

Exploring the Beach

Objectives

1. To give the students time to learn more about the beach and the organisms which live on the beach and the intertidal zone.
2. To review or preview the concepts learned in the core curriculum classes.

Important Reminders

- **Please be mindful of other beach classes that may be going on and keep your students together as a group.**
- **Please enforce the no swimming policy.**
- **Please remind students that shirts and shoes must be worn at all times.**
- **Please keep students off of the sand dunes.**
- **Please don't let students chase birds.**
- **Please collect only non-living, empty shells.**

Teaching Material

You can walk north or south with your students. Walking approximately north, there is the "Glory" boardwalk and a restored area after the destruction of the beach for the movie Glory. Walking approximately a quarter of a mile south, students can check out a shipwreck. It was a shrimp boat that washed aground in the late 90s. This area also often has many birds. Please have students observe the birds from a distance only.

Have the students find as many different shells as they can. Use the field guides in his folder for identifying shells. Once the students have learned to identify some shells, hand out the beach scavenger hunt. Do NOT allow the students to collect any living organisms, including plants.

Another good activity is sand sculpting. The students can construct a marine food chain or web and then build the organisms in the sand. Example: salt marsh (*Spartina*)---detritus---plankton---anchovy---flounder---sandbar shark. The class can be split into teams with each constructing a separate food chain. Have each team explain their food chain to the rest of the class. Please make sure they level any sculptures before leaving the beach (for the sea turtles).

Finally, as you walk back to the boardwalk, have the students collect all the litter they can find. Ask them to identify the litter. Can these articles decompose? Plastics and metals disintegrate very slowly. Can any of the articles harm animals? Plastics are often mistaken for food by animals. Once inside the digestive tract, these materials clog the passages, making the animal feel full. The animal then starves to death. Can any of the litter be recycled? Paper, aluminum, tin, and even some plastics are recyclable. Put the litter where it belongs.

Please remember to watch the time. It takes about 15 minutes to walk from the 4-H Center's boardwalk to the next boardwalk north. It takes about 15 minutes to walk from the 4-H Center's boardwalk to the shipwreck. It takes another 10 minutes to head up our boardwalk and reach the center. Please end the class and get back to the center on time.