

SHARK SUMMIT / LESSON OVERVIEW

Objectives

The students will:

- practice using the library and Internet to research a conservation issue;
- work as a team to develop a stance on an issue using scientific research;
- stage a “Shark Summit” to discuss the issue, propose solutions, and vote on a plan to conserve wild shark populations;
- and discuss how conservation issues are complex problems of society that affect both humans and animals.

Lesson Summary

Introduction (10 minutes)

- Introduce the lesson by discussing the importance of apex predators in an ecosystem (particularly sharks).
- Discuss problems that threaten wild shark populations.
- How are conservation issues addressed in the real world?

Shark Summit Activity (Variable)

As a class, students will demonstrate a decision-making process called a “summit” then evaluate its outcome.

Conclusion (10 – 20 minutes)

After concluding the Shark Summit, students discuss its outcome using prompted discussion questions, such as:

- Is it always easy, or even possible, to come up with a solution acceptable to everyone involved?
- Did your stance on the conservation issue change after listening to others present their point of views?
- Would it ever be beneficial to compromise your point of view? When and why?
- What role does science play in policy-making?
- What role does public education play in awareness and action?

Materials

- Computer with internet access
- PowerPoint
- Pencils, writing utensils
- Colored pencils, crayons, or markers
- White art paper or construction paper
- Poster boards
- Scissors
- Glue and/or tape