



One big ocean

Lesson plan: how much of Earth is ocean, where all the water is, and why the sea is salty, with a globe toss and a water bottle demonstration



Ages	8 to 11 (grades 3 to 6)
Time	45 to 60 minutes
Group	Up to 35 students
Where	A classroom with space for a circle, or outside
You need	An inflatable globe or a ball with a world map, a 1 litre bottle of water and a small cup for the demonstration, one record sheet per student

What students learn

- The ocean covers about 71% of Earth's surface.
- About 97% of Earth's water is in the ocean, and only a little is fresh water we can use.
- All the named oceans are connected as one world ocean.
- Why the sea is salty.

Before the lesson

1. Blow up the globe, or draw a simple world map on a ball.
2. Fill a 1 litre bottle with water for the demonstration.
3. Print one **record sheet** per student.

The lesson

- 1** A water planet **5 minutes, slides 1 and 2**. Show the pie chart. Ask students to guess first.
- 2** Globe toss **15 minutes, slide 3**. Play until you have at least 30 catches. Work out the percentage together.
- 3** Where is the water? **10 minutes, slides 4 and 5**. Pour 30 ml from the 1 litre bottle into a cup: that is all the fresh water. Pour a single drop onto a finger: that is roughly the fresh water in rivers and lakes.
- 4** One ocean, salty sea **10 minutes, slides 6 and 7**. Discuss how the oceans connect and why the sea is salty.
- 5** Wrap up **5 minutes, slide 8**. Discuss one or two questions.

Answers and what to listen for

What to expect: with 30 to 50 catches, classes usually get somewhere between 60% and 80%. That is a good moment to talk about why more samples give a better answer.

Making it easier or harder

- **Younger groups:** skip the percentage and just compare the two tallies.
- **Older groups:** combine results from several classes and see if the answer gets closer to 71%.
- **Link:** the Seashore explorers module takes students to the edge of the ocean.

Curriculum links

- **Science:** Earth and space, water.
- **Maths:** tallying, percentages, pie charts.
- **Ocean Literacy Principle 1:** the Earth has one big ocean with many features.

The teacher reading has the science behind every slide, with links to the sources.

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