

Squid Dissection Pre-Post Trip Activities

Activity 1. Hide and Go Squid

Break students into groups. One group will color in a squid cutout and hide it somewhere in the classroom. The other group will be sperm whales trying to find the squid. If the sperm whales find the squid, it has been eaten as prey. If not found, the squid lives to see another day. Repeat for multiple rounds. Discuss the benefits for chromatophores.

Activity 2. Jet Propulsion

Have students make a model to show how squid use jet propulsion. Take a balloon and explain this is the mantle or body wall of the squid. The squid will draw water into the mantle. Fill the balloon with water from a faucet and twist it off. The squid uses a body part called the siphon to regulate the flow of water. Put a soap cap in the mouth of the balloon as the squid siphon. Place the balloon in a large tub of water and open the soap cap so water jets out and propels the balloon around. Using this technique, squid can swim up to 25 mph!



Activity 3. Can I Eat it?

Discuss the anatomy of a giant squid, specifically how their esophagus goes right through their doughnut shaped brain. Break students into groups giving each group a different sized ring (such as those that come in a stacking game). Arrange your groups around a pile of balls (tennis, golf, plastic, etc). Groups should take time to examine their doughnut shaped ring, then one at a time run to the pile of balls to collect “food.” After everyone has collected a ball, groups try to fit balls through the brain. The group that gets the most through wins.

Activity 4. Predator and Prey

Hand out marine animal names cards to your students. Make sure to have at least one sperm whale, a few giant squid, and other marine animals. Students must keep their animal species visible. The game is played like a big game of catch as the giant squid try to catch animals they can eat, while the sperm whale tries to catch giant squid. When prey is caught, they are out and must wait on the sidelines for the next round.

Activity 5. How Big is it?

Colossal squid can get up for 40 feet long. Mark the length of a colossal squid with tape on a gym floor or with chalk on blacktop. Have your students lay head to toe inside the tape and see how many it takes to make up the length of the squid! You can also have your students measure themselves and do some math to find out how many times larger the squid is than them.



Activity 6. Squid Ink Visual Demonstration

Fill a water balloon with water and place seven or eight drops of dark food coloring into the balloon before tying it close. Fill a water table or small tub with water and place a toy predator (ex. shark) in the water. Place the water balloon in the tub. Show students that the shark can see the squid. Remove the water balloon and carefully put a tiny hole (end of a safety pin is good) near the knot & place it back in the water. Students will see how the ink helps hide the squid from the shark.

Making the best better!