



Education Dept.
Georgia Aquarium
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UNDERSEA INVESTIGATORS

TEACHERS GUIDE

GRADES 6-8

Program Description: The Undersea Investigators is an inquiry based program where the students become researchers for the day and learn about an aquatic ecosystems and the concept of aquatic research through observation and gathering information. During the program students will also be introduced to research being conducted by the Georgia Aquarium and other institutions.

Our Learning Loop provides an opportunity for more directed learning that will enhance students understanding of aquatic ecosystems. Behind-the-scenes experiences and aquarium exhibits will reinforce the concepts that are being taught and will help students make a personal, life long connection to aquatic ecosystems and their inhabitants.

Enduring Understandings for Undersea Investigators:

- ◆ Research is the process of scientific investigation that helps scientists learn more about living organisms and their environment.
- ◆ Humans can have a positive or negative impact on the quality of water in aquatic ecosystems.
- ◆ Water composes a large percentage of the Earth's surface and is a vital resource that humans play an important role in its conservation.

Objectives:

- ◆ Students will understand the relevance, purpose and process of scientific investigations.
- ◆ Students will learn how research can improve our knowledge and understanding of animals and ecosystems.
- ◆ Students will investigate how living things are connected and the impact of humans on aquatic ecosystems.
- ◆ Students will understand that a large percentage of the earth is composed of water and is a precious resource that needs to be conserved.

Lead Sponsor



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Georgia Performance Standards Addressed: **6th Grade**

Science - Characteristics of Science

S6CS1 Students will explore the importance of curiosity, honesty, openness, and skepticism in science and will exhibit these traits in their own efforts to understand how the world works.

- a. Understand the importance of – and keeping – honest, clear, and accurate records in science.

S6CS5.Students will use the ideas of system, model, change, and scale in exploring scientific and technological matters.

- a. Observe and explain how parts are related to other parts in systems such as weather, solar systems, and ocean systems including how the output from one part of a system (in the form of material, energy or information) can become the input to other parts. (For example: El Nino’s effect on weather)

S6CS8.Students will investigate the characteristics of scientific knowledge and how it is achieved.

Students will apply the following to scientific concepts:

- a. When similar investigations give different results, the scientific challenge is to judge whether the differences are trivial or significant, which often requires further study. Even with similar results, scientists may wait until an investigation has been repeated many times before accepting the results as meaningful.
- c. As prevailing theories are challenged by new information, scientific knowledge may change and grow.

S6CS9 Students will investigate the features of the process of scientific inquiry. Students will apply the following to inquiry learning practices:

- b. Scientists often collaborate to design research. To prevent bias, scientists conduct independent studies of the same questions.

Content of Science

S6E3 Students will recognize the significant role of water in earth processes.

- a. Explain that a large portion of water of the Earth’s surface is water, consisting of oceans, rivers, lakes, underground water, and ice.

Mathematics - Data Analysis and Probability

M6D1. Students will pose questions, collect data, represent and analyze data and interpret results.

- a. Formulate questions that can be answered by data. Students should collect data by using samples from a larger population (surveys), or by conducting experiments.

Georgia Performance Standards for 7th Grade

Science

Characteristics of Science

S7CS1 Students will explore the importance of curiosity, honesty, openness, and skepticism in science and will exhibit these traits in their own efforts to understand how the world works.

- a. Understand the importance of – and keeping – honest, clear, and accurate records in science.

S7CS5.Students will use the ideas of system, model, change, and scale in exploring scientific and technological matters.

- a. Observe and explain how parts can be related to other parts in a system such as predator/prey relationships in a community/ecosystem.
- b. Understand that different models (such as physical replicas, pictures, and analogies) can be used to represent the same thing.

S7CS8.Students will investigate the characteristics of scientific knowledge and how that knowledge is achieved.

Students will apply the following to scientific concepts.

- a. When similar investigations give different results, the scientific challenge is to judge whether the differences are trivial or significant, which often requires further study. Even with similar results, scientists may wait until an investigation has been repeated many times before accepting the results as meaningful.
- b. As prevailing theories are challenged by new information, scientific knowledge may change and grow.

S7CS9 Students will investigate the features of the process of scientific inquiry. Students will apply the following to inquiry learning practices:

- b. Scientists often collaborate to design research. To prevent bias, scientists conduct independent studies of the same questions.
- c. Accurate record keeping, data sharing, and replication of results are essential for maintaining an investigator’s credibility with other scientists and society.

Content of Science

S7L4 Students will examine the dependence of organisms on one another and their environments.

- c. Recognize that changes in environmental conditions can affect the survival of both individuals and entire species.
- d. Categorize relationships between organisms that are competitively or mutually beneficial.

Mathematics - Data Analysis and Probability

M7D1 Students will pose questions, collect data, represent and analyze the data, and interpret results.

- a. Construct frequency distributions
- g. Analyze and draw conclusions about data, including describing the relationship between two variables.

Georgia Performance Standards for 8th Grade

Mathematics - Data Analysis and Probability

M8D4 Students will organize, interpret, and make inferences from statistical data.

- a. Gather data that can be modeled with a linear function.

Before coming to the aquarium, the student should be familiar with:

- ◆ The process of the scientific inquiry
- ◆ Be able to identify different aquatic habitats (freshwater, marine, estuary, coral reef)
- ◆ Have a basic understanding of the concept of pollution and its impact on aquatic ecosystems
- ◆ Have a basic understanding of the concept of biodiversity

Vocabulary:

Watershed, pollution, predator, prey, adaptation, indicator species, animal behavior, ecosystem, habitat, symbiotic relationship, wetland, biodiversity, conservation, freshwater, saltwater, species, and endangered species.

Pre-activities (in order of importance).

- 1) Tally of Treats

Students will understand the basic processes of scientific investigation by conducting a study of candy.

Post-visit activities:

- 1) Classification of Coral Reef Animals

Students will learn how classify coral reef animals.

- 2) Spotless School

Students will participate in a school yard clean-up activity to reduce the amount of non-point source pollution found on campus.

Tally of Treats (Pre-visit Activity)

Grade Level: 6th – 8th

Objective: Familiarize students with the process of scientific inquiry through a study of diversity and make up of a bag of candy.

Duration: 45 minutes – 1 hour

Vocabulary: Research, scientific inquiry, observation, mean, median, mode.

Materials: Graph paper, small bags of small round multi-colored candies (one per group), one large bag of the same candy, copies of candy data collection sheet #1, one overhead copy of data collection sheet #1, and data collection sheet #2 for each student, white sheets of paper, popsicle sticks and scales.

Background: The process of scientific inquiry starts with a question. From there, the inquiry can take many different paths, but the underlying function is usually observation. Through this exercise the students will become comfortable with the process of scientific inquiry (questioning, observation, data analysis and conclusions) with a familiar subject, candy. Students will follow a process of data collection, and, apply this knowledge to estimate the qualities of a new bag by applying their data on weight, percentages of colors, and mathematical averages.

Procedure:

1. Make copies of candy data collection sheet #1 for each student.
2. Purchase enough bags of chosen candy for 1 bag per 2-3 students.
3. Photocopy the candy recording sheet onto an overhead sheet.
4. Introduce the activity by asking students how scientists find out how things work. (investigation, trial and error, record keeping)
5. Introduce the concept of scientific inquiry (questioning, observation, data analysis and conclusions).
6. **Inquiry:** Hold up a bag of candy and tell the students that they will be exploring this bag as scientists. Ask the students what they would like to know about the bag of candy. Record questions on the board. (How many are in the bag, what colors are they, etc.)
7. Ask the students if they could answer any of the questions without opening the bag of candy. Record any of their answers on the board next to the question.

8. Ask the students how they might be able to find out the answers to their questions and introduce the process of scientific inquiry (questioning, observation, data analysis and conclusions).
9. **Observation:** Divide the students into groups of 2-3 and assign them a group number.
10. Pass out a bag of candy, a blank white paper for a surface, a popsicle stick for sorting and a candy data collection sheet #1 for each student.
11. Have the students keep their bags of candy **closed** at first.
12. Have the students make an educated guess about the number of candies in their bag and the weight of their bag, then record their guesses on data collection sheet #1 (in the estimate row).
13. **Open** the bag. Have them fill out data collection sheet #1 with the number in of each color and total amounts in the bag.
14. **Analysis:** After the students have recorded their data, have them report the findings back to the full class. On the overhead data collection sheet #1, record all of the data collected. Have students fill out the data collected from the other groups in the class on their own sheets and tally the totals. Have the students find the mean, median, and mode for each color and record.
15. Next, find the percentage of each color found in the bag of candy and record on data collection sheet #2 (Have students show their math on the page!).
16. Discuss the findings and differences between bags. Ask what conclusions they may be able to make from their findings regarding the make up of the bags (similar/different, do different colors cost more to manufacture, some colors may be easier to mix than others).

Advanced Analysis (if time permits and you have a larger bag of candy)

17. Using Scales, have the students weigh an individual piece of candy and record on data collection sheet #2
18. Compare the measurements on weight gathered and produce a method of calculating the number of total candies in a larger bag.
 - a. This should be based on the weight of the new, larger bag, divided by the weight of an individual candy.
19. Split the class into two groups.
20. One group will sort the candies according to color and count the number of each manually.
21. The second group will estimate the breakdown of colored candies in the large bag based on estimated total number of candies in the new large bag in step 18. Have students use the percentage of colors recorded on their data sheets to estimate the number of each color in the larger bag.
22. Record the findings of each group on data collection sheet #2 under large bag.
23. Discuss the accuracy achieved with the calculations and how they might improve the process.
24. Discuss how the class approached the smaller bags (estimates) in the beginning of the lesson differently than the larger one (scientific knowledge and calculation).

25. Eat the subject of the scientific inquiry.

Assessment: Have the students fill out both handouts completely and describe the methods used to calculate information. Have the students hand in these sheets.

Candy Data Collection Sheet #1

Group #	Weight	Total #	Green #	Yellow #	Orange #	Purple #	Blue #	Brown #	Red #
Estimate									
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									
Total									
Mean									
Median									
Mode									

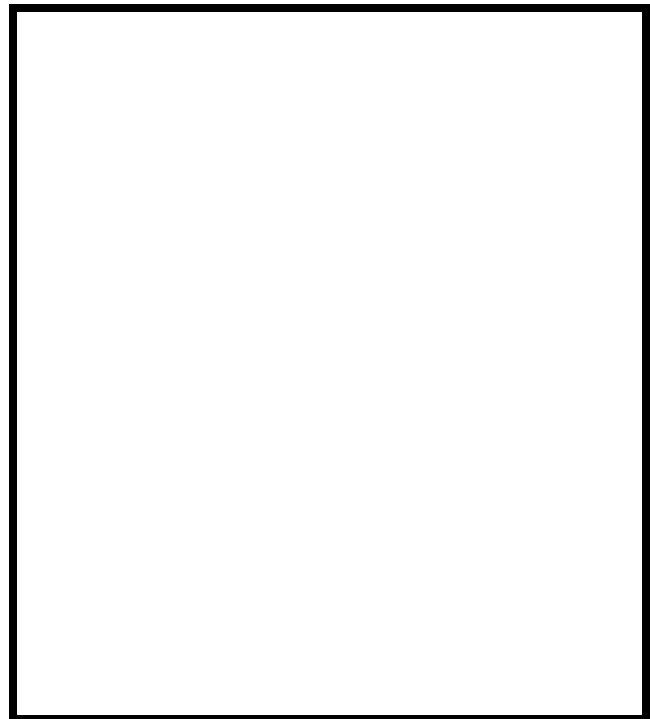
Data Sheet #2

Name: _____

Weight of Bag: _____

Individual Candy: _____

Show Your Math!



Percentages of colors:

Green: _____

Yellow: _____

Orange: _____

Purple: _____

Blue: _____

Brown: _____

Red: _____

The Large Bag

	Total #	Green #	Yellow #	Orange #	Purple #	Blue #	Brown #	Red #
Estimated Amounts*								
Actual Amounts								

* To be calculated based on formula determined.

CLASSIFICATION OF CORAL REEF ANIMALS (Post-visit Activity)

Grade: 6th – 8th

Objective: Students will learn how classify coral reef animals.

Duration: 50 minutes

Vocabulary: Classification, family, phylum, mollusk, echinoderm, cnidarian, arthropod

Materials:

- ◆ One copy of 12 animal descriptions per group of students
- ◆ One copy of 12 animal pictures per group of students
- ◆ Copies of 2 student worksheets for each student
- ◆ 24 large index cards (per group)

Background:

Scientists use a classification system to organize living things into groups and help them understand how certain animals are related to one another. All animals are classified into the kingdom Animalia. Animals that share the same basic characteristics are classified in the same phylum. Other classification levels are (in order of most general to most specific): class, order, family, genus, and species. Important coral reef phyla in the animal kingdom include the mollusks, echinoderms, arthropods and cnidarians. All of these phyla include animals that are commonly found living in the coral reef ecosystem.

The name “mollusk” comes from the Latin word meaning “soft.” All mollusks have soft bodies, which may or may not be covered by a shell. Mollusks have highly variable body plans. Some move across the floor of the ocean by sliding with a single foot. Others have highly developed brains and eyes similar to our own, and swim with the help of tentacles. Mollusks include snails, slugs, squid, octopuses, nudibranchs, clams and oysters.

Echinoderms have a hard skeleton that gives the body a spiny appearance. Their appropriate Latin name means “spiny-skinned.” Most of the animals have bodies arranged in five parts of equal size. Most have hundreds of tube feet that are used for locomotion. The tube feet are similar to suction cups and move the animal across the bottom of the ocean or help them to capture food. Echinoderms include sea stars, sea cucumbers, sand dollars, and sea urchins.

The arthropods are the largest and most diverse group of animals. The Latin word “arthropod” means “jointed leg.” All arthropods have many jointed legs and bodies with distinct, segmented skeletons. Another feature of the arthropods is their

exoskeleton, which is a hard outer skeleton. They may also have antennae. Arthropods include insects, crabs, spiders, lobsters, shrimp and barnacles.

The Latin name Cnidaria means “nettle-like.” Cnidarians may live attached to the ocean floor in large groups (as a polyp), or may be free-swimming (as a medusa). Cnidarians have no skeleton inside their body and therefore have very soft, jelly-like bodies. All cnidarians have tentacles containing nematocysts, or stinging cells. The stinging tentacles are used both to capture food and in defense. Cnidarians include corals, sea anemones, zooanthids and sea jellies.

Procedure:

1. Make copies of animal descriptions and pictures (1 per group). Students may work in groups of four to five students. Cut out the 12 animal descriptions and paste them onto index cards. Cut out the 12 animal pictures and paste them onto another set of index cards.
2. Prepare copies of the two student worksheets, to be handed out to the students during the second part of the activity.
3. Discuss how scientists use classification to group animals according to their common characteristics. Tell the students they will be classifying 12 animals by putting them in groups according to their physical characteristics and common traits. Hand out a set of descriptions and picture cards to each group. Have students work in groups to identify the 12 animals according to the descriptions. The students should match each description with its appropriate animal.
4. Have students classify the 12 animals using their own methods by putting the animals into groups according to the characteristics that the students can see. Allow students to use their own observational skills. They may choose to classify the animals by shape, presence of tentacles, presence of eyes, etc.
5. Hand out the two student worksheets, and introduce the scientific classification system. Discuss the characteristics of the following four scientific groups (phyla) of animals: **cnidarians**, **arthropods**, **mollusks** and **echinoderms**. Have the students re-classify the animals according to these groups that scientists use. Point out to the students that they will need to understand the characteristics of each group and then be able to identify these characteristics in the individual animals.
6. Go over the results with the class.

Answer Key:

Groups	Which animals belong to this group?
Mollusks	Pink conch, octopus, clam
Echinoderms	Sea star, sea cucumber, sea urchin
Arthropods	Lobster, crab, krill
Cnidarians	Coral, sea anemone, sea jelly

Assessment:

- ◆ Check that each group of students has correctly classified 90% of the animals in the table.
- ◆ Have students compare their own classification system with the system used by scientists. Were there many differences between the system they used and the system used by scientists?
- ◆ Have students classify the following animals into the same four groups: snail, sand dollar, shrimp, insect, and squid.

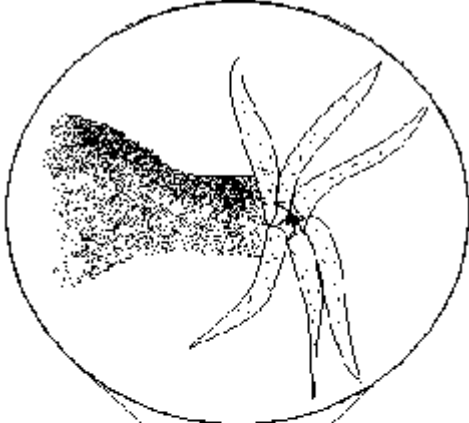
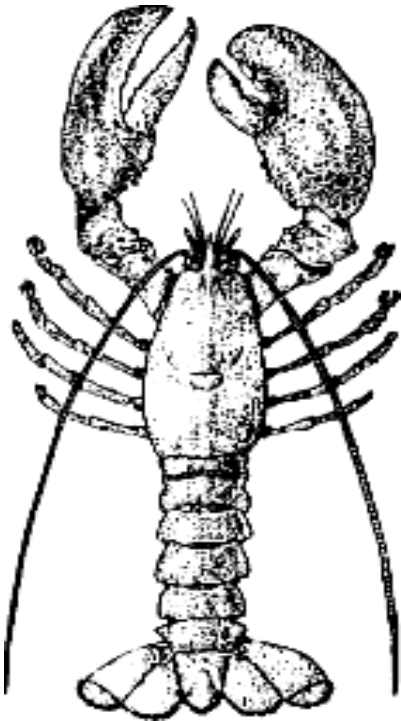
Resources:

Alevizon, William S. 1994. *Pisces Guide to Caribbean Reef Ecology*. Houston, Texas: Gulf Publishing Company.

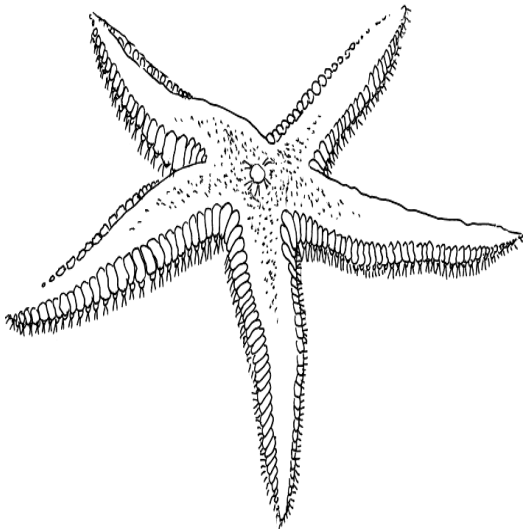
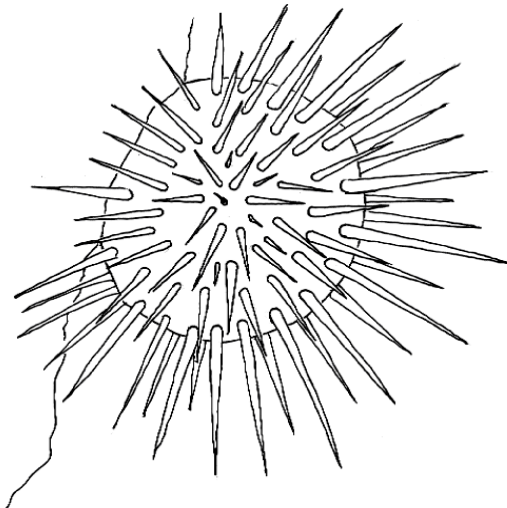
<p>A sea star is an animal with five arms. It can be found on the ocean floor where it moves very slowly in search of food. Most sea stars are carnivorous and eat other animals such as clams, oysters, or corals. When the sea star eats, it pushes its stomach out of its mouth, and digests its prey on the outside of its body. The sea star moves and clings to its prey with hundreds of tube feet, which provide suction for the sea star to grip.</p>	<p>A crab is a round-bodied animal with a hard skeleton on the outside of its body. It has well-developed claws that can be used for protection and feeding. It also has four pairs of legs which are used for movement. There are many species of crabs, and they have varied diets; some eat plants, some eat animals, and some eat both plants and animals. Some crabs live in water and others live on land.</p>
<p>The sea cucumber is a long, cylinder-shaped animal that lives in the sand on the sea floor. It eats by taking in the sand, filtering out small plants and animals and then forcing out the sand. The animal uses tube feet for locomotion and the head is sometimes surrounded by tentacles. The body has 5 parts, but the animal has no arms. The largest sea cucumber can reach a length of 6 feet. Predators include sea turtles, some fish, and humans. Some sea cucumbers can give off a toxin that can deter predators.</p>	<p>A coral is a tiny animal that usually lives in a large group or colony. A single animal is called a coral polyp, and each polyp has 6 tentacles surrounding its mouth. The tentacles contain nematocysts, or stinging cells, which help the animal catch its food. The coral polyps have soft bodies, but each polyp makes a shell outside its body made of limestone. This shell formed by many polyps in a community together forms a coral reef. The coral reef is an important part of the ocean ecosystem because it is home to many other animals.</p>
<p>An anemone looks like a flower but it is actually an animal. It lives at the bottom of the ocean and has many tentacles to help it to trap food. The tentacles have stinging cells called nematocysts that are used to catch and paralyze its prey. These tentacles surround the animal's mouth, which is connected to its stomach. The anemone has no skeleton and has a soft, jelly-like body.</p>	<p>A conch is an animal that lives inside a beautiful, large shell that has been collected by people and used for decoration. Inside the shell is the animal's soft body, and it uses a single foot to move across the sea floor. The conch lives in beds of sea grasses or in the sand on the ocean floor. They have two eye spots that are located on the end of a pair of tentacles.</p>

<p>As its name suggests, the sea jelly has a soft, jelly-like body. It swims in the water using a pulsing motion and has a mouth surrounded by many stinging tentacles. The tentacles, which contain stinging cells called nematocysts, are used to trap and eat their prey. Some species of sea jelly have enough venom to severely injure a human. The largest sea jelly can have a body of up to 3 feet in diameter! The sea jelly is eaten by some species of fish and is a favorite food item of sea turtles.</p>	<p>The octopus has a soft body and has 8 arms. There are many species of octopus, and the biggest can grow up to 23 feet from the arm tip to arm tip. Octopuses have good eyesight and will hunt many food items including crabs, snails and fish. When threatened, an octopus can squirt dark ink into the water, allowing it to escape. In addition, the octopus can change its skin color to blend into its background, using camouflage to hide from its predators.</p>
<p>Krill are small, shrimp-like animals that live in the ocean in large groups. They have a hard exoskeleton and segmented bodies with 5 pairs of jointed legs used for swimming. Krill eat phytoplankton or tiny, one-celled plants that float in the ocean. Many predators, such as fish, birds and whales depend on them for food, so they are very important in marine food chains.</p>	<p>Clams are animals that burrow into the sea floor. They eat by drawing water into a siphon, and pulling small microscopic pieces of food out of the water. They have soft bodies which are protected by two shells. Muscles called abductors are used to hold the two shells together and are used to open and close the shells. The animal uses a foot to bury itself in the sand and for movement. Predators of clams include eels, sea stars, and humans.</p>
<p>A lobster has a hard, segmented skeleton on the outside of its body. Some species of lobster have pincers which are used for protection. All lobsters have antennae and 5 pairs of jointed legs (including pincers). Lobsters are active at night and hide during the day. They are eaten by many animals, including fish, octopuses, other lobsters, and humans.</p>	<p>A sea urchin is a round animal with many spines. The spines are attached to its outer skeleton. Its mouth is located on the bottom of the body, and it possesses a set of five teeth which it uses to eat by scraping algae off of rocks. The sea urchin moves very slowly with the use of tube feet, which act like suction cups to grip the rocks.</p>

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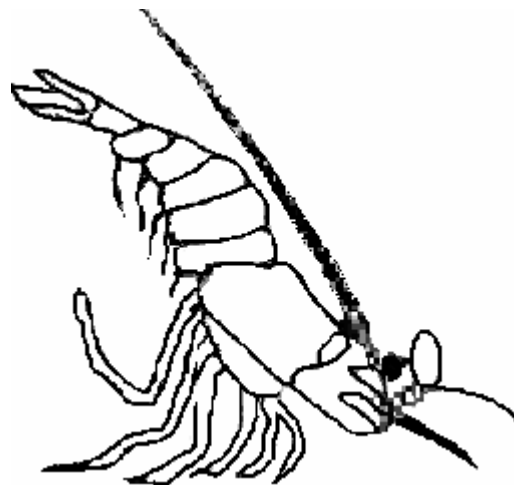
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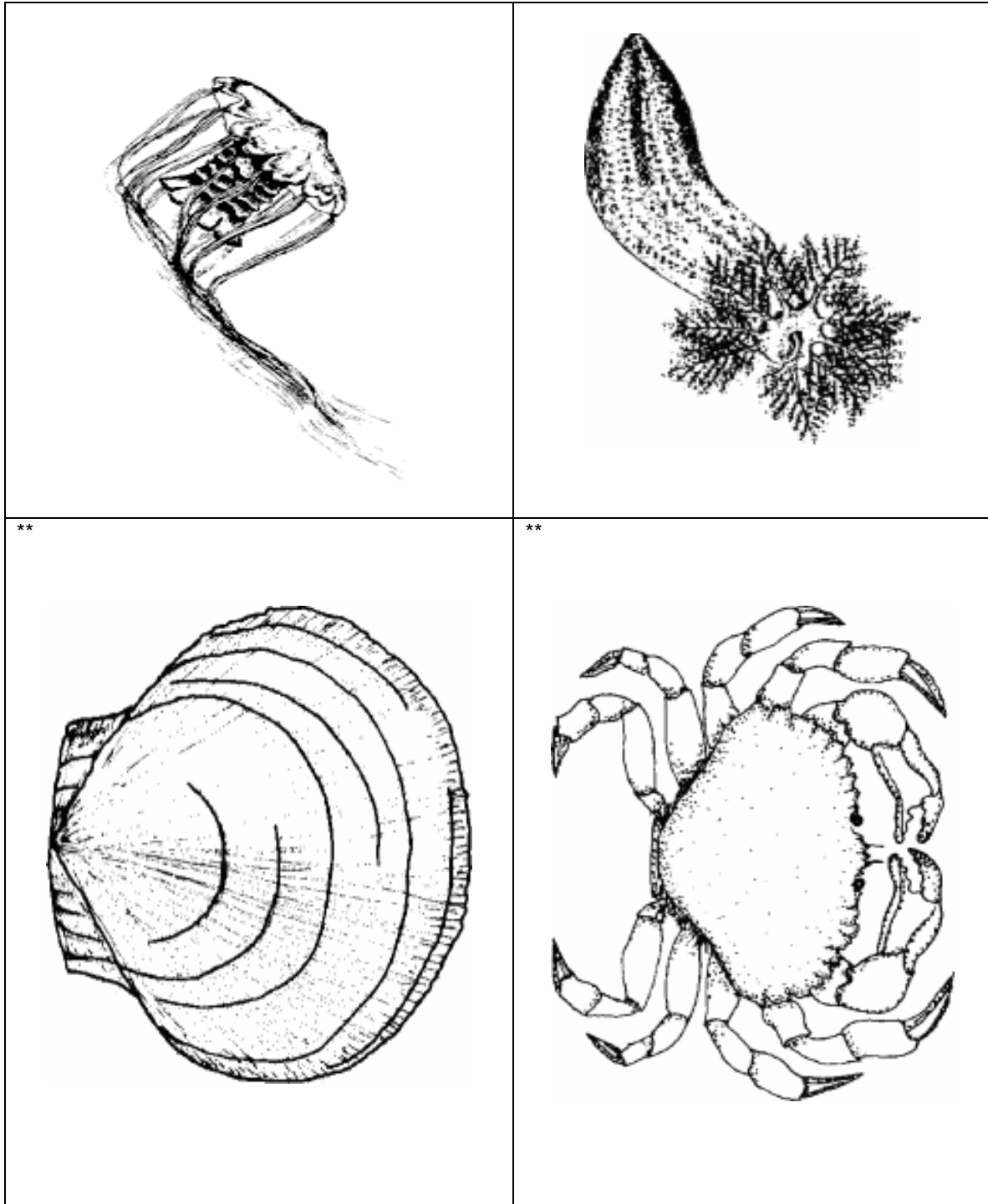


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* Drawings from [MacGillivray Freeman's Coral Reef Adventure Guide Educational Activities & Resources](http://www.coralfilm.com/edu.html) (<http://www.coralfilm.com/edu.html>).

** Drawing by Fisheries and Oceans Canada, "To the Horizon - The Nearshore" (<http://www.glf.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/sci-sci/bysea-enmer/nearshore-littoral-e.html>), Reproduced with the permission of Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2005.

CLASSIFICATION—GROUPING ANIMALS

Student Worksheet

Scientists use a **classification** system, which helps them understand how certain animals are related to one another. For example, two animals that are very closely related might be classified in the same **family**. A group of animals that shares the same basic characteristics are classified in the same **phylum**. See if you can classify the above 12 animals into the following four phyla (groups) of animals:

Mollusks

The name “mollusk” comes from the Latin word meaning “soft.” All mollusks have soft bodies, which may or may not be covered by a shell. Mollusks have highly variable body plans. Some move across the floor of the ocean by sliding with a single foot. Others have highly developed brains and eyes similar to our own, and swim with the help of tentacles.

Echinoderms

Echinoderms have a hard internal skeleton that give the body a spiny appearance. Most of the animals have bodies arranged in five parts of equal size. Most have hundreds of tube feet that are used for locomotion. The tube feet are similar to suction cups and move the animal across the bottom of the ocean or help them to capture food.

Arthropods

The arthropods are the largest and most diverse group of animals. The word “arthropod” means “jointed leg.” All arthropods have many jointed legs and bodies with distinct, different skeletons. Another feature of the arthropods is their exoskeleton, which is a hard outer skeleton. They may also have antennae.

Cnidarians

Cnidarians may live attached to the ocean floor in large groups, or may be free-swimming. Cnidarians have no skeleton inside their body and therefore have very soft, jelly-like bodies. All cnidarians have tentacles containing nematocysts, or stinging cells. The stinging tentacles are used both to capture food and in defense.

CLASSIFICATION OF ANIMALS

Student Worksheet

Classify the 12 animals into the following four phyla (groups) according to the scientific classification system. List the defining characteristics of each animal phylum and compare them to the characteristics of each of the animals that were identified. Then, sort each of the 12 animals into the appropriate phylum.

Animal Phylum	Main Characteristics of this Phylum	Which animals belong to this phylum?
Mollusks		
Echinoderms		
Arthropods		
Cnidarians		

Spotless School (Post-visit activity)

Grade: 6th – 8th

Objective: Students will conduct a school yard and/or river cleanup gathering non-point source pollution. (River cleanup can be a local creek or stream).

Duration: 45 minutes (add time if traveling to river site)

Vocabulary: Pollution, non-point source pollution, point source pollution and watershed.

Materials: Plastic bags, gloves, pencils and data sheet

Background: Water pollution is an alteration of the physical, chemical, or biological properties of water by the introduction of any substance that renders the water harmful to use. There are two types of water pollution: point source and non-point source pollution. *Point source pollution* occurs when pollutants are discharged from any identifiable point, such as factories and water treatment plants. They enter a body of water usually through a pipe and are controlled by permits and the Clean Water Act. Point source pollution may be controlled through regulations and permits. *Non-point source pollution* is contamination that does not originate from one specific location, but instead comes from everywhere, including school grounds. This type of pollution often is carried across land by water when it rains and is dumped into bodies of water. All types of pollution can impact the health of fish and aquatic organisms. School yard cleanups are a great way to improve water quality by removing pollution that may end up in the nearest body of water.

Procedure:

1. Ask the students "What is pollution?"
2. Ask them for examples of pollution and write them on the board (if they don't mention any point source pollution, add factories and water treatment plants).
3. Ask students the difference between point source pollution and non-point source pollution. Help students categorize the list on board as either point source pollution or non-point source pollution.
4. Ask the students which type of pollution is the hardest to control? (non-point source pollution because its sources are unclear and is found everywhere). Tell them point source pollution is controlled by permits and the Clean Water Act.
5. Tell students they will be conducting a school yard and/or river clean up to address non point source pollution and will be collecting data on the types of pollution they encounter.

- Break the students up into teams of 4 or 5 students.
 - Hand out a data sheet and pencil to each team and instruct them to make a tally mark for each item collected.
 - Hand out plastic bags and gloves to each student.
 - Tell students to walk around the clean-up site as a team and collect litter in their plastic bags
 - Each student should take turns recording what type of trash is collected on the data sheet.
6. After about 30 minutes (or longer) take students back to classroom.
 7. Have students tally their data sheet and analyze the data (Did they expect to find what they did? Did they find more of one type of trash?).
 8. Afterwards have the students share how they feel and what they can do to help reduce pollution.
 9. Ask the students: What could the trash they found tell you about the attitudes of individuals?

Assessment: Create a bar graph with the data collected and have students brainstorm ways they can minimize pollution on the school campus and at home.

Extension: Students will participate in a river clean-up with a local organization, such as “Rivers Alive” or “Keep Georgia Beautiful.”

Resources:

1. EPA. *Polluted Runoff*; 12/08/05; <http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/kids/>.
2. The Earth Works Group. 1990. *50 Simple Things Kids Can Do To Save The Earth*. New York, Scholastic Inc.
3. Rivers Alive. 2007. www.riversalive.com – information about local river cleanups and how to get involved.
4. Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper. 2007. www.ucriverkeeper.org – information on Chattahoochee River cleanups.
5. Ocean Conservancy. 2007. www.oceanconservancy.org – information on annual International Coastal Cleanup.