



Cabrillo Marine Aquarium Lesson Plan

Grade Level: Third Grade

Title: Animal Tales

Objective: Students learn about the characteristics of marine animals that can make them susceptible to the hazards of marine debris.

California Science Standards: 3rd: 3a-c

Time to Complete: 40 minutes

Materials Provided by CMA Ocean Discovery Kits: *Reading Handout: Animal Tales, Photo: Lobster/Crab Trap*, Piece of Fishing Net, Fishing Line or Rope, Six-Pack Ring, Balloon and Ribbon, Popped Balloon (in jar of water), Nurdles, Other Types of Debris (such as a Pull Tab from a Can, a Metal Bottle Cap and a Glass Bottle)

Materials Provided by Teacher: Plastic Cup/Plate/Bowl, Plastic Shopping Bag, any other objects you'd like to add from around your classroom

Vocabulary: Endangered species, threatened species, entanglement, ingestion, resin pellets/nurdles, debris, harmful

Lesson Outline:

1. Place the items of debris on the floor in the middle of the classroom and have students form a circle around the items. Read the description of the seal on the "Animal Tales" handout, or ask one of your students to read it to the class. (NOTE: You might want to make copies of the handout and distribute it to the students so they can follow along.)
2. Choose a volunteer to be a seal and ask him or her to go into the center of the circle and pick up an item of debris that might harm a seal. Ask the "seal" to tell how and why it might become injured by their piece of debris. Encourage students to think about how animals could become entangled in the debris items, plus how the animals might eat the items, mistaking the debris for food.
3. Repeat this procedure for the remainder of animals on the handout. After you have finished, ask the students if they can associate any other pieces of debris with one of the animals in a way that the class has not yet discussed.

Lesson Wrap-Up:

Explain that many species of mammals, sea turtles, birds and fish that encounter marine debris are endangered or threatened. Ask students how marine debris

could pose special problems for these species. End your discussion by helping students to understand that **any** animal that lives in the ocean or along the coast can be affected by marine debris.

Lesson Extensions:

1. Have students locate photographs, artwork or articles describing the impacts of marine debris on wildlife. Students can work individually or in pairs to research a particular type of marine wildlife and develop a “photo essay” or brief presentation about how marine debris harms a particular species. Students could also focus on a particular type of marine debris and its impacts on wildlife in general.
2. Take students on a field trip to an aquarium or nature center/reserve, where they can learn about endangered and threatened species that might be harmed by marine debris. Contact the aquarium or nature center/reserve in advance and ask for a guided tour that emphasizes the problems that marine debris poses for endangered and threatened species.

References:

- NOAA Turning the Tide on Trash
<http://marinedebris.noaa.gov/outreach/pdfs/101turntd.pdf>