

Art – Ocean Literacy Principle 6

The ocean and humans are inextricable interconnected

Our Plastic Environment activity:

Plastic pollution is one of the major problems facing the ocean at this point of time. Eight million tonnes of plastic a year ends up in our ocean, causing immense problems to the animals living there. However, the problem that plastic is causing is hard to communicate to society. Not only is the ocean hard to reach for some people, and difficult to see into, sometimes the images associated with plastic pollution can be quite upsetting.

If you are able to, show your students some of the footage about this issue from the final episode of the BBC series Blue Planet II that showed the impact of human activity on marine life.

The following activity allows students to use a mixture of artistic mediums to represent the problem of plastic pollution. Dividing their page into two sections, one side should represent a healthy ocean and the other one that is affected by plastic. The twist? The animals and habitat can be drawn using pencils, and the general habitat can be decorated using any other artistic media (colouring pencils, oil pastels, watercolour etc.) but all of the animals depicted in the artwork should be decorated using the plastic that the students have collected!

Activity Learning Objectives:

By the end of the activity, students should fully understand the extent of the plastic pollution problem facing our oceans. They will then use their creativity to communicate the problem to others through the medium of art.

What you will need:

- A2 paper
- drawing pencils
- a mixture of art mediums
- a selection of plastics - the plastic should be collected by the students prior to the activity. It should consist of the plastic that they use at home or at

Further work:

In order to fully communicate their message, the students could hold an art exhibition for the school and parents enabling them to present their work to a wider audience.

Art links to other Ocean Literacy Principles:

Principle 1:

Use their knowledge of the ocean to create pieces of art work that clearly depict the differences between the five ocean basins.

Principle 4:

Encourage your students to use their creativity to show how important phytoplankton is for the world. Draw or paint all the animals in an ocean food chain, starting with phytoplankton. Find a creative way to link them together in a chain and

Principle 7:

Encourage students to use their imagination and pretend that they are on a deep-sea expedition in unknown waters. Using their knowledge of marine ecosystems, the students can invent their own animal that they have discovered in the abyss, writing details