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Informational Fiction Picture Book
505 words

NUDI GILL

(Page 2-3)

Snorkeler: Check out all the gear it takes to become a fish!

(Art: The snorkeler is a young girl. Labeled gear includes:
snorkel, mask, life vest, fins, and flotation device.)

Gill: YIKES! Watch out! (Art: Gill is a nudibranch, a.k.a. sea slug.)

Snorkeler: Oops! Sorry, I didn't see you.

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Snorkeler: Whoa! What *are* you?

Gill: Gill. I'm a nudibranch.

Nudibranch (**noo**-de-brank)

Gill is flashy.

Gill is fancy.

Gill is...

(Page 6-7)

NAKED!

Gill: Whoooo-hoo!

(Page 8-9)

The clam wears a shell.

So does the gastropod.

What does the nautilus travel in?

A shell.

Snorkeler: Those look safe. Why don't you use a shell, Gill?

(Page 10-11)

Gill: I need to be freeeee!

SNAP!

SLOOP!

(Art: Clam and gastropod duck in their shells.)

Snorkeler: You're so colorful!

Gill: I am what I eat!

Underwater, bright colors warn creatures of poison.

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The clam nibbles algae.

The gastropod prefers micro-plankton.

The nautilus chomps on crustaceans.

Snorkeler: What do you eat, Gill?

Gill: I devour poisonous killer creatures! BWAA-HA-HA!

(Art: labeled food items include

sea anemone, sea sponge, fire coral, jellyfish.)

Snorkeler: You're tough, Gill!

Gill: What doesn't kill me, makes me STRONGER!

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Gill: Look, but don't touch!

Snorkeler: You wouldn't hurt **me**, right?

Gill: Maybe not, but I have to defend myself somehow.

I **am** naked after all.

Nudibranchs consume poison, absorbing it into their flesh.

Predators that try to eat them, get a nasty sting.

Snorkeler: WATCH OUT, GILL!

Gill: I'M A FIERCE POISON POWERHOUSE!

ZAP! ZING!

(Art: Gill stings a fish that tries to nibble on him.)

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Snorkeler: Are those your stingers?

Gill: Naw, those are my gills.

I have more on my sides.

Snorkeler: WEIRD!

Gill: You have no idea...

Check out my friends!

(Page 18-19)

Snorkeler: WOW!

There are over 3,000 different kinds of nudibranchs!

(Art: Full spread showing diversity of nudibranchs.)

(Page 20-21)

Snorkeler: They look like technicolored rainbows!

Gill: Really? I can't see color.

Nudibranchs have eyespots that don't see the way we do.

These simple eyes only sense light and dark.

Gill: Do you think I'm missing out on anything?

However, their sense of smell is extraordinary.

Gill: I've got something you don't!

(Page 22-23)

Gill: I use my rhinophores to sense smell.

"Rhino" means nose.

Gill: Nice to smell you again!

The rhinophores sense odors.

They can also detect vibrations
and changes in water pressure.

Gill: Wanna see something neat?

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Snorkeler: Is that a flower?

Gill: This is my egg ribbon.

 I have one million babies in here.

Every nudibranch can create and fertilize eggs,
but they can't fertilize their own eggs.

Snorkeler: Wow, Gill! You're so cool.

Gill: Awww, gosh.

Scientists are studying nudibranchs for all kinds of reasons.

These tiny creatures could hold the cure for memory disorders,
neurological diseases, and even cancer.

(Page 26-27)

The nautilus is a living fossil.

Its relatives existed before dinosaurs.

The gastropod filters and cleans the ocean water.

Clams make delicious chowder.

Clam: What?

Gill is a tiny miracle.

Snorkeler: I wish I could make a difference like you.

Gill: You can! Tell people not to harm the reef.
 Down here, everything lives in harmony.

Coral is a living animal.

It takes a whole year for most corals to grow one centimeter
and oils from human skin can kill them.

(Page 28-29)

Snorkeler: Do you want to come home with me?

Gill: No can do. I need to stay wild and free.

Nudibranchs don't live long in captivity.

Snorkeler: You don't need this. I'll put it where it belongs.

I can learn to live in harmony, too.

(Art: Plastic trash floats by. The snorkeler collects it.)

Gill: Thanks! I like having a big friend!

(Page 30-31)

The ocean is teeming with mysteries to discover—
some small, some large, and some...

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NAKED!

End papers:

NUDI = naked

GILL = branch

NUDI + BRANCH = Gill

nudibranch

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