

DINNER AT THE REEF

Who is it for? 7-11 year olds

How long will it take? Approx 1 hour (depending on group size and how many times you play).

Learning outcomes: Students learn about food webs in a marine environment, predator-prey relationships and the fine balance of an ecosystem.

What do you need?

Teacher resources:	Student resources:	Other resources:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers' notes (including discussion points and a glossary of terms) - Event cards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 x sets of Species cards <li style="padding-left: 20px;">Set 1: Sharks & toothed whales <li style="padding-left: 20px;">Set 2: Big fish & rays <li style="padding-left: 20px;">Set 3: Small fish & crustaceans (There are three versions of these species cards to choose from: detailed, simplified and blank). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Straws (or other small objects) to represent algae & plankton - A coral reef made up of a row of chairs or stools - Internet access (if you are using the 'blank' species cards)

How to play the game:

1. Build a coral reef made up of chairs or stools. Scatter algae & plankton (straws) on the reef. (You need approximately 32 straws for a class of 28)
2. Each player takes a Species card from one of the three sets. Make each group double the size of the last (i.e. for a class of 28, start with 4 sharks & toothed whales; 8 big fish & rays and 16 small fish & crustaceans).
3. Choose which version of the Species cards you want to use. If you are using the 'blank' set, get the students to research their species, and fill in the gaps on the cards, using the ARKive website (www.arkive.org).
4. Run a quick quiz to establish students' knowledge.
5. Dinnertime for small fish & crustaceans! All small fish & crustaceans rush in and grab two algae & plankton (i.e. 2 straws) from the reef.
6. Dinnertime for big fish & rays! All big fish & rays rush in and grab two small fish & crustaceans. Any without two are OUT of the game.
7. Dinnertime for sharks & toothed whales! All sharks & toothed whales rush in and grab two big fish & rays. Any without two are OUT of the game. (But - some sharks eat other sharks! If there are no big fish available, sharks should check their Species cards to see if they can stay in the game.)
8. Draw an 'Event card'. The Event card will instruct you whether to take some species OUT or put more species IN.

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9. All players still in the game repeat the above round, remembering to draw an Event card at the end of every round.
10. Repeat until one set is extinct e.g. All 'small fish & crustaceans' are OUT.
11. Play again and see if you get different results each time!