



## Second Nature - Oceans

Today we learned

Oceans cover 70% of Earth's surface, but humans have only explored about 20% of the oceans! The ocean consists of several layers. The **intertidal zone** is where the ocean meets land. Here we have tide pools and beaches! The next layer is the **sunlight zone**, which is the layer in which sunlight can penetrate the water. Most animals live in this zone. The next two layers are the **twilight zone**, where the light is very faint, and the **darkness zone**, where light is nonexistent. Animals that live in the bottom two zones have adapted to living in the dark and their **anatomy** is different than those living closer to the surface.

Oceans are important for providing healthy ecosystems for animals, providing food and a means of transportation for humans, and providing a beautiful space for recreational use and play! To ensure healthy ocean ecosystems, we need to prevent ocean pollution. This means reducing the amount of trash we create, correctly throwing away any trash we do make, and picking up litter!

Now at home

### Activity 1 - Ocean Creatures

Ask your child to choose an animal from the ocean and talk about its anatomy! Does it have big bulging eyes, gills, or tentacles? How about large teeth? If it lives in the twilight or darkness zone, does it glow in the dark?

Help your child cut out the outline of the animal they chose. You can use paper or something sturdier like a piece of cardboard or the inside of a cereal box. Now encourage them to use art scraps and recycled materials to build out that animal's anatomy! You can use bottle caps for eyes, scrap paper for scales, or ribbon for tentacles. Or, you can turn this activity into a drawing with just a piece of paper and coloring utensils.

### Activity 2 - Beach or River Clean Up

Making sure that trash doesn't end up in the ocean is important in ensuring healthy ocean ecosystems! There are over 5 trillion tons of plastic in the ocean. Some plastic is floating around in big islands of trash, while some of it has broken down into tiny pieces below the ocean's surface. Unfortunately, animals can mistake tiny pieces of plastic for food.

Have a discussion with your child about the interconnectedness of bodies of water, and that oftentimes streams and rivers eventually lead out to the ocean. Because of this, a piece of litter has the ability to travel quite far. It's important to ensure clean beaches and water bodies all over the world! If you have access to a beach or a river, head out for a clean up! If you don't have access to any bodies of water, you can pick up some trash anywhere in your town! Remember to wear some safety gear like gloves, and send us a photo of the trash you collect!

To send us any photos, videos, or questions, email us at [education@sproutup.org](mailto:education@sproutup.org)!

