

CATCH! THE WORLD'S OCEANS

AGES

Children 5+ years

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Children get to know each other through a fun activity that introduces the importance of water on Earth. This can be run as an icebreaker or a short program on its own. First, ask them to guess how much of the earth's surface is covered by water (71%). During the game, children toss a soft Earth (such as an inflatable ball or stuffed globe), noting with each catch whether their index finger touches ocean or land. The record keeper tracks the tally, and you can determine the ratio as a group after the game is over. Estimated runtime: 30 minutes.



Image source: Shutterstock

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials:

- 1 inflatable Earth globe or a Hugg-a-Planet Earth
- Calculator (optional)

Instructions:

Select a volunteer record keeper, and invite children to stand in a circle and toss the Earth ball to each other. Designate the area immediately behind one side of the circle “ocean” and the other side “land.” Every time a child catches the ball, they shout “Ocean!” or “Land!” depending on where their finger lands. Then they move to the ocean or land side of the circle. Two lines form as the game progresses. At the end, ask the record keeper to share results. Calculate the percentage of “ocean” vs. “land” contacts.

SOURCE:

Developed by National Science Foundation and STAR Net; reprinted with permission.

ADAPTATION:

For younger children, be sure to discuss how the blue parts of the globe represent water, and the other colors represent land. Instead of calculating percentages, point out how the “ocean” line is longer than the “land” line at the end of the game.

ADAPTATION:

For older children, guide a discussion about how oceans influence weather patterns, even if your region is far from the ocean.

Questions to ask during discussion:

- How do we use water everyday?
- Where is water found?
- Where do we find salt water vs. fresh water?

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Works well outdoors. Solo-librarian friendly.

RESOURCES

Web

Full program from STAR Net: <https://bit.ly/3hYO15i>

Hugg a Planet Earth from Peace Toys: <https://bit.ly/3fpwyl2>

Books

Non-fiction

Why Water's Worth It (2019) by Lori Harrison and Jon Harrison (children's)

Ocean! Waves for All! (2020) by Stacy McAnulty and David Lichtfield (children's)

If Polar Bears Disappeared (2018) by Lily Williams (children's)

Ocean Seasons (2014) by Ron Hirschi and Kirsten Carlson (children's)

Fiction

Sea Bear (2019) by Lindsay Moore (children's)

The Snail and the Whale (2006) by Julia Donaldson and Alex Scheffler (children's)

Oliver and the Seawigs (2014) by Philip Reeve and Sarah McIntyre (children's)