



## KIDS ENVIRONMENTAL LESSON PLANS

This lesson developed by:



# Beach Bucket Scavenger Hunt

### Overview:

Take a beach anywhere with your custom-made beach bucket. Use the worksheet provided for a quick lesson on beach ecology.

### Ocean Literacy Principles:

2. The ocean and life in the ocean shape the features of Earth
5. The ocean supports a great diversity of life and ecosystems
6. The ocean and humans are inextricably interconnected
7. The ocean is largely unexplored

### Key Concepts:

- The shore is the interface between land and water
- Sandy beaches have many components:
  - non-living (rock, sand, shells, skeletons)
  - living (beach hoppers, sand crabs, worms, clams, seaweed)
  - manmade (plastic, glass, metal)

### Materials:

Per 2 to 4 students:

- 1 shoe-box size plastic “bucket” with snap-on lid with enough sand to fill bucket 2 inches deep
- 5-6 photos of beaches from old magazines or calendars
- 3-4 items from plants: driftwood, twigs, leaves, dried seaweed, etc.
- 3-4 items from animals: shells, crab exoskeletons, fish bones, sea urchin tests, etc.
- 3-4 items from humans: bottle tops, soda rings, small plastic bottles, and pieces of plastic bags
- 1 or 2 “What’s in My Sand?” worksheets



# Beach Bucket Scavenger Hunt (cont.)

- 2 to 4 pencils

**Set-up Prior to Activity:**

You can preassemble the buckets or have the students collect items from the sandy beach you are visiting.

**Duration:**

30 minutes

**Physical Activity:**

Moderate

**Activity:**

1. Gather student group on the sand, at a grassy area or at tables. “Beach Bucket Scavenger Hunt” can be paired with “A Sand Story.”
2. Begin the activity with a verbal “brainstorm” to assess prior knowledge. (If you have a whiteboard, you can make a list of the answers.) Ask students guiding questions such as:
  - Who has been to a sandy beach?
  - What have you found on the beach?
  - Has everything you have found on the beach come from nature?
  - What items were manmade?
  - How did it make you feel to find plastic or other trash on the beach?
3. Tell students that this activity explores sandy beach ecology, that is what lives on the beach and what may harm the animals that live there.
4. If the buckets are not premade, then ask students to go on a scavenger hunt to find items on they sandy beach you are visiting. You may want to put a few limits on what they can pick up; such as no cigarette butts, medical debris (syringes), or person hygiene items. Also if jellyfish are common, students should not touch them.
5. Ask students to bring back eight to ten items and a handful of sand. Place the sand, then the items in their bucket (2 to 4 students per bucket).
6. Distribute worksheet. Ask students to explore and sort what they found.

**Discussion:**

1. Did they find any seaweed? Any trash? Any animal exoskeletons or bones? Have students share what they found in their bucket with others.
2. Begin a discussion on what students consider to be a healthy beach? Is there anything in their bucket that might be considered a pollutant? Why?
3. If you are returning items to the beach after the lesson, please ask students to dispose of the trash correctly.

# Beach Bucket Scavenger Hunt (cont.)

## What's in My Sand?

Many things, natural and man-made, make up the sand on our beaches. Choose an object from the beach bucket that came from a plant, human and animal, and draw them below.



Plant

Human

Animal