



Octopus Ocean Mural

Dive into the ocean theme with this interactive display.

Create an ocean background. Choose a bulletin board for your display and cut a sheet of craft paper to fit. Gather paints, colored sand, and colored tissue and invite children to create an underwater world! Encourage children to use different shades of blue for the water. Have them paint a layer of glue across the bottom and sprinkle on sand for the ocean floor. Use green tissue paper for seaweed and other colors for coral. You might add some real saltwater to your ocean by dissolving table salt in water and painting a layer on top. When it dries, the salt will create a sparkly effect. When finished, attach the background to your bulletin board.

Use the display. Use your mural as a backdrop for dramatic play scenarios. Give children copies of the octopus pattern and other sea creatures (see cards 31–34 and 36) to color, cut out, and use as characters. Attach the sea creatures to the board with removable adhesive. Invite children to act out deep-sea dive adventures! You might also have children act out scenarios as a prewriting activity for written or dictated stories.

Standards

- Understands relationships among organisms and their physical environment
- Knows that distinct environments support the life of different types of plants and animals

Learning Differences

Tip

Consider adding an audio component to your ocean display: Play a cassette or CD of ocean sounds to enhance the experience for verbal/linguistic, kinesthetic, and visually impaired learners. Encourage children to describe the sounds they hear (crashing waves, seagulls' cries) and move to the rhythm of the sea.

Octopus Math

Eight is a magic number for an octopus! Practice math skills with the ideas below.

Explore sets of eight. Tell children that *octo* means “eight” and that an octopus has eight tentacles. What else comes in eights? Brainstorm ideas with children, such as the number of sides on a stop sign and the number of legs on a spider. Children might also consider the number of wheels on two cars, the number of legs on four birds, and so on. Make a copy of the octopus pattern and write on it: “An octopus has 8 arms. What else comes in 8s?” Have children draw their idea on the back.

Create number sentences. Invite children to create as many number sentences as they can that result in the number eight. They can use addition or subtraction, for example: $5 + 3$, $4 + 4$, $10 - 2$, $12 - 4$. Let children write their number combinations on copies of the pattern.

Standards

- Understands symbolic and concrete representations of numbers, such as written numerals and objects in sets
- Knows that the quantity of objects can change by adding or taking away objects



Book Links

Gentle Giant Octopus by Karen Wallace (Candlewick, 1998). Lilted verse explores the underwater world of the giant octopus.

Herman the Helper by Robert Kraus (Windmill Books, 1974). A great story of cooperation starring Herman the helpful octopus.

My Very Own Octopus by Bernard Most (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980). A boy imagines having an octopus for a pet.

An Octopus Is Amazing by Patricia Lauber (Crowell, 1990). Packed with amazing octopus facts!

Octopus Under the Sea by Connie and Peter Roop (Scholastic, 2001). Rhyming text introduces basic features of an octopus.