

Shark and Ray Touch Tanks Curriculum

Lesson Summary:

SWBAT:

- a. Compare and contrast characteristics between rays and sharks.
- b. Write a description of the white spotted bamboo shark.
- c. Explain their experience at the aquarium describing the different shark and ray tank inhabitants.
- d. Create a new creature based on the characteristics of the sharks and rays in the touch tank.

Grade Level:

K-5

NJCCCS

5.1.4.A.3
5.1.P.B.1
5.1.4.B.3
5.1.P.C.1
5.1.P.D.1
5.1.4.D.1
5.1.4.D.2
5.3.P.A.1
5.3.4.A.2
5.3.P.B.1
5.3.2.B.1
5.3.2.B.2

Topic Keywords:

*White spotted bamboo shark *Cownose sting ray

Teacher Materials

1. *Fish Tales* – Aquarium information sheet containing background facts on the white spotted bamboo shark and cownose sting ray touch tanks.
2. *Venn Diagram Worksheet*

Teacher Procedure:

Prior to visit Activities:

Estimated Duration of Activity: 60-90 minutes

1. Have the students brainstorm on what they know, or think they know, about sharks, and make a list on the board.
2. Provide students with *Fish Tales* handout.
3. Read through the handout with students or have students read it on their own.
4. Then, discuss the white spotted bamboo shark, and talk about how it is the same or different from other sharks.
5. Discuss Greek/Roman/Norse mythology with your class. (Re: why we have seasons, what causes thunder, etc.) Then, discuss what students know about sharks. Brainstorm and write the list on the board. Have students get into groups of five and create a myth about the white spotted bamboo shark. The myth may explain a physical feature, behavior, diet, habitat, etc.

Post-visit Activities:

Estimated Duration of Activity: 60-90 minutes

1. Compare and contrast the cownose sting ray and the white spotted bamboo shark.
 - a. Create a Venn diagram to display the similarities and differences.
 - See template with this packet
2. **Writing Connection:** If you could have any three characteristics of a white spotted bamboo shark, cownose ray, what would they be and why?
3. **Art connection:** Take one characteristic from each of the creatures found in the touch tank and combine them to create a new creature. Draw it and name it.
4. Write a letter to a friend/family member describing your experience at the aquarium. Talk about your interaction with the sharks and rays.

During the visit:

1. An Atlantic City Aquarium Educator will gather students around the Tropical Touch Tank inhabiting the white spotted bamboo sharks and also gather them at the sting ray touch tank.
2. There will be a lecture on the tank inhabitants and their role in their ecosystems.
3. Students will be encouraged to ask questions about specific research that was assigned before visiting the aquarium.

Evaluation:

The K- 5th grade students will be able to successfully identify white spotted bamboo sharks and cownose sting rays. They will also be able to compare and contrast the characteristics of the two species.