otter?

1. Where do river otters live?

- A. In trees
- B. On farms
- C. Near water
- D. In deserts

2. What helps otters steer and dive?

- A. Their feet
- B. Their nose
- C. Their tail
- D. Their teeth

3. Fill in the blank:

Otters slide down snow or mud like little \_\_\_\_\_.

4. What features help river otters live and hunt in water?

---

---

---

5. Why do you think otters are fun animals to watch?

---

---

---



# Coaching Guide

---

**Target Skill:** er R-Controlled Vowel

**Genre:** Nonfiction – Life Science / Animals

**High-Frequency Words:** are, near, their, they, even

---

## Before Reading

1. This story features “er” words like *river*, *diver*, *clever*, and *surfer*.
  2. What do you know about animals that swim or live near rivers?
  3. Have you ever seen an otter at a zoo or in nature?
- 

## During Reading

1. **Sounding Out Support:** Tap and stretch “er” sounds in *otter*, *river*, *surfer*, and *clever*.
  2. Watch for er words that describe what otters do and how they move
  3. What makes river otters good at hunting and playing?
  4. Read the final sentence with energy like you’re sharing a cool animal fact
- 

## After Reading

1. Retell three things otters can do with their bodies
  2. Why do their whiskers and tails help them?
  3. Would you want to see a river otter play? Why or why not?
  4. Skill Check: Highlight six “er” words in the passage
  5. **Fluency Tip:** Read it again with wonder and excitement like you’re giving an animal show
- 

## Activity Idea

Draw a river otter diving and sliding with labels for tail, whiskers, and water. Use er words like *river*, *surfer*, *clever*, or *otter*. Write one sentence about how it uses its body.

---

## Coaching Tip

Animal nonfiction builds knowledge and reading power—use phonics to support science exploration!

