



SHARKS4KIDS

PROBLEM BASED LEARNING

PACKET 1

PROBLEM BASED LEARNING: SAVING SHARKS

Approximately 100 million sharks are killed each year and a report from the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Shark Specialist Group reports one-quarter of the world's sharks and rays to be threatened with extinction. This is a real issue and students can in fact have a positive impact and make a difference.

The overall goal of this problem-based learning is to learn about why sharks and rays are in so much trouble and what students can do right in their own community to help these animals and help the oceans.

STEP 1: Split up into groups of 4-5 students

EACH GROUP WILL

STEP 2: Create a list of things threatening shark populations.

STEP 3: Research the threats and select one.

STEP 4: Outline the details of this issue

1. What is the issue and what is causing it?
2. Is it happening in a specific area or globally?
3. Are steps being made to stop or minimize it?
4. Is it happening in your community, state or country?

STEP 5: Discuss ways to help sharks in the school or community? How could you educate people about these issues, specifically the one you have selected? How would you get people involved? What can they do?

STEP 6: Create a project that allows them to teach others about this problem (poster, video, photo collage, etc.). How will they share this information with others? How will teaching others impact this issue? Are their pros and cons?

STEP 7: Critical Thinking: How can they bring this issue into the community and educate others? Can they get other people to help sharks? What will the challenges to increase awareness about this issue and to get the support of others in the community?

Follow up questions to be discussed as a class:

What was the most enjoyable part of the project?

What was the most challenging?

Were you able to gather support from people in the school and community?

Would you consider your project a success?

What did you learn during the process?

The complexity of this problem solving will vary with age.

Example:

Grade 4 students might make posters and share with their parents.

Grade 10 students might create videos to present to the school or a community group.

The most important aspect of the project is encouraging kids to make a difference. Sharks are the focal point for this, but critical thinking and conservation minded discussions could be applied to a wide range of topics. It is also important for kids to realize we are all connected and whether we live near the ocean or not, our actions have impacts.