

# Our ocean in crisis



Age 11-14



60 minutes

## Curriculum links

- Identify scientific evidence that has been used to support or refute ideas or arguments
- Analyse and interpret information

## Resources



**Slideshow 3:**  
Our ocean in crisis



**Student Sheet 3a:**  
News articles

**Student Sheet 3b:**  
Ocean hero profiles



**Subject Update:**  
Learn more: Marine plastics

**Subject Update:**  
Learn more: Marine plastics facts and figures

## Extension or home learning

Students keep a record of how they have managed to fulfil their pledge over the next week i.e. not using straws or encouraging their parents to take reusable bags to the supermarket.

## Lesson overview

This lesson challenges students to think about the potential myths we have been led to believe through selective media representation, by completing a true, false or uncertain activity. Students are then asked to think about the different motivations media outlets or organisations might have. Students conduct research about an ‘Ocean hero’ and create a poster encouraging others to pursue a career in that field. The lesson is concluded by discussing the changes we can implement in our lives which will make a difference to the levels of marine plastic pollution.

## Lesson steps

### 1. Ocean plastic pollution (5 mins)

Students take part in a whole class discussion about ocean plastics pollution, share what they already know and consider where that information comes from.

### 2. True, false or uncertain (15 mins)

Students play a game of true, false or uncertain where they are presented with a ‘fact’ and must discuss with their partner whether it is true, false or uncertain.

### 3. Media coverage (20 mins)

Students are given a variety of news reports and asked to assess the reliability of each source. Students then consider what the motivation for interested parties might be to promote or embellish ideas.

### 4. Ocean heroes (15 mins)

In groups students are allocated an ‘Ocean hero’ to research and create a poster demonstrating the impact of their work.

### 5. Pledges (5 mins)

Students investigate what they can do to make a difference to plastics pollution and write a pledge to share on a classroom display.

## Learning outcomes

- Review prior knowledge of ocean plastic pollution
- Recall facts about plastic pollution
- Explain why it is important to know the validity of a source
- Create an informative and interesting poster about a ‘Ocean hero’
- Share knowledge and understanding of marine plastic pollution through making a pledge

### Step Guidance

### Resources

**1**  
5  
mins



Step 1 introduces students to the concept of ocean plastics pollution and encourages a class discussion around what students have seen or heard in the media.

- Display slide 3 and ask students to talk in pairs about what they have heard about ocean plastic pollution.
- Students share what they have heard and seen.
- Mind-map their ideas.
- Look at Gallery: Marine plastics pollution which demonstrates the dangers of plastic pollution to marine life.

**Slideshow 3:**  
Slides 1-4

**Gallery:**  
Marine plastic pollution

**2**  
15  
mins



Step 2 involves playing a game of true, false or uncertain and asks students to reflect on why certain ideas might be promoted or embellished.

- Display slides 5-23, read aloud the popular 'fact' from each slide. Ask students to vote with a show of hands whether they think this 'fact' is true, false or uncertain. You may need to elaborate on what is meant by uncertain, explaining that in some cases we simply don't know the answer, or that there is not enough evidence to support it.
- After students have voted, reveal the following slide which has the truth of the 'fact' explained in more detail. Allow students time to respond to each point.
- As you go through the slides ask students to think about who might benefit from that 'fact' becoming a mainstream idea.
- Help students understand that the motivation might be benevolent and charitable, or it might be due to an economic interest, but that understanding the source of information is crucial to making informed decisions. They should use their critical thinking skills whenever they are presented with facts to consider the validity of the source.

**Slideshow 3:**  
Slides 5-23

**3**  
20  
mins



Step 3 asks students to consider the practices used by the media to convey their messages and achieve their aims.

- In pairs students read the news articles on Student Sheet 3a.
- They then write a paragraph analysing each of the articles. They need to assess the reliability of the information, conclude what they think the aim of the article is and make a note of the practices used within the article such as persuasive language, numerical data, sensational headlines etc.

**Slideshow 3:**  
Slides 24-27

**Student Sheet 3a:**  
News articles

### Step Guidance

### Resources

4  
15  
mins



Step 4 introduces students to five 'Ocean heroes' who are paving the way to improve ocean health and reduce plastic pollution.

- Display slides 28-32 which give a brief summary of each of the ocean heroes and their work.
- Using Student Sheet 3a, students work in pairs or small groups to read in more detail about that person. They may also like to use tablets or laptops to find out more.
- Explain that students should read the information about their designated 'Ocean hero' and create an information poster demonstrating the impact of their work.

**Slideshow 3:**  
Slides 28-32

**Student Sheet 3b:**  
Ocean hero profiles

5  
5  
mins



Step 5 encourages students to consider what they can do to make a difference to ocean plastic pollution and make a pledge to change one thing.

- Display slide 33 which has some suggestions for what we can do to make a difference to ocean plastic pollution.
- Ask students in pairs to discuss what they might do.
- Students choose one and write on a post-it-note.
- These pledges can form part of a classroom display and can be reviewed later in the term for students to reflect on their experiences.

**Slideshow 3:**  
Slides 33-36

H/L  
30  
mins



Students keep a record of how they have managed to fulfil their pledge over the following week i.e. not using straws or encouraging their parents to take reusable bags to the supermarket.