



Teacher Resource

Oceans Conference

Focus Questions

Discuss the BTN story as a class and record the main points of the discussion. Students will then respond to the following:

1. Briefly summarise the BTN Oceans Conference story.
2. Name at least one threat to marine ecosystems.
3. About how much of the Earth's surface is ocean?
4. Oceans produce at least 50% of the planet's oxygen. True or false?
5. What impact is plastic having on our oceans?

Activity: What do you Wonder?

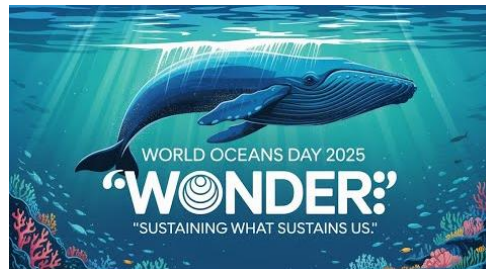
After watching the BTN Oceans Conference story students will think about and reflect on the following question...

What's something you've seen, done, or learned
about the ocean that made you feel amazed or
curious?

Students will reflect on their own experiences or knowledge of the ocean and share one of their ocean moments with the class.

Introduce your students to the theme for World Oceans Day 2025: *Wonder, sustaining what sustains us*. Ask your students what they think the theme means.

- Think about the word *wonder* and what it is about the ocean that is amazing and mysterious.
- Think about the second part of the theme, *sustaining what sustains us*, which means taking care of the ocean because it takes care of us. How do we depend on the ocean and why is it important to protect it? (think about oxygen, food, water, climate).



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KEY LEARNING

Students will explore the theme for World Oceans Day 2025. Students will investigate a variety of scientific and geographical questions about Earth's oceans.

CURRICULUM

Science – Year 4

Living things depend on each other and the environment to survive.

Science – Year 5

Living things have structural features and adaptations that help them to survive in their environment.

Science – Year 6

The growth and survival of living things are affected by physical conditions of their environment.

Science – Year 7

Interactions between organisms, including the effects of human activities can be represented by food chains and food webs.

Scientific knowledge has changed peoples' understanding of the world and is refined as new evidence becomes available.

Activity: Glossary

Students will brainstorm a list of key words that relate to the BTN Oceans Conference story. Here are some words to get them started.

WORLD OCEANS DAY	MARINE ANIMALS	WARMING OCEANS
MARINE ECOSYSTEMS	OCEAN SUSTAINABILITY	OVERFISHING

Ask students to write what they think is the meaning of each word (including unfamiliar words). They will swap definitions with a partner and ask them to add to or change the definition. Check these against the dictionary definition.

Further activities for students:

- Use as many of the following words to write a summary about the ocean: coral reefs, plastic pollution, ocean exploration, marine life, climate change, coral reefs, marine ecosystems, ocean conservation, marine debris.
- Who explores and studies our oceans? Learn more about the jobs involved with ocean exploration. Choose one job and investigate what the job involves and what you need to study to become one.
- Where does the word “ocean” originate from? Learn more about the word’s origins and its significance in Greek mythology.
- What is the difference between an ocean and a sea? Give examples and highlight on a map of the world.

Activity: Encouraging Curiosity

Begin this activity by watching this United Nations video as a class. Link to video – <https://unworldoceansday.org/>

What do you wonder?

Wonder is the beginning of discovery. Every scientific discovery starts with a simple question: Why? Or how? Encourage students to be guided by their curiosity when asking questions about the Earth’s oceans.

What do you wonder about the ocean?

Students will come up with questions they think scientists ask and solve about the ocean. Individually or in pairs, students will write their questions on small pieces of paper. Give students 10-15 minutes to write down their questions – there is no limit to how many questions, and there is no wrong or right question. Encourage all types of questions – scientific, imaginative and mysterious.



Announcing UN World Oceans Day 2025: Wonder (Source: [YouTube](#))



Questions could include:

- What is the deepest part of the ocean?
- How do plastic bags get into the ocean?
- How do whales communicate?
- How can the ocean be cleaned of pollution?
- What does the floor of the ocean look like?
- How do coral reefs grow?
- What causes tsunamis?
- Why is there a line where the Atlantic and Pacific oceans meet?
- Are there mountains underwater?
- How much of the Earth's water is found in our oceans?

What do you wonder about the ocean?

Gather your students' questions and read them aloud to the class, writing them on the board as you go. Organise the questions into scientific themes.

Students will use the internet to find answers to their questions and share their findings with the class. Below are some BTN stories which may spark your student's curiosity about the ocean.



BTN [Whale Voice Box](#)



BTN [Ocean Census](#)



BTN [Underwater Sounds](#)

Activity: Did You Know

Ask you students to share one fascinating fact they discovered during their research about the Earth's oceans. Create a classroom *Did You Know* about oceans and share your findings with your school community.

Did you know...

- The Earth's largest mountain range is found underwater
- The ocean produces most of the oxygen we breathe
- The ocean covers about two-thirds of the Earth's surface
- Less than 20% of the ocean floor has been mapped.

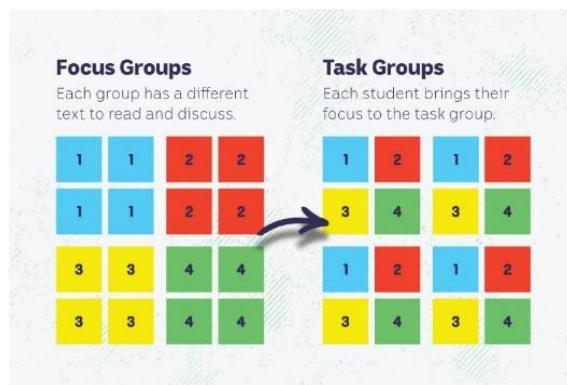
Did you Know...

Activity: Geographical Knowledge

In this jigsaw learning activity students will work cooperatively to build on their geographical knowledge of the Earth's 5 oceans: Pacific Ocean, Atlantic Ocean, Indian Ocean, Arctic Ocean, and Southern Ocean. Each group will become experts and then share what they have learnt with other students.

Form groups

Divide the class into 5 x Focus Groups. Each Focus Group will be assigned a different ocean and become experts. Each group will need to decide how they will collect and communicate the information they find during their research.



Research

Each Focus Group will work as a team to learn as much as they can about their topic. They will use the following as a guide for their research.

- What is the name of the ocean? Investigate the origin of the ocean's name.
- How big is the ocean? What area does it cover geographically. Highlight its location on a map. What percent of the ocean covers the Earth's surface?
- What is the average depth of the ocean? What is the deepest point of the ocean?
- Are there any trenches in the ocean? Name them.
- How does the ocean help people?
- How can we protect the ocean? Are there already any innovative ways that people are protecting the ocean.
- Interesting facts!

Share

Mix the Focus Groups to form Task Groups (Task Groups include one student from each of the Focus Groups) to share the information they have collected. Students will share the information they have collected and learn from one another.

Reflect

Students will reflect on the activity by responding to one or more of the following questions:

- What did you enjoy about this investigation?
- What did you find surprising?

Activity: ABC Education Digibook

Over millions of years, the East Australian Current (EAC) has created the conditions for some of the most diverse and abundant ecosystems on the planet, but the warming of the atmosphere and oceans is causing widespread change from Far North Queensland right down to Antarctica.

Explore this [ABC Education digibook](#) to learn what the challenges are and what we can do to meet them in the future. Each chapter includes a video and questions to think about for your students.



Australia's Ocean Odyssey (Source: [ABC Education](#))

Activity: Teaching Sustainability

On World Environment Day (Thurs June 5), Stay Tuned To Our Planet (STTOP) launched an Australian curriculum-mapped program that gives high-school kids hope, with practical tips to help protect the planet.

Watch this video, [Dump the Bottle](#), made by STTOP with your students to learn about the impact of single use plastic bottles on our ocean and why we need to break up with them.



Dump the Bottle (Source: [STTOP](#))

Useful Websites

- [World Oceans Day](#) – United Nations
- [Ocean Census 2025](#) – BTN
- [Ocean Census 2023](#) – BTN
- [Ocean Treaty](#) – BTN
- [Australia's Ocean Odyssey](#) (Digibook) – ABC Education
- [Attenborough's message for World Oceans Day](#) – BBC Earth
- [World Oceans Day 2025: What's it all about?](#) – BBC Newsround