

OCEANS AWAY

Grade Level:
K-3, adjust for
appropriateness

Location:
Classroom, possible field
trip

Vocabulary:
Oceans, endangered,
extinct

Materials:

Various-see activities below

Learning Outcomes:

It is expected that students will be able to:

- discuss some of the problems that ocean life faces from humans,
- name some endangered species living in Canadian oceans, particularly in British Columbia



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Method

Students will engage in various cross-curricular activities described below.

Background



British Columbia is home many endangered plant and animal species. The Pacific coastal topography makes British Columbia different and unique from the rest of Canada. See the website http://www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca/default_e.cfm for information and photos about BC's endangered species.

Suggested Activities and Procedures

1. Ocean Diorama - Create your own ocean scene in a box. Print out sharks and whales, draw some seaweed, corals, and your favourite fish. Paste, color, cut, hang them in a decorated box, and enjoy the ocean. Try to include some endangered species in the marine environment of BC.

Supplies needed:

- paper and a printer, or magazine pictures of ocean animals (stiff paper works best - coloured paper is also great for this project)
- a shoe box or slightly larger box
- crayons and/or markers
- tape
- thread

- scissors
- optional: pipe cleaners (great for seaweed and coral), glitter (for great bubbles), thin cardboard to glue to the back of the animals if your paper is very flimsy (old cereal boxes work well)

Find a box at least as big as a shoe box - a slightly bigger box works even better. This will be the stage containing your ocean scene. Decorate the inside of the box to look like it's underwater. Draw the water, the ocean floor, rocks, coral, seaweed, fish, an octopus, bubbles, scuba divers, a submarine, etc. Glitter makes a wonderful addition - just sprinkle some on a little glue.

Print out the animals you want to be in the scene. For some ideas, here is a list of [whales \(click here\)](#)

<http://www.zoomschool.com/subjects/whales/activities/whaletemplates/Template1st.shtml>.

For a list of [sharks to print out, click here](#)

<http://www.zoomschool.com/subjects/sharks/classroom/sharktemplates/Template1st.shtml>.

Again, try to incorporate some of the endangered or at risk species.

(Note: To print the template (and not any other things that might be on the screen), go to that page, click your mouse on the template (this is so you won't print the rest of the stuff that's on the screen), then choose PRINT from the File menu.)

If your paper is very flimsy and you think your animals may bend too much, paste the template onto thin cardboard (like an old cereal box). Let the paste dry.

Using crayons or markers, decorate the animals and plants. Also, draw and decorate your own seaweed, corals, and favourite fish. Green construction paper cut in squiggly strips makes nice seaweed. Cut out the animals and plants.

Hang the fish and whales in the box using tape and thread. Tape your seaweed and coral to the bottom of the box. Green and brown pipe cleaners also make nice plants. Enjoy your ocean diorama!

Discussion

Imagine that there's been an oil spill in the ocean and therefore in their diorama. Teachers can also ask students make one extra class diorama that they don't mind using as an example for an oil spill. For this extra realism, teachers can bring a cup of motor oil and pour it on the one diorama designated for this activity. Ask students to think about the consequences of this event. Will plants and animals die? How can this be prevented? Can we have industry and environmental agencies work together to stop these kinds of tragedies? What happens if the endangered species don't recover from the oil spill? What can volunteers do to try and save species? (Teachers might hand out paper towels and have students make attempts to "wipe" up the mess. Note how sticky the oil is and have students think about how difficult it is to clean in the real ocean environment. Encourage students to study the Exxon Valdez disaster and discuss the results, the cleanup effort etc. from newspaper articles and Internet sites. Primary students will need some supervision when accessing these sites. Students can work in small groups if they wish.

<http://library.thinkquest.org/10867/home.shtml>
<http://www.evostc.state.ak.us/facts/qanda.html>,
<http://www.valdezscience.com/wiens/index.html>
<http://response.restoration.noaa.gov/photos/exxon/exxon.html>
<http://www.lessonplanspage.com/ScienceImmiscibleSolutionsInWater56.htm>
(for teachers of gifted students who wish to try an “oil slick” experiment usually recommended for grades 5 and 6.
<http://library.thinkquest.org/10867/home.shtml>
<http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/eeeb/osris/osris.html>

Evaluation

Discuss each group's findings with the rest of the class. What populations are most affected by this oil spill? Least affected? How do they know? Would you expect any



organisms to become extinct as a result of this oil spill? Which ones? Why do you think they might? Humans interfere with organisms and populations of plants and animals in order to improve their own lives. What guidelines would you recommend when it comes to humans using the environment, whether it's to

ship oil or fish the waters or dam the rivers?

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This activity was developed by *FORED BC*.

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