Nomads of the Gulf, Guardians of the Sea and Friends of the Fishermen

AN EDUCATIONAL BOOKLET ON THE UAE'S OCEANS
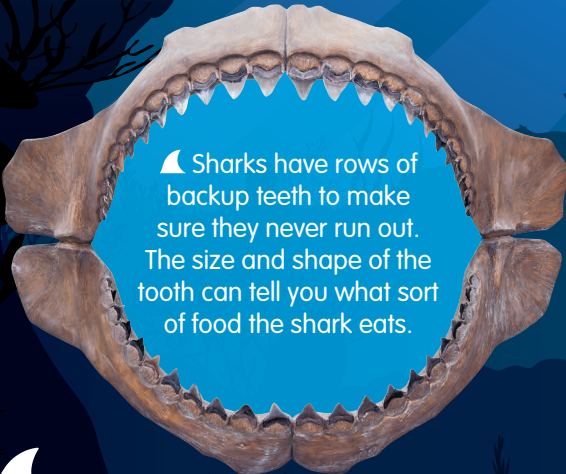
JUNIOR VERSION

Key facts about sharks

◤ Sharks are fish so they have tail fins which move from side to side. Mammals, like whales, have flukes which move up and down.

◤ In the water, sharks have eyes similar to a cat to help them see and they can also feel vibrations. The shark has a supreme sense of smell too.

◤ Baby sharks are called pups. Some sharks lay eggs, others keep their eggs inside and yet other sharks grow baby pups inside them. Sharks are not all the same!

◤ Sharks have rows of backup teeth to make sure they never run out. The size and shape of the tooth can tell you what sort of food the shark eats.

◤ Sharks come in many sizes. They can be as small as the 6 inch Dwarf Lanternshark to the 40+ ft Whale Shark!

Introduction

We are one of millions of species on a water plant in the universe. Indeed, we are made up of 70% water and depend on the oxygen coming from the ocean to breathe. Many of us depend on the food the ocean provides for us and it is our job to be stewards of the sea and to protect the sea ancients, most importantly the sharks!

The Gulf is home to 30 species of Elasmobranchs. Elasmobranchs are sharks, rays and sawfish. Many of these 400 million year old sea ancients are in serious danger because in the Far East there is a demand for their fins. Fishing for shark fins has led to many shark species coming close to extinction – which would mean that we could run out of sharks!

Nevertheless here in the Gulf there are still quite a number of sharks, rays and sawfish compared to elsewhere.

The Problem!

Sharks are extremely important to the habitats and other fish in the seas. Sharks keep fish together in schools and closer to the shore. This makes it easier for fishermen to catch the fish for us to eat.

When the sharks eat the bigger fish in the sea, it also leaves plenty of smaller fish for us, keeping the food chain healthy and balanced. This balance means we have more biodiversity or richness in the ocean, making the ocean more bountiful and full of protein.

Part of the problem is people are scared of sharks – they do not realise how important these creatures are to keeping our seas healthy and balanced, and making sure the ocean remains rich in biodiversity and functioning as a working ecosystem. Without sharks marine habitats would be completely destroyed.

We need to cause a commotion for the ocean; and learn about these precious creatures before we lose them.

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How can we help?

1 Do not buy food containing shark fins/meat.

2 Avoid restaurants or hotels that serve food with shark products in them.

3 Sign up to the Bite Back shark campaign at bite-back.com/campaigns

4 Alert the team at Bite Back if you see shark on sale anywhere so they can go about putting a stop to it.

5 Tell all of your friends and family about the amazing facts on sharks and how beautiful and essential they are – so we can raise awareness to protect them together.

Say no to shark fin soup!

True or False?

Sharks have been around since before dinosaurs.

Sharks always attack humans.

True
Sharks have been around for about 400 million years and have been safeguarding the oceans before dinosaurs roamed the earth!
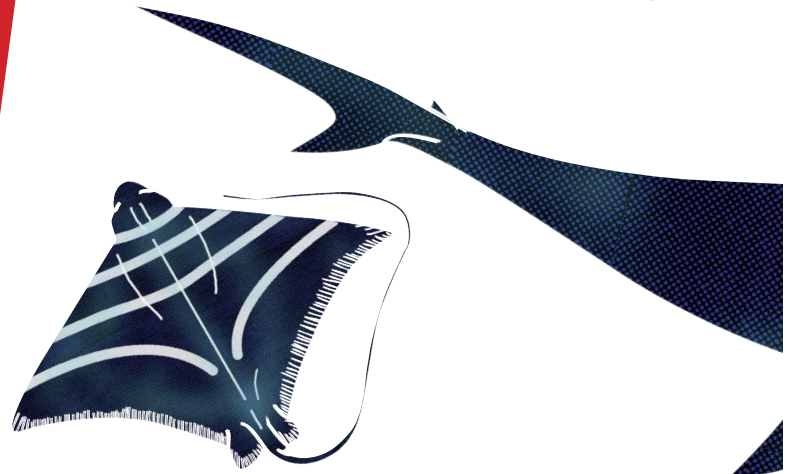
False
Sharks and rays are usually very wary of people and most sharks will swim away long before you see them. Scientists agree that attacks are usually the result of mistaken identity or the sharks feeling threatened because they are cornered.

Sharks only eat other fish.

False
Although many sharks are carnivores, some eat plankton instead, just like baleen whales! The largest shark feeds on tiny plankton and can be seen in the Gulf: the gentle giant – the whale shark.

Sharks don't have bones.

True
Sharks do not have a single bone in their bodies – instead, their skeleton is made up of cartilage (like the tip of your ear) to allow them to move faster and freely through the water.

Humans kill more sharks than sharks kill humans.

True
Last year, only 12 people died because of shark incidents in comparison to about 100,000,000 sharks which humans killed. Is this fair?
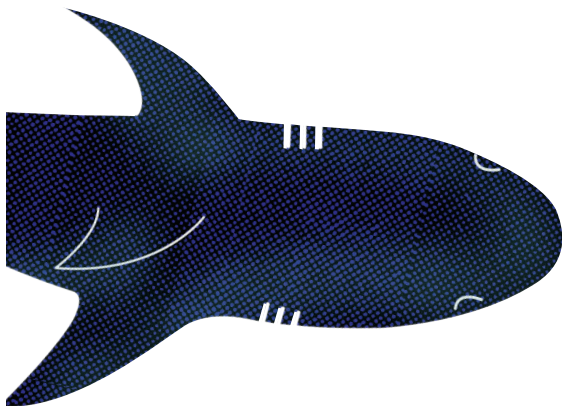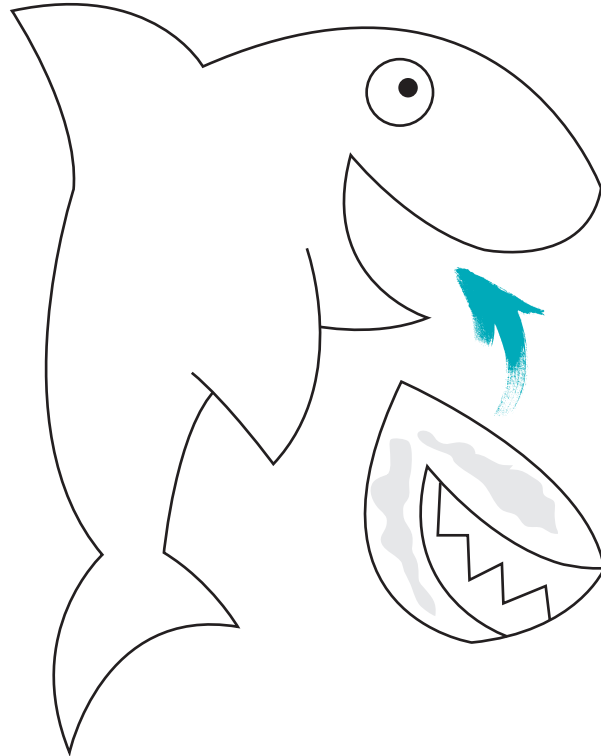
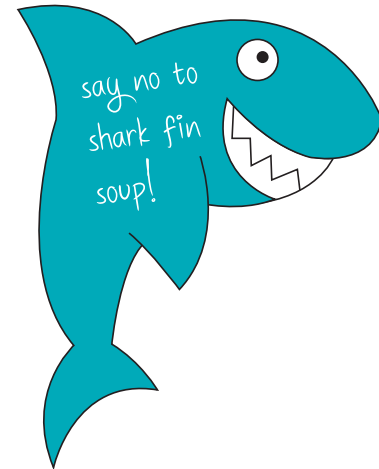# How to make a shark...

1 Trace around the shark image and the teeth. Next cut them out.

2 After this you can colour in or decorate the shark however you like.

3 Put glue on around the teeth as shown and stick it behind the sharks mouth.

4 To finish you could write a message on your shark and give it to someone to teach them how to protect sharks.

say no to shark fin soup!

Word**Search**

R	S	T	R	A	V	B	S	L	L	T	U	I
L	F	Y	U	X	A	F	T	I	H	Z	F	G
K	I	C	O	C	B	O	T	T	L	E	S	H
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What strange things have been found inside sharks? Can you find them?

NAILS

BOTTLES

TREASURE CHEST

COAT

SUIT OF ARMOUR

DRUM

TORPEDO

UAE Dolphins

Let's make the UAE a place where dolphins can be happy!

Have you seen the dolphins at the Aquaventure waterpark at Atlantis? Dolphins are highly intelligent mammals. They are so clever they have even saved people that have fallen into the sea. Dolphins can often be seen here in the UAE waters and spend most of their time playing and looking for food.

Our fascination with dolphins has led to a business where they are rounded up for aquariums or even killed. Sadly, dolphins are very unhappy when kept in captive conditions. They lead happy lives in the ocean, until we tear them away from their homes and families. We need to stop going to see the dolphins in captivity, so aquariums will close.

Competition time

Do you want to help keep dolphins out of captivity and WIN a trip to Wild Wadi and Dhs 5000 for your school?

All you have to do to be in with a chance of winning these great prizes is draw a dolphin in the wild with the title 'Captive Dolphins Deserve Freedom!'

Be as creative as you like and send in your entry with your name, age and school to info@globalocean.org.uk

Wild Wadi
WATERPARK
wildwadi.com

Captive dolphins deserve freedom!

Get drawing and win!

Plastic Poison!

When we grow tired of our plastic toys and throw them out, have you ever wondered what happens to them? Well, they often end up in our oceans and become poisonous!

Plastic pollution also affects traditional fishing in areas such as Kerala, South India and the UAE. Fish feed on small bits of plastic, which look like tiny sea animals called plankton, causing choking or even death. In fact, when fish eat small bits of plastic, they enter our food chain and end up on our plates too.

We want to make sure that the UAE has the cleanest seas in the world – and we can do this by reducing our plastic use, by using cotton or tote bags instead of plastic bags and spreading the word!

Tote or cotton bags are better than plastic. Help the ocean, do your bit!

Swap this for

WordSearch answers

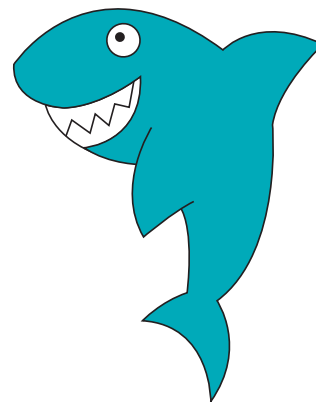| R	S	T	R	A	V	B	S	L	L	T	U	I
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Did you find them all?

NAILS
BOTTLES
TREASURE CHEST
COAT
SUIT OF ARMOUR
DRUM
TORPEDO

For more resources and childrens activities visit:
globalocean.org.uk/resources

globalocean.org.uk

Global Ocean aims to educate children on their local marine environments in order to conserve the oceans for generations to come!

Global Ocean is a marine conservation charity, based in London, encouraging children to learn and care about their local marine environments to preserve them for the future.

We are especially keen on protecting the 16 endangered UAE shark species, including the Whaleshark and Sawfish, as the UAE is currently the 5th largest importer of shark fins in the world.

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Global Ocean