



Getting ready to explore

Lesson plan: tides, shore habitats, the animals and plants to look for, the dangerous few, and the explorer's code



Ages	8 to 11 (grades 3 to 6)
Time	45 to 60 minutes
Group	Up to 35 students
Where	Any classroom. No internet needed.
You need	The slides, one field guide per group, the explorer's code poster

What students learn

- What tides are, and why low tide is the best time to explore.
- The different kinds of shore, and what lives on each.
- How to recognise common shore animals and plants, and the four dangerous ones.
- How to explore safely and respectfully, following the explorer's code.

Before the lesson

1. Print one **field guide** per group and the **explorer's code** poster (A3 if possible).
2. If you are planning a shore walk, look up the tide times now. Lesson 2's plan has a full checklist.

The lesson

- 1 **A tough place to live 8 minutes, slides 1 to 3.** Explain tides with the diagram. Ask who has seen the sea go out.
- 2 **Shores and their life 15 minutes, slides 4 to 6.** Go through the habitats and the animals and plants.
- 3 **Danger and the code 10 minutes, slides 7 and 8.** Make sure every student can name the four dangerous animals.
- 4 **Spot and sort 12 minutes, slide 9.** Show pictures from the slides and let groups race to find them in the guide.
- 5 **Wrap up 5 minutes, slide 10.** Discuss one or two questions.

Answers and what to listen for

Key safety message: cone shells, stonefish, sea urchins and jellyfish. Cone shells are the most important: the rule is never to pick up any cone-shaped shell, even one that looks empty.

Making it easier or harder

- **Younger groups:** learn six animals and the four dangerous ones.

- **Older groups:** find out which animals in the guide are molluscs, echinoderms, crustaceans, fish or plants.
- **Language:** ask students for local names. Sea grapes are *lato*, and many families will know other names.

Safety and good practice

- Teach the four dangerous animals before any shore visit.

Curriculum links

- **Science:** habitats, adaptations, living things and their environment.
- **Ocean Literacy Principle 5:** the ocean supports a great diversity of life and ecosystems.

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

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