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OCEAN DREAMS

Educational Activities Guide

ACTIVITY 1

Tides of Memory

A Discussion & Reflection

Voice of the Ocean

DEEP SEA

SK Films

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INTRODUCTION

The ocean is the blue heart of our planet. It produces much of the oxygen we breathe, provides food for billions of people, and plays a crucial role in regulating Earth's climate. Life on Earth began in the ocean, and even today, all living systems remain connected through its waters. What happens on land — from the choices we make to the resources we use — directly affects the health of the ocean, even far from the coast.

Ocean Dreams takes us to places where marine life has been given the chance to recover, showing how ecosystems can return and flourish when they are protected and carefully restored. Through powerful images and personal stories, the film highlights both the challenges facing the ocean and the hope that emerges when people act wisely. It reminds us that the ocean is not separate from our lives, and that small actions can create far-reaching impacts.

UNESCO's Ocean Literacy Program emphasizes that understanding the ocean is essential for caring for it. By observing how marine ecosystems function, recognizing how they change over time, and understanding the role humans play within them, students can begin to connect knowledge with responsibility. These activities are designed to support that learning journey — encouraging reflection, curiosity, and discussion — while empowering students to think about how informed choices can help protect, restore, and support the recovery of ocean ecosystems, for the benefit of life both below and above the waves.

From the Film:

Ocean Dreams is a Giant Screen journey into the hidden world beneath the ocean's blue surface — a story of breathtaking beauty, fragile ecosystems, and extraordinary resilience.

While human activity has pushed marine environments to the brink, this film reveals something equally powerful: the ocean's remarkable ability to recover when given protection and space. From the icy fjords of Norway to the vibrant reefs of Raja Ampat and the surprising rebirth of Bikini Atoll, ***Ocean Dreams*** showcases real-world conservation success stories where marine life has returned in astonishing abundance.

Through immersive large-format cinematography, audiences are invited to experience the ocean not as a distant wilderness, but as a living system deeply connected to our own survival.

At its heart, ***Ocean Dreams*** is a story of hope — a reminder that when we protect the ocean and its inhabitants, we protect ourselves.



Ocean Literacy Principles

The Ocean Literacy Principles are a globally recognized framework that helps educators guide students toward a deeper understanding of the ocean's influence on us and our influence on the ocean. These seven principles describe the essential knowledge students need to develop environmental awareness, scientific curiosity, and a sense of stewardship for our blue planet.



Earth has one big ocean with many features

Even though we use different names — Atlantic, Pacific, Indian, etc. — all of these are actually connected and form one single, continuous ocean system. Water, currents, heat, and marine life move freely across the planet.



The ocean and life in the ocean shape the features of Earth

The ocean constantly reshapes our planet. Waves and currents shape coastlines, marine organisms help form sand and reefs, and ocean processes influence the physical structure of Earth.



The ocean is a major influence on weather and climate

The ocean absorbs, stores, and moves heat around the planet. This controls weather patterns, rainfall, storms, and long-term climate conditions everywhere — even far from the coast.



The ocean makes Earth habitable

The ocean helps regulate Earth's temperature and produces much of the oxygen we breathe through microscopic plankton, making life on Earth possible.



The ocean supports a great diversity of life and ecosystems

The ocean contains more living organisms and ecosystems than anywhere else on Earth — from coral reefs and kelp forests to deep-sea trenches full of species we still know little about.



The ocean and humans are inextricably interconnected

Humans depend on the ocean for oxygen, food, climate regulation, transportation, recreation, culture, and inspiration — and our actions directly affect ocean health.



The ocean is largely unexplored

Most of the ocean remains a mystery. We have only explored a small portion, and new species, ecosystems, and geological features are discovered all the time.

Tides of Memory

Overview

Description

This lesson can be used either before or after watching the film ***Ocean Dreams***. It invites students into a guided reflection that builds their emotional connection to the ocean and encourages thoughtful engagement with its themes. Used as a pre-viewing activity, it helps surface students' prior knowledge, assumptions, and curiosity about ocean environments. Used after the film, it reinforces key observations and deepens understanding of the interconnected relationship between humans and the ocean.

Learning objectives:

Students will:

- Recall key ideas, animals, places, and themes from ***Ocean Dreams***.
- Identify environmental challenges shown in the documentary.
- Share personal reactions and perspectives.
- Practice active listening and respectful dialogue.
- Explore their own connections to the ocean (even if they don't live near it).
- Generate questions that spark curiosity about ocean science and ocean protection.

Ocean Literacy Principles

- Principle 1: One big ocean with many features
- Principle 5: Ocean supports diverse life and ecosystems
- Principle 6: Ocean and humans are interconnected
- Principle 7: Ocean is largely unexplored

Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)

5-ESS2-1: Develop a model using examples to describe ways Earth's systems interact
5-LS2-1: Develop a model to describe interactions among plants, animals, and their environment.
3-ESS3-1: Make a claim about the merit of a design solution that reduces the impacts of environmental challenges.
5-ESS3-1: Obtain and combine information about ways communities use science ideas to protect Earth's resources and environments.

Materials:

- Whiteboard / chart paper
- Markers
- Paper or sticky notes
- Optional: small object for turn-taking (shell, ball, etc.)
- Art material for students; crayons, markers, color pencils, etc.



Background: Tides of Memory

The surface of our planet is covered by one vast, connected ocean—an immense, living system that links all continents and covers more than 70% of Earth's surface. Though most of it is saltwater, a smaller portion exists as freshwater in seas, estuaries, and polar ice. Beneath its surface lies a world of striking contrasts—from sunlit shallows to the silent darkness of the deep—home to an extraordinary diversity of life that has evolved over millions of years. Ancient, resilient, and sometimes otherworldly, ocean life continues to thrive in even the most extreme environments.

This great ocean is the largest ecosystem on our planet and the foundation of life on Earth. It produces much of the oxygen we breathe, regulates the climate, shapes weather patterns, and drives the currents that sustain global systems. It helps generate the rain that nourishes crops and provides freshwater, while also feeding billions of people and supporting livelihoods through fishing and tourism. For countless species, the ocean is everything—it is home, food, shelter, and a place where life begins and grows.

Yet, the ocean is more than a life support system—it is a dynamic, living world that has endured for millennia. Today, however, many parts of the ocean are changing. Human activities have placed increasing pressure on marine ecosystems, and in some places, the ocean is no longer as vibrant as it once was. And yet, there is hope. The ocean has a remarkable capacity to recover—if given the chance. By protecting and restoring marine environments, we can help ensure that this vast, life-giving system continues to thrive for generations to come

Key words: *One ocean, Ocean services, Biodiversity, Climate, Ecosystem.*

Tides of Memory

Lesson Plan

Step 1: Memory Splash

Format: Whole-Class Discussion - Guided discussion

Time: ~10 minutes

Invite students to sit in a circle, with the teacher at the same level, to create a sense of openness and inclusion. You may wish to use a speaking object to support turn-taking and active listening. If students have not yet seen the film, consider starting with the **short video "*Ocean Dreams – Introduction*"** as a teaser to spark curiosity and help prepare them for the themes they will explore.

Preparing students **before** watching the film ***Ocean Dreams*** helps them connect more deeply with what they will see. By recalling their own memories and feelings about the ocean, they become more engaged and curious, making it easier to understand the film, notice key details, and care about the environments and animals they encounter.

Ask students to close their eyes for a moment and think about the ocean. You may play soft ocean sounds in the background to create a calm and immersive atmosphere.

Then ask a few guiding questions:

- ***Have you ever visited the ocean or sea? If yes, when was the last time? If not, what do you imagine it might be like?***
- ***Who were you with, or who would you like to go with? What did you do, or what would you like to do there?***
- ***How did the weather feel? Warm? Windy? Cold?***
- ***What sounds do you remember? Waves? Birds? People?***
- ***How did being near the ocean make you feel, or how do you think it would make you feel —happy, calm, excited, curious, or maybe a little scared?***

Reflecting **after** watching the film ***Ocean Dreams*** helps students process what they've seen and connect new knowledge with their own thoughts and emotions. Revisiting key moments and ideas deepens their understanding of ocean environments and encourages critical thinking, empathy, and a stronger connection to the natural world.

Then ask a few guiding questions:

- ***What was the documentary about?***
- ***What places or habitats did the film visit?***
- ***Which ocean animals did you see?***
- ***What problems or challenges did the ocean face in the documentary?***
- ***What moment from the film stayed with you the most? Why?***

*Encourage students to notice both **facts** and **feelings**.*

Lesson Plan

Step 2: Ocean Dreams & Imagination

Format: Whole-Class Discussion - Guided discussion

Time: ~10 minutes

Students use imagination to build their own "Ocean Dream," inspired by what they saw in the film. Ask a few students to describe their Ocean Dream to the class or to a partner.

Ask a few guiding questions:

- ***Imagine you could create your own "Ocean Dream." What would it look like?***
- ***What animals from the film would you include? Are there any new ones you would add?***
- ***Where would your ocean be?*** *(deep ocean, coral reef, icy sea, near a beach)*
- ***What would you be doing in your ocean dream? Swimming, exploring, helping animals?***

Optional Creative Extension: **Draw Your Ocean Dream**

Students can illustrate their Ocean Dream on paper, showing the animals, plants, people, and places they imagined. Encourage them to think about perspective (Are they above the water, on the shore, or underwater?) and to include as many details as possible to bring their ocean to life.

After drawing, invite a few students to share their work with the class or a partner, describing what they included and why.

As students draw and share, teachers can observe and reflect on key elements in their work, such as:

- ***Perspective:*** *Is the scene from the beach, above the surface, or underwater?*
- ***Environment:*** *Does the ocean appear calm, vibrant, mysterious, or threatened?*
- ***Marine life:*** *What types of animals are included? Is there a variety (biodiversity) or just a few species?*
- ***Human presence:*** *Are people included? If so, what are they doing?*
- ***Ocean health:*** *Does the drawing show a healthy ecosystem, or are there signs of challenges such as pollution or harm?*
- ***Emotional tone:*** *Does the image feel joyful, peaceful, curious, or concerned?*

These observations can offer valuable insight into how students understand the ocean, how they relate to it emotionally, and how connected they feel to marine environments.

Lesson Plan

Step 3: Our Connection to the Ocean

Format: Whole-Class Discussion - Guided discussion

Time: ~15 minutes

Ask a few guiding questions:

- ***In what ways are you connected to the ocean?*** (If students struggle, the teacher may offer examples such as: weather, climate, food, oxygen, transportation of goods, vacations, etc.)
- ***How do humans depend on the ocean?***
- ***How do humans affect the ocean—positively or negatively?***

Now, lets think as a Scientist

- ***Why is the ocean important?***
- ***What can people do to help the ocean?***

Add this reflection:
"Did you know? You don't have to be a scientist to help the ocean. No matter what job you have, you are connected to it!"

Examples to share with students:

- ***Architects*** *design buildings near the coast that are safe from rising sea levels and storms*
- ***Doctors*** *help people stay healthy, using medicines that can come from ocean plants and animals, and treating diseases linked to ocean health, such as those caused by polluted water*
- ***Artists*** *create ocean stories, drawings, or films that show sea animals and inspire people to protect them*
- ***Engineers*** *design cleaner ships, reduce plastic pollution, and build ocean-friendly energy like wave or offshore wind power*
- ***Teachers*** *teach students how the ocean works and how we can take care of marine biodiversity*
- ***Tourism workers*** *help people enjoy beaches and the ocean without littering or harming the ecosystem*

Follow-up question:

- ***What job would you like to have one day? How could that job help the ocean?***

Closing; *So no matter what you become one day, you can always be an ocean helper.*

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Educational Activities Guide

As part of UNESCO's efforts to advance Ocean Literacy through accessible and engaging educational resources, this activity uses the Ocean Dreams film to explore how marine ecosystems evolve over time, from ecological balance to environmental pressures and the possibility of recovery. Through visual observation and guided inquiry, students investigate how environmental changes affect marine life and how human activities can influence these processes. The activity supports learners in developing their understanding of ocean dynamics, strengthening their curiosity and critical thinking, and recognising the importance of collective efforts towards a healthy and sustainable Ocean.

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