

Exploring Pearls

Elementary: Ages 7-11

Rationale: Students will explore pearls, including, what oysters are, how pearls are formed and the different types of pearls

Learning Outcome/Goal:

- The students will develop an understanding of what oysters are and how pearls are formed
- The students will develop an understanding of the different types and characteristics of pearls

Key Stage 2 (Living Things and Their Habitats):

- asking relevant questions and using different types of scientific enquiries to answer them
- gathering, recording, classifying and presenting data in a variety of ways to help in answering questions
- recording findings using simple scientific language, drawings, labelled diagrams, keys, bar charts, and tables
- identifying scientific evidence that has been used to support or refute ideas or arguments

Materials/Resources:

- Books about mollusks, both fiction and nonfiction (e.g. Learn about Oysters by Becky Wolff, What About Oysters by Fallon Kaczka, Mollusks (Animal Kingdom) by Ruth Miller)
- Informational articles about oysters:
 - <http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/invertebrates/oyster/>
 - <http://a-z-animals.com/animals/oyster/>
 - <http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/oyster.aspx>
- Classroom set of pearls
- Picture or actual oyster shell
- Paper, writing utensils and markers or crayons
- Diagram/picture of a pearl in an oyster (attached)
- Pearl characteristics chart (attached)
- Chart paper or white/black board for making a list

NOTE: This lesson can be completed as a whole lesson, or can be broken up and completed over the course of several days

Procedure:

Introduction

1. Hold up an oyster shell or a picture of one. Ask the students if they know what it is. Allow the students to share their thoughts. If no one knows, tell the students that it is an

oyster shell. Ask the students if they know where an oyster lives. Explain that oysters live in oceans. Tell the students that they are going to be learning all about oysters!

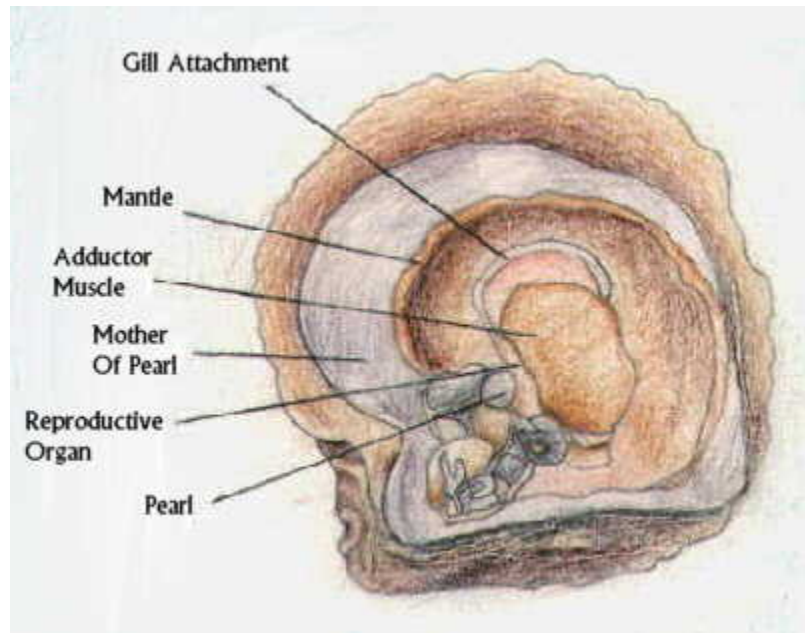
Development

2. Read a nonfiction book, such as Learn about Oysters by Becky Wolff. Have a discussion with the students about the main ideas of the book, including where oysters live and what is made inside of an oyster.
3. Show the students the pictures of the pearl in an oyster. Reinforce the concept of an intruder entering the oyster shell and being coated to create a pearl. This can be done by using an oyster shell and a pearl and demonstrating how the oyster opens up to eat and a piece of sand gets in, is coated and becomes a pearl. Tell the students that they are going to get to look at and touch some pearls now!
4. Split the students into groups of 2-3 students so that each group has one packet of pearls (there are 10 packages of pearls). Give each student a copy of the pearl characteristics chart. Explain to the students that they are going to be looking at each of the five pearls in their packet and identifying their characteristics.
5. Provide the students with ample time to look through and examine each of the pearls. Students should also fill out their characteristic chart.
6. Bring the students back together and have each group of students share the characteristics of their pearls. Have a discussion with the students about how all of the pearls are slightly different and ask the students why they think that is. Talk about how the pearls will be different sizes, colors and textures based on the size of the “intruder,” how long it was in the pearl and the type of oyster it was found in.
7. Read a fiction book, such as What About Oysters by Fallon Kaczka. Have a discussion with the students that includes talking about the importance of oysters. Allow the students to ask questions and clarify any information about oysters and pearls.
8. Explain to the students that they are going to write about oysters and pearls. The students should reference any oyster books and informational articles about oysters to help them. Students should also be encouraged to draw diagrams of an oyster and/or a pearl.

Wrap-Up

9. Students should work with a partner or in small groups and share what they wrote about oysters. Gather the whole class back together. Ask the students to share everything they have learned about oysters and pearls. Display the list in the classroom.

Pearl in an Oyster Picture



Pearl Characteristics Chart

Look at each of the pearls in your packet and then fill in the chart.

	Size (big or small)	Color	Texture
Pearl 1			
Pearl 2			
Pearl 3			
Pearl 4			
Pearl 5			

