

Oceanography IP

Oceanography The Oceanography IP is an interest project from the Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts.

Activities

Complete 8 activities, including the 4 "starred" ones.



1. There are several branches of oceanography, including marine biology, coastal geomorphology, and hydrology. All are important in their own ways. Explore at least three different branches of oceanography, and describe at least five ways that people are becoming more dependent on knowing about the oceans.
2. What are ocean currents? Describe the effects of ocean currents on weather and climate. Compare and contrast ocean and air currents.
3. Explore and experiment with the way water carries things like sand grains, and what happens to them when they are left behind. Do at least two of the following activities:
 - Shake up a jar of water with some sand, gravel, silt, small shells, and/or clay. Observe which things settle first and how the layers of sediment form. Why do you think this happens?
 - Make a long trench using wood or metal and plastic. Place some gravel, sand, silt, small shells, and pieces of wood at one end. Use a hose to simulate a stream. Does the speed of the water affect the amount and size of material carried by the water? Try raising one end. Does this affect what is carried by the water? What about the amount of water? Try pushing the material up a slope using water, the way oceans do. What do you observe?
 - Visit the ocean shore! Look closely along the shoreline for debris such as shells, pebbles, plants, bottles, beach glass (pieces of glass that have been polished smooth by the sea), and decaying matter. Where did these things come from? How did they get there and what is likely to happen to them? What is flotsam and jetsam?
 - Most ocean water is not perfectly clear. Find out what causes cloudiness in water. You may need to use a filter, plankton net, magnifying glass or even a microscope.
4. * Do one of the following:
 - Learn about and describe ocean waves. Where do waves get their energy? What accounts for the different types of waves? Explain how breakers are formed. Explain the difference between sea swell and surf. What are the differences between a storm surge, tsunami, tidal wave and tidal bore? How do all of these things relate to the Massachusetts coastline? What accounts for the different kinds of beaches (rocky coasts, barrier islands, marshy areas, for example). How have "nor'easters" and other storms affected the area?

- -OR- Observe waves in motion. If you cannot go to really see the following structures, make a model of a beach to help you discover what effects waves have on the shoreline. Observe how the effects of waves on the shoreline may be altered by a jetty (a wall that is built out into a body of water), a groin (a short wall built at right angles to the shore to trap moving sand), or a breakwater (a structure protecting the shore from breaking waves). Observe the changes in the behavior of the waves.
5. Draw a cross-section of underwater ocean topography. Show what is meant by the continental shelf, continental slope and abysmal plains. Show and label the following: seamount, guyot, deep rift, valley, canyon and trench. Compare the depth of the ocean with the height of the mountains. Learn about the underwater topography of Boston harbor. Where are the deep water channels? Where can large freighters or "Tall Ships" be brought in?
 6. List the main components of seawater, including salts, gases and microscopic plants and animals. Describe the importance of these to life in the sea. Why is Photo: Girls aboard a tall ship investigate sea life George's Bank (off the coast of Massachusetts) such a lush feeding ground for sea life? Why is George's Bank now a protected area?
 7. Explain the meaning of phytoplankton, zooplankton, nekton, and bnetos. What is the importance of phytoplankton? Make a food chain illustrating the importance of plankton to sea life. Expand it into a food web that includes examples of both sea and land creatures.
 8. * Do one of the following:
 - Make a plankton net (see directions in Girl Scout Badges and Signs, p. 244). Tow the net from a dock, wade with it, hold it in a current, or tow it behind a boat for about twenty minutes. (Follow Safety-Wise activity considerations.) Examine what you have caught under a microscope or high powered magnifying glass. Identify and draw the three most common types of plankton in the sample.
 - -OR- Measure and record the water temperature one foot below the surface of a body of water three or four times daily, at the same times each day, for six consecutive days. Measure and record the air temperature at the same times. Record the cloud cover and roughness of the water surface. Show your findings on a graph. How does water temperature change with respect to air temperature? What other conclusions can you draw?
 9. Do one of the following:
 - Investigate how pollution is affecting a harbor, salt marsh or the ocean. What are the long and short term effects of this pollution? What is being done to clean-up and/or prevent further pollution?
 - -OR- Make a list of some of the endangered species that live in or depend heavily upon the ocean. Research at least one of these species, and include a drawing or picture, a description, why it is endangered, and what, if anything, is being done to protect the species and its habitat. Share your findings with others.
 10. * Do one of the following:
 - Visit an oceanographic research vessel or oceanographic institute. Share what you learn with others.
 - -OR- Visit an aquarium. Discover at least three things about ocean creatures that you did not know before. Share what you learn with others.
 11. * Do one of the following:

- Make a list of careers that relate to oceanography. Learn about the different types of training or education needed to do these jobs.
- -OR- Arrange to meet a professional in the field of oceanography. Meet with this person at his or her place of employment, or have the person come to a troop meeting.
- -OR- Research a scientist who has made an important contribution in the field of oceanography. Interview the scientist in person or by phone, letter, or e-mail, if possible.

See also

[Aquaculture IP](#)

[Fishing IP](#)

[Ocean Discovery IP](#)

[Marine Life IP](#)

[Saltwater IP](#)

[List of Council's Own Interest Projects](#)

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[Girl Scouts of Patriots' Trail Council Badges, Patches, and Recognitions](#)

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