

Activity

Episode 1
4th February 2014

Shark Cull

Key Learning

Students will investigate both sides of the shark culling debate.

The Australian Curriculum

English / Literacy / Interacting with others

Clarify understanding of content as it unfolds in formal and informal situations, connecting ideas to students' own experiences and present and justify a point of view ([ACELY1699](#)) **Year 5**



Participate in and contribute to discussions, clarifying and interrogating ideas, developing and supporting arguments, sharing and evaluating information, experiences and opinions ([ACELY1709](#)) **Year 6**



Use interaction skills, for example paraphrasing, questioning and interpreting non-verbal cues and choose vocabulary and vocal effects appropriate for different audiences and purposes ([ACELY1796](#)) **Year 5**



English / Literacy / Interacting with others

Use interaction skills, varying conventions of spoken interactions such as voice volume, tone, pitch and pace, according to group size, formality of interaction and needs and expertise of the audience ([ACELY1816](#)) **Year 6**



Use interaction skills when discussing and presenting ideas and information, selecting body language, voice qualities and other elements, (for example music and sound) to add interest and meaning ([ACELY1804](#)) **Year 7**



Science / Science as a Human Endeavour / Use and influence of science

Science and technology contribute to finding solutions to a range of contemporary issues; these solutions may impact on other areas of society and involve ethical considerations ([ACSH120](#)) **Year 7**



Discussion Questions

1. Which state has recently introduced a shark culling program?
2. Why was the program introduced?
3. In your own words, describe what a cull is.
4. What is the aim of the shark cull?
5. Which species' of sharks can be killed?
6. How long do the sharks have to be?
7. Give one argument for and one against culling sharks.
8. Do you think that the shark cull will make the beach safer for people? Why or why not?
9. Should sharks be culled? Have your say in the BtN online poll. To vote head to the BtN website <http://abc.net.au/btn/polls.htm>
10. How did this story make you feel?

Activities

Classroom discussion

Watch the BtN *Shark Cull* story and summarise the story in your own words. Hold a group discussion and reflect on the issue of culling sharks.

- Are all sharks dangerous?
- Who made the decision to cull sharks?
- Why are sharks being culled?
- Should a shark be killed if it attacks a human? Why?

Mini debate

Before preparing for the mini-debate, students will investigate the environmental, safety and moral/ethical issues related to culling sharks. They may find it useful to record their information on the following chart.

What do you know?	What do you want to find out?	How will you find out?	What did you learn?

Preparing for your mini debate

- Working in pairs, students will prepare a 1-2 minute speech for a mini debate on the topic of culling sharks. One person will speak for the affirmative and the other will speak for the negative.
- Before students begin to construct their argument, ask them to record what they already know about the topic and what they would like to find out. Students then research the topic to gain a greater understanding of the issue.
- Ask students to list their arguments in point form on paper (without their partner seeing them). When they have done this, ask them to choose the five best points that will form the basis for their debate.
- Students will write in point form, their debate on cards that fit into the palm of their hand. Their debate needs to have an introduction (introducing the topic), middle (three main points) and a conclusion (restating their position). Students practise their speech and then present the mini debate to other students.

Guide for giving feedback

- Was the information clear and accurate?
- Were the arguments logical?
- Were the counter arguments accurate and relevant?
- Comments about the presentation style (tone of voice, body language, enthusiastic, convincing).

Reflection

- How difficult was it to think of points to support one side of the argument?
- Do you think you would have done a better job supporting the other side of the argument?
- Was I able to convince others of my opinion?
- Did my opinion change?
- What did you learn from this activity?

Opinion Poll

Students will conduct their own opinion poll on the issue of culling sharks. Working in groups, students will need to decide who their sample group will be and how many people will be polled. What method they will use to conduct the poll? (Face to face interviews or written responses).

- Ask students to graph the opinion poll results and display in the classroom. Students can reflect on how reliable they think the results were. What would they do differently next time?
- Students may want to film their interviews and then create a movie to present to other students.
- Compare the poll results from the people you surveyed to the results from the BtN online poll <http://www.abc.net.au/btn/polls.htm>

More about sharks

Students will choose to investigate either:

The role sharks play in the marine ecosystem. The following questions will help guide their research:

- Are sharks important predators?
- Are sharks endangered? If so, which species?
- What threats exist to shark populations?

Create a poster that explains the shark's role as predator and threats to their existence.

OR

Research some specific adaptations sharks have made to survive in particular habitats, for example, body shape, colour, tails and fins.

Share your research with the class or create a display in the school library.

Related Research Links

ABC News – First shark destroyed under WA's catch-and-kill policy

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-01-26/first-shark-killed/5219492>

ABC Fact Check – Can governments protect people from killer sharks?

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-12-22/can-governments-protect-people-from-killer-sharks/5158880>

Behind the News – Shark attacks

<http://www.abc.net.au/btn/story/s3349511.htm>

National Geographic Kids – Great White Sharks

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com.au/kids/animals/creaturefeature/great-white-shark/>

Scholastic – Shark adaptations

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/dirtrep/animal/sharks.htm>