My sea creature

Important – please read

This lesson has been adapted for teachers providing online classes. These notes are specifically for online lessons and the accompanying PowerPoint has been designed to support the lesson activities.

There is also guidance and advice for what teachers need to know and do before the lesson and at the beginning of the lesson. Please read the lesson instructions carefully before using them. They are for guidance only, designed to be used with the most common online platforms. You may need to adapt the lesson to the online platform you are working with.

**Topic**

Sea creatures

**Aims**

- To learn about some of the animals that live under the sea
- To practise talking about sea animals (it’s got/it hasn’t got, it eats/it doesn’t eat, it can/can’t, etc.)
- To give learners an opportunity to imagine a sea animal and compare it to others
- To enable learners to create and describe their own sea animal as a homework task in preparation for the following lesson

**Age/level**

Primary
CEFR level A1–A2

**Time**

60 minutes

**Materials**

- The teacher will need the accompanying PowerPoint and worksheet A (for younger/lower-level learners) or B (for older/higher-level learners) in PDF format to send to learners for homework.
- The learners will need colour pens or pencils and paper or a notebook.

**Introduction**

In this lesson learners learn about life under the sea. They introduce each other to different sea animals through a pre-lesson task, then they are exposed to language to describe sea animals with a focus on body parts. Then they share their favourite sea animal and practise describing it. Individually they imagine a version of a new sea animal and they compare their versions in small groups. Finally, they brainstorm some ideas in preparation for their homework to create and describe their own new sea animal.
### Checklist for online teaching

**Make sure you are familiar with the online platform you are using**

- Have you tested your microphone and camera in the platform to make sure they work with it? A headset with a mic is usually better than a device’s in-built speakers and mic.
- Do the learners need a URL or code to join the class? Do they all have this?
- Do you know how to share what is on your computer screen so that the learners can see it?
- Do you know how to mute the learners’ microphones if you need to?
- Do you know how to use the ‘breakout rooms’ if the platform has this facility? Is this enabled?
- Does the platform have a ‘raise hand’ button that the learners can use to indicate they want to speak? You can also use this function to get them to indicate if they can hear you or see what you’re showing on the screen, or to hold a quick vote!
- Do you know what the platform looks like from a learner’s perspective? It may look different or have slightly different functions compared to the teacher’s view. If you use screenshots to explain to learners where to click on something, make sure they’re taken from a learner’s perspective.
- Do you know how to troubleshoot some of the technical issues that you or your learners might experience with the platform? Does it make a difference if they are accessing the platform from a mobile device or a certain browser?
- Do you know if your learners’ parents or another adult will be available during lessons to help them resolve technical issues?
- Have you considered safeguarding and child protection issues? For example, you may wish to insist that learners do not record the lessons.
- Most online platforms have support videos or tutorials available online. Have you looked at these?

**General tips**

- Make sure you have explained to your learners (and ideally a parent or another adult if they can be around during lessons) about how to use the basic functions of the platform, how to troubleshoot issues and how to check their settings. This could be done in an initial lesson where you practise using the different buttons and teach them the things to try if there are technical or connection issues. This is also a good opportunity to teach them the language connected with the platform, such as ‘mute’, ‘breakout room’, ‘refresh’, etc., which they will need each lesson in order to follow your instructions.
- Make sure you have explained to your learners the rules and the behaviour you expect during lessons, such as patience, respect for each other, writing only relevant things in the chat, etc.
- Always check your microphone and camera before each lesson and check with each learner at the start that you can hear and see each other, and that they can see what you share on the screen.
- Make sure all the learners know they must arrive on time and what they must bring, such as their notebook and pencil case. Many online learning platforms have a virtual waiting room. It’s a good idea to tell your learners to join the class at least five minutes before it begins to avoid disruption.
### Procedure

**Before the lesson**
- Prior to the lesson, decide which sea animals and which body parts you are going to cover. This lesson includes shark, dolphin, squid, crab, lobster, whale, seahorse, jellyfish, octopus and starfish, and fin, tentacles, claws and blowhole as well as the usual arms, legs, head, etc., but you can change these depending on your learners.
- Assign one or more sea animals to each learner, so that all the animals are assigned, and ask them to find or draw a picture of it to bring to class.
- Before you start the lesson:
  - Test your microphone and camera to make sure they work.
  - Make sure that you have the accompanying PowerPoint open and shared.

**At the start of the lesson slide 1**
- Welcome the learners as they arrive:
  - Check that you can all hear and see each other.
  - Check that they can see the first slide.
  - If they can’t, ask them (or ideally an adult they have present) to check their settings or troubleshoot in the way you have shown them previously. You may need to write this in the chat facility if they cannot hear you.
- Tips:
  - Consider having a short task for the learners to do until they have all arrived. For example, you could have a poll set up (if your platform has this function) or a simple activity where they write in the chat, such as to say what they’ve done that week.
  - Consider muting learners’ microphones after greeting them to avoid having too much background noise when you get started. Tell them if you do this and explain why. You could also suggest that if possible they use a headset with a mic rather than their device’s in-built speakers and mic.

**1. Warmer (3–5 minutes) slide 2**
- Ask the learners to find their pictures that you assigned them before the lesson.
- Each learner shows their picture to the camera and tells the class what it is.
- Ask learners to guess what the topic of today’s lesson is. They can raise their hands physically or using the ‘raise hand’ function if your platform has one.

**2. Introduce language to describe sea animals (5 minutes) slide 3**
- Play a describing game to introduce language to describe sea animals. Read the sentences aloud and ask learners to raise their hand to guess. If you assigned different animals, change the sentences.
  - It’s big. It’s grey and white. It’s got a big mouth with lots of teeth and a big fin on its back. It can swim very fast. (a shark)
  - It’s big or small. It eats other sea animals like crabs. It’s got eight arms. It can hide in small places. (an octopus)
  - It’s very big. It can ‘sing’. It eats lots and lots of very small animals called krill. It’s got a blowhole on top of its head so it can breathe air. (a whale)
  - It’s very soft. It’s got long tentacles and it can sting. (a jellyfish)
  - It hasn’t got a head. It’s got five legs. It walks on the bottom of the sea. (a starfish)
  - It’s big or small. It’s got claws. It usually walks sideways. (a crab)
- If you like, you can award a bonus point if they can remember which learner had the picture of that animal!
3. Focus on body parts language (5–10 minutes) slides 4 and 5
- Show the sea animal body parts on slide 4, or cover them all and slowly reveal them one by one if possible. Ask learners to raise their hand and say what animal each one is. Ask them how they knew and elicit/teach the words for the body parts, e.g. *It’s an octopus because it’s got eight arms. It’s a whale because it’s got a blowhole.* You can see the whole animals on slide 5.
- Get learners to suggest an action for each body part, then do the actions while drilling the words.

4. Body parts language practice (5–10 minutes) platform whiteboard or blank document
- Play a game of *backs to the computer*, which is similar to *backs to the board*. Put learners in two teams. For reference write the names of who is in each team on the whiteboard (if the platform has one) or on a blank document that you screen share.
- Nominate one learner from each team to physically turn around away from the screen. Write a body part word or show a picture on the whiteboard/document for the other learners to see, then remove it.
- The two nominated learners turn back around. Everybody else mimes the word and the first of the two learners to raise their hand says the body part.
- Repeat with two different learners turning around each time.

5. Describing sea animals (5–10 minutes) slide 6
- Tell learners your favourite sea animal and describe it, making something false in the description. For example: *My favourite sea animal is the seahorse. It’s small and it’s got tentacles.*
- Nominate a strong learner and elicit the correction to your sentence. Ask the same learner to tell everyone their favourite sea animal and to make something false in the description. The next learner corrects them, and so on, until all the learners have had a chance to share what their favourite sea animal is.
- You could repeat the activity with their least favourite sea animal for more practice.
- Ask learners to say what was the most (or least) popular sea animal and why they think that is.

6. Imagining a new sea animal (10 minutes) slide 7
- Ask learners if they’ve ever heard of the jell-octo-crab. Tell them you’ve just heard about this new sea animal but you haven’t seen a picture of it yet. What do they think it looks like? Elicit some ideas. It’s great if the learners make some assumptions based on the name of the animal but not essential.
- Tell the learners they now have three minutes to draw what they think it looks like. Set a timer if the platform you’re using has one, or use an online one and share your screen. Draw a picture yourself too!
- Get learners to hold their pictures up to the camera when they’ve finished. You now have lots of sub-species of jell-octo-crab! Then hold your picture up and introduce it as the [teacher’s name’s] jell-octo-crab.
- Ask them if they have any questions about your jell-octo-crab. Elicit some basic questions such as *What can it do? What does it eat?* Generate some ideas, e.g. *It’s got tentacles and it can sting.*

7. Speaking about a sea animal (15 minutes)
- For this activity the learners will ideally work in groups in breakout rooms, if the platform you’re using has this function, and your learners are comfortable and responsible when working in breakout rooms. However, it can also be done as a whole class activity.
**slides 8 and 9**

- Tell learners they are going to work in a small groups, talk about their jell-octo-crabs and find out what’s the same and what’s different about them. They should take turns to hold their picture up to the camera and talk about it. Slide 9 shows some language you could display to support the learners during the task although you may wish to provide different examples.
- You could also open a blank document or whiteboard for them to write on in the breakout room to record the similarities and differences as they discuss.
- Tell learners that when they come back to the main room, they will tell the class about the similarities and differences.
- You may wish to remind the learners of the ‘breakout room rules’ before you move them there, for example speaking English only, staying on task, etc.
- Monitor the learners during the activity by regularly moving between breakout rooms. If your platform has the function, turn your camera off while you monitor so as to disturb the learners less when you enter a room.
- Before you bring learners back to the main room, visit each breakout room briefly and announce that they have two more minutes before you will bring them back.
- After two minutes, bring all the learners back and ask each group to say what was the same and what was different with their jell-octo-crabs.

**8. Homework – inventing a sea creature (5 minutes)**

**slide 10**

- Tell the learners that their homework will be to ‘discover’ their own new sea animal. They will draw a picture and write about it. Elicit some ideas. You might prefer to limit them to sea animals (e.g. a jelly-star-whale), or you could encourage some ideas that combine other animals or even objects, e.g. an ele-dolph-cat or a lob-fish-cycle.
- Explain that you will send them the PDF of the worksheet (A or B, depending on your learners) to either print out or use as a guide for writing in their notebooks.
- In the next lesson, learners can show their pictures for the other learners to describe and guess what it can do and what it eats.

**At the end of the lesson**

**slide 11**

- Praise the learners for their participation and work and tell them you’re looking forward to seeing them again in the next lesson.
- Make sure they know how to exit the platform and wait until they all leave before leaving yourself.

**Further ideas and resources**

- If feasible, you could ask the learners to send you a scan or a photo of their work, and you could post it on a virtual ‘wall’ using a tool such as Padlet.
- LearnEnglish Kids website has lots of activities related to sea animals: [https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/category/topics/sea-animals](https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/category/topics/sea-animals)
- You can also watch a video (with accompanying online activities) about a boy trying to reduce the amount of plastic in our oceans: [https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/video-zone/plastic-ocean-campaigner](https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/video-zone/plastic-ocean-campaigner)
- The World Oceans Day (8 June) website has resources related to protecting oceans: [https://worldoceansday.org/](https://worldoceansday.org/)

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