



The shore walk

Lesson plan: a safe, organised shore walk with three tasks, and a classroom follow-up. Includes a no-shore alternative



Ages	8 to 11 (grades 3 to 6)
Time	60 to 90 minutes on the shore, plus 30 minutes back in class
Group	Small groups of 4 to 6, each with an adult
Where	A safe sandy, rocky or seagrass shore at low tide, or the school grounds
You need	The slides, record sheets, pencils and clipboards, 1 m string squares, a first aid kit, water

What students learn

- How to explore a shore safely and respectfully.
- How to observe carefully, count in quadrats and record findings.
- That different parts of the shore support different amounts of life.
- How to share findings as a class.

Before the lesson

1. **Check the tide** and plan to arrive about an hour before low tide. Check the weather on the day.
2. Get permission from parents and the school, and from the barangay if needed.
3. Visit the shore first if you can. Choose a safe area without strong currents, steep drops or heavy boat traffic.
4. Arrange enough adults to supervise every small group, and choose a meeting point and a signal to gather.
5. Pack a first aid kit, water, and a copy of the explorer's code. Print one **record sheet** per student and make a 1 m string square per group.

The lesson

- 1 **Before we go 10 minutes, in class, slide 2.** Go through the checklist and the explorer's code. Check everyone's shoes.
- 2 **Shore bingo 20 to 30 minutes, slide 3.** Groups explore slowly with their adult.
- 3 **Quadrat counts 20 minutes, slide 4.** Each group does three quadrats from the top of the beach to the water.
- 4 **Look closely 15 minutes, slide 5.** Quiet observation and drawing.
- 5 **Back in class 30 minutes, slide 6.** Class chart, shore map and thank-you notes.

Answers and what to listen for

What to expect: most shores have more life near the water than at the top of the beach, because animals there spend less time drying out in the sun. Rubbish is often concentrated along the high tide line.

Making it easier or harder

- **No shore:** use the school grounds or the picture walk on slide 7.
- **Older groups:** measure the distance of each quadrat from the high tide line and draw a graph. This links to the Reef scientists module.
- **Partners:** schools near MCP can ask about joining a shore walk or beach clean-up with our team.

Safety and good practice

- Keep groups small, with an adult each, and away from the water's edge on rough days.
- Closed shoes for everyone. No bare feet.
- Nobody touches cone shells, stonefish, sea urchins or jellyfish. Carry a first aid kit and know the nearest health centre.
- Watch the tide: leave before it turns and starts to come in.

Curriculum links

- **Science:** habitats, sampling, observation and recording.
- **Maths:** tallying and comparing.
- **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.

Free to use and share for education. Made by Marine Conservation Philippines. More free lessons: marineconservationphilippines.org/resources/teachers-resources/ Photo by MCP. Updated September 2026.