

## Rock pool explorers

### **Before you start:**

- Check the tide times. It is best to go rock pool exploring as the tide is going out.
- Wear shoes or boots with a grip.
- Check the weather forecast. If there is a strong onshore wind then the tide may not go out as far as you would expect.

### **Resources:**

- Bucket or tray
- Rock pool detective sheet
- Camera to photograph creatures that are not on the sheet. You could look them up when you get home
- Phone to contact somebody if there is an emergency

### **Art and craft materials:**

- Paper plate, coloured pencils, tissue paper (red, green and brown)
- Glue
- Scissors
- Wool

## Rock pools

There is nothing quite as exciting as exploring a rocky shore. You never really know what you are going to encounter when you lift a pile of seaweed up, explore the gullies or peer into the mini caves lying hidden under the overhanging rocks. Will it be a crab, a wriggling eel like fish or even a sea star.

Life on the rocky shores is hard. The wildlife there has to survive winter storms, the daily cycles of the tide, huge variations in temperature and aerial predators. Creatures that live on the rocky shore have developed weird and wonderful adaptations to survive in this inhospitable place. Many creatures retreat under seaweed, rocks or hide in the cool crevices and caves. Some, like the limpet, gouge out 'home scars' using their tongue-like organ (radula), to create a tight fitting seal, while others use camouflage.

### Questions to ask:

- Where are the best places to look for sea creatures?
- Look closely at a crab's nippers. Why do you think one nipper is bigger than the other is?  
*Crabs use one nipper for cutting and the other one for crushing.*
- How many legs does a starfish have?
- Beadlet anemones sting. Can you think of another creature that stings that an anemone is related too?  
*Jellyfish. Sea anemones are armed with large numbers of stinging cells called cnidae, which they use to stun their prey.*

### Activities and fun things to do:

- Use the **rock pool spotter sheet** to see how many you can find.
- Make a paper plate rock pool.  
Draw creatures that you have seen in the rock pools on your paper plate. Make a cone. Cut a small hole in the top. Thread wool through to make the anemones tentacles.



- Make a swimming foil fish.  
Draw the outline of a fish on the card. Colour the fish so it is camouflaged when sitting on the sand, hiding in the seaweed etc. Cut the fish out. Make a small hole in the head. Thread a piece of wool through. Attach the fish to a piece of driftwood. Hold your piece of wood up, walk along the beach. See it swim.



Fish usually swim in shoals as it gives them greater protection against predators. Why not form a shoal with your friends.

### Stories to share:

- Sharing a shell: Julia Donaldson and Lydia Monks
- The Rainbow fish: Marcus Pfister
- Tiddler: The story telling fish: Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler
- One world: Michael Foreman