

What are you Wading for?

• Keep 'em Reading •

Grades
K-5

by | Bobbie Martinie

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Whether you live in a land-locked state or by the seashore, the beach is a favorite escape for most everyone. What could be better than feeling sand between your toes, hearing the ocean waves lap against the shore, and smelling a hint of salt in the air? Having a good book by your side is all you need to top off a great day at the beach.

Teaching children about the seashore has endless possibilities. Each classroom subject can be taught using a beach theme, so make a day of it! Language Arts activities allow students to learn and define words about the seashore. Math and science inherently provide easy, teachable connections about this important habitat. Check out social studies and geography resources to determine where different beaches are found—and how to get there. Music and art can bring a creative aspect to the day. Our responsibility to keep beaches clean helps students to understand their civic duty to nature and the world. So, dig out your flip flops, don the Hawaiian shirt, and let's hit the beach!

Several publishers offer useful series of books about the seashore. Here are a few:

- *Creatures of the Sea* by Kris Hirschmann. KidHaven. 3-6.
- *Musty Crusty Animals* by Lola M. Schaefer. Heinemann Library. K-3.
- *Pebble Plus: Under the Sea*. Capstone Press. K-3.
- *Sea Creatures*. Heinemann Library. 3-6.
- *Welcome Books: Ocean Life* by Lloyd G. Douglas. Children's Press. K-3.
- *Wild Marine Habitats* by Melissa S. Cole. Blackbirch Press. 3-6.



Seashore Story Resources

1. *At the Beach* by Anne and Harlow Rockwell. Aladdin Books, 1991. K-1. Simply describes a young girl's morning at the beach with her mom.
2. *At the Beach* by Huy Voun Lee. Henry Holt and Company, 1994. K-3. While visiting the beach, a young Chinese boy learns Chinese characters from his mother. Ten different characters are explained.
3. *At the Seashore* by David M. Schwartz. Gareth Stevens Publishing, 1997. K-3. This book is part of the Look Again series, which allows children to guess what a picture taken up close could be. The answer and explanation are on the following page.
4. *Baby Bear Goes to the Beach* by Lorette Broekstra. Octopus Publishing Group, 2001. K-2. After Baby Bear builds his perfect sand castle, he goes looking for a special shell to finish it off. As he searches, he has a wonderful adventure with the sea animals he meets.
5. *Beach Is to Fun: A Book of Relationships* by Pat Brisson. Henry Holt and Company, 2004. K-3. This colorful and rhyming book looks

at relationships between things at the beach. For example, “Claws are to crab as hands are to me.”

6. *Beachcombing: Exploring at the Seashore* by Jim Arnosky. Dutton Children's Books, 2004. K-3. This colorful book shows what seaside treasures can be found when walking along a beach.
 7. *Clam-I-Am! All About the Beach* by Trish Rabe. Random House, 2005. K-5. The Cat-in-the-Hat visits the beach with his friends and answers questions and provides facts as only he can.
 8. *D.W. All Wet* by Marc Brown. Little, Brown and Company, 1988. K-2. D.W. doesn't want to be at the beach until Arthur changes her mind.
 9. *Flotsam* by David Wiesner. Clarion Books, 2006. K-3. This Caldecott-winning wordless book tells the story of what happens when a science-minded boy discovers a camera at the beach.
 10. *Fun in the Sun* by Janine Scott. Picture Window Books, 2004. K-3. Tired of rain and bad weather, Farmers Claude and Maude and their animals take a drive in search of sunny weather and end up at the beach.
 11. *Henry and Mudge and the Forever Sea* by Cynthia Rylant. Aladdin Paperbacks, 1993. K-2. Mudge, the 180-pound dog, gets to enjoy the ocean and the seashore for the first time with Henry and Henry's father.
 12. *High Tide, Low Tide* by Jason Cooper. Rourke Publishing, 2007. K-3. Photographs and simple text explain the effect of gravity on tides at the seashore.
 13. *A House for Hermit Crab* by Eric Carle. Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers, 1987. K-3. Having out grown his old shell, Hermit Crab is in search of a new one. He finds a larger one—and plenty of friends along the way to decorate it.
- *In One Tidepool-Crabs, Snails, and Salty Tails* by Anthony D. Fredericks. Dawn Publications, 2002. K-3. A girl discovers a tide pool and watches the creatures that make their home there. Field notes at the end provide more information about the animals mentioned in the tide pool.



- *Into the Sea* by Brenda Z. Guiberson. Henry Holt and Company, 1996. K-3. Explains how a turtle hatched on a beach grows and travels to different parts of the sea, only to return one day to lay eggs on the same beach she started from.
- *Is This a House for Hermit Crab?* by Megan McDonald. Orchard Books, 1990. K-3. Hermit Crab has outgrown his old house and goes on an adventure to find a new one.
- *Just Grandma and Me* by Mercer Mayer. Golden Books, 1983. K-2. With a few mishaps, Little Critter enjoys a day at the beach with her Grandma.
- *Pigs on a Blanket: Fun with Math and Time* by Amy Axelrod. Aladdin Paperbacks, 1996. K-3. Children can count in real time how many minutes (hours) it takes this silly pig family to finally make it to the beach—just in time for it to close.
- *Seashore* by Lucy Bowman. Usborne Books, 2008. K-2. An Usborne Beginners book with simple text and photographs of plant and animal life found at a seashore.
- *Seashore* by Steve Parker. Dorling Kindersley, 2004. 5-8. An Eyewitness Book that shows close-up plants and animals that inhabit the shorelines of the world.
- *Seashore Food Chains* by John Crossingham and Bobbie Kalman. Crabtree Publishing, 2005. 3-6. This book presents the lifecycles of a variety of plants and animals found along the seashore.
- *Seashore Life* by Jenna Kinghorn. National Geographic Society, 2002. 3-6. This pocket guide includes pictures, photographs, and text that describe life along the seashore.

- *The Seashore: A Saltwater Web of Life* by Philip Johansson. Enslow Elementary, 2008. 3-6. This book of well-chosen, colorful photographs and text provides information about the biome of the seashore.
- *Senses At the Seashore* by Shelley Rotner. Milbrook Press, 2006. K-2. Young children share the sights, sounds, smells, touches, and tastes of their day by the ocean.
- *Shell* by Alex Arthur. Dorling Kindersley, 2000. 5-8. An Eyewitness Book that shows different types of shells including seashells, eggshells, and fossil shells.
- *Shells* by Jennifer Coldrey. Dorling Kindersley Ltd., 1992. 3-6. Use this handy guide to identify shells and the animals that live in them.
- *To the Beach!* by Linda Ashman. Harcourt, Inc., 2005. K-2. A family struggles to make it to the beach, returning home each time someone forgets something important along the way.
- *Who Eats Who at the Seashore?* by Moira Butterfield. Smart Apple Media, 2005. 3-6. Provides an introduction to seashore food chains, and discusses their beginnings and what happens when the chain is broken.

Seashore Information on the Web

- **Environmental Kids Club**, www.epa.gov/kids. K-6. Includes information on animals and plants of the Chesapeake Bay and beach games that are fun to play.
- **Field Trip Guide to the Seashore**, www.teachnet.ie/gmulligan/. K-6. Includes pictures, games, quizzes, and other seashore activities. The sound of waves crashing is a nice touch.
- **National Wildlife Federation**, www.nwf.org/. 4-6. Search for articles on the seashore and otherwildlife/outdoor information.
- **Reading Rainbow Games**, <http://pbskids.org/readingrainbow/games/index.html>. K-3. Seashore games including “Build a Habitat,” “Seashore Concentration” and a printable “Crab Maze” are all available.

Seashore Story Activities

Read-aloud stories

These stories are wonderful to share aloud: *At the Beach* (Lee), *Beach is to Fun*, *D.W. All Wet*, *Fun in the Sun*, and *To the Beach!*

Discussion

A Day at the Beach. A beach discussion can be fun whether students have visited the shore or not. Those who have had the privilege can share their experiences and enthusiasm with others, and if none of your students has firsthand knowledge of a beach atmosphere, you can help them imagine what it's like through sensory activities.

- Play a CD of waves and seagulls to create the sounds of the beach.
- If your school or local playground has a sandbox and weather permits, take a trip over there for a sandy experience. Otherwise, bring sand into the classroom and spread it out in a plastic blow-up pool so students can rake their fingers through it (you might hide shells and smooth seaglass in the sand for them to discover).
- Bring in shells and other treasures that can be found while beachcombing.
- Tantalize their tastebuds with salt water taffy, straight from the seaside.

KWL. Before reading Reading Rainbow #88 *Seashore Surprises*, ask the students what they know about the seashore and what they would like to learn about it. After reading the title, ask students what they learned and add the information to the KWL chart (for sample chart, visit www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/pdf/kwl.pdf).

Visit China. Share the book *At the Beach* by Huy Voun Lee with your students. Let them write the Chinese characters as presented in the story. Emphasize that beaches are found around the world (not just in the United States).

Games

Do you hear what I hear? Obtain a cassette or CD of ocean sounds. Have students make a list of what they hear (e.g. waves, birds, people). Compare the sounds of a beach to that of a farm or city street.

Language Arts/Science

Seashore Words to Know. After reading several seashore books, have the students recall words



about the seashore and list them on the chalkboard/markerboard. Ask them to each select one word from this list to define, use in a sentence, and illustrate. Put the students' finished pages together, organize alphabetically, and bind for a class book.

She Sells What? "She sells seashells by the seashore" is a popular tongue twister. Discuss what a tongue twister is and the process of creating your own. Encourage students to make new tongue twisters using seashore words (e.g. Shifting sand slides sideways).

Sea+Shell. Use seashells to discuss and identify compound words related to the seashore. (e.g. horseshoe crab, clamshell, saltwater, etc.) Have students identify as many as they can and write each part of a compound a word on a seashell half (see page 8 for template).

Science

Great Circle of Life. Discuss the ecosystem of the seashore. Have students explain what might happen if one part of the ecosystem is eliminated. What part do humans play in this ecosystem? Discuss ecosystems closer to your home.

Hear, Hear. If you have a large enough shell, have the students put it up to their ear. What do they hear? Could it be the sound of the ocean? The sound they hear is *white noise*. Just like white light is a mixture of all colors, white noise is a mixture of different pitches of sound. Have students listen to different-sized shells, or tumblers if shells are unavailable. What difference do they notice in

sound when shell size or the height and width of the tumblers is changed?

Arts

Art in Nature. Water currents can create some unusual forms and patterns in the sand, and wind patterns can do the same sort of thing with clouds, long grass, the surfaces of rivers, lakes, and oceans, and more. Have students look for their own natural piece of art that they find beautiful or pleasing. Allow them to talk about their choice and what they like about it.

Math

Shell or No Shell? After reading a story that features animals that live along the seashore, sort the animals into different categories such as "shell" and "no shell" or where they live. Do they make their homes in water, sand, rocks, or someplace else? Discuss how their shell or lack of shell might affect where these animals live. When you are finished sorting the animals, tally them up. Do shelled animals outweigh the non-shelled animals, or is it about even?

Guess How Much. Gather sand, shells and water in a central area. Using three identical buckets, have students guess how many scoops of each material each bucket will hold. Encourage them to predict which of the three buckets will be heavier.

The Shells Have It. Give each student or small groups of students several different kinds of shells. Have the students classify them according to type, color, size, etc. Encourage them to arrange the shells in categories and explain their choices. If the shells are bivalves, explain the concept of 'one-half' and include symmetry in the discussion.

Geography

Where in the World? Using a world map, ask students to locate their city. Then have them identify a large body of water nearest their city. How far away is the closest ocean? What are the similarities and differences between oceans, lakes, gulfs, and rivers?

On a Desert Island. Ask the students to define an island. What items would they want to have with them if they were stranded on the island? Have them select five things and explain their choices.

Research

Red Light-Green Light. Discuss safety rules for beachcombing and swimming in unfamiliar areas.

What I Want to Know. Using a non-fiction book, encyclopedia, or online source, have students take notes about a seashore plant or animal. Younger students might create a stick puppet of their research subject by drawing it, cutting it out, and affixing it to a craft stick, and then give a short presentation about it. Older students might create a PowerPoint with their research and then present it to the class.

Civics

Pop Cans and Trash. Talk about how litter impacts the seashore environment and the creatures that live there. Discuss our responsibility as stewards of the Earth.

The Perfect Shell. Shells have been washing up on beaches for millions of years. What happens to the old ones, and why are the new ones often chipped and cracked? Place different sizes and shapes of pasta in a coffee can. (Keep a few out for later comparison.) Add a few small rocks to the can, and tape the lid shut. Shake the can up and down, like waves crashing on a beach. After a few minutes, remove the lid and pour the contents on a piece of dark construction paper. Compare the shaken pasta with the samples left out of the can. Talk about how the ocean will take its toll on most shells, and that shells without chips are often harvested from live animals. As a result, there is shortage in the population of some shell animals. To help protect and preserve these animals, it is best for us to collect empty shells from the beach in whatever condition we find them, and not purchase the perfect ones from the beach shops.

Works Cited

- Schweiger, Nan (editor). (n.d.) *Science Comes Alive Teacher's Guide*. Lincoln, NE: Great Plains National.
- Turner, C. A. (1994). *Reading Rainbow A Guide for Teachers* (Programs 51-100). Lincoln, NE: Great Plains National.
- Wendelin, Karla Hawkins PhD. (n.d.) *Math is Everywhere Teacher's Guide*. Lincoln, NE: Great Plains National.

Standards

Grades K-5

Curriculum Connections: What Are You Wading For?

Art Connections

- Understands connections among the various art forms and other disciplines

Civics

- Understands how certain character traits enhance citizens' ability to fulfill personal and civic responsibilities

Geography

The World in Spatial Terms

- Knows the location of places, geographic features, and patterns of the environment

Physical Systems

- Understands the characteristics of ecosystems on Earth's surface

Environment and Society

- Understands how human actions modify the physical environment

Language Arts

Writing

- Gathers and uses information for research purposes
- Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process
- Uses grammatical and mechanical conventions in written compositions
- Uses the stylistic and rhetorical aspects of writing

Reading

- Uses the general skills and strategies of the reading process
- Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of literary texts
- Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of informational texts

Mathematics

- Uses a variety of strategies in the problem-solving process
- Understands and applies basic and advanced properties of the concepts of numbers
- Understands and applies basic and advanced properties of the concepts of measurement

Science

Life Science

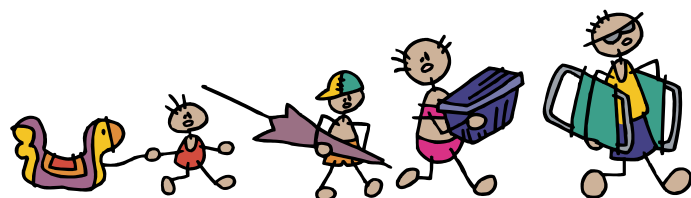
- Understands relationships among organisms and their physical environment

Earth and Space Sciences

- Understands Earth's composition and structure



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Seashell

