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## How to Use This Book

Technology is a tool that when integrated into the curriculum can motivate students, encourage higher-order thinking, and enhance learning. *32 Quick and Fun Content Area Computer Activities* contains a variety of activities across the subject areas that seamlessly integrate technology into the classroom. Whether the subject you are teaching is language arts, math, science, or social studies, the easy to follow computer activities can boost students' understanding and learning of what is already being taught in the classroom.

The activities in this book range from using word-processing programs, slide show programs, painting programs, desktop publishing, and spreadsheets to using the Internet. While the activities are not software specific, there are some software specific templates available for many of the activities. The templates efficiently maximize students' time at the computer and allow for students to focus on the main objectives of each activity.

Each activity can be done in a 45–60 minute class period. The activities are content based and aligned to content and technology standards, making them easy to fit into what is already being taught.

The book is divided into the following four subject area sections:

- Language Arts Activities
- Math Activities
- Science Activities
- Social Studies Activities

Each of these four sections contains a summary page with a description of the activities. There are eight activities in each section. Each activity contains a two-page teacher section. The teacher section contains clear objectives, materials needed to complete the activity, a step-by-step procedure, an assessment, and one or more extension activities that continue the learning. Content and technology standards are listed in each activity as well as in the Correlations to ISTE and McREL section on pages 10–15. In addition, there is a two-page student section that includes easy to follow step-by-step directions for the student to complete the activity on the computer and a sample of the activity that can also be accessed on the CD-ROM.

The accompanying CD-ROM contains templates, activity samples, assessment rubrics, and appendices. You can reference the CD-ROM section on pages 159 and 160. Note: The templates, activity samples, or assessment rubrics were created using one of the following computer software (minimum software version needed is noted in parenthesis):

- *Microsoft Word* (1998 or above)
- *Microsoft Excel* (1998 or above)
- *Microsoft PowerPoint* (1998 or above)
- *KidPix Deluxe* (version 3.0 or above)

# Dear Marine Biologist

### Objectives

- ◆ Students research how humans influence ocean environments, including the ecosystem and animals that inhabit the ocean.
- ◆ Students use word-processing software to write a letter, from the perspective of an ocean animal, persuading humans to stop harming their habitat.

### Materials

- ◆ enlarged or overhead copy of “In the Ocean” chart (file name *s5chart.doc*)
- ◆ student copies of “Ocean Life” research page (file name *s5rsrch.doc*)
- ◆ ocean animal research materials, such as textbooks, online resources, and current news articles
- ◆ word-processing software, such as *Microsoft Word*
- ◆ printer
- ◆ “Dear Marine Biologist” sample (file name *s5samp.doc*)
- ◆ colored construction paper
- ◆ “Dear Marine Biologist” assessment rubric (file name *s5rbrc.doc*)

### Procedure

1. Have students work with a partner. Instruct the pairs to brainstorm a list of ways that humans affect ocean environments. Have the pairs compile their information in a class list. As the groups share their ideas, list each of the people involved, the animals or ecosystem affected, and whether the act is harmful or helpful. (This chart is available on the Resource CD, file name *s5chart.doc*, to enlarge or place on an overhead transparency.)
2. Explain to the students that they will research how people’s actions affect an ocean animal. Then they will type a letter to the people involved, persuading them to stop harming the animal or congratulating them for helping the animal.
3. Distribute the “Ocean Life” research page (file name *s5rsrch.doc*) to each pair of students. Allow the students time to conduct their research.
4. Students will use their research to write their letters. Allow time for the students to type their letter on the computer. A sample (file name *s5samp.doc*) is available.
5. Help the students print their letters. Mount them onto colored construction paper. Use them as the border for a bulletin board entitled, “Save Our Living Oceans.”

### Content Standards (McREL)

Students know that an organism’s patterns of behavior are related to the nature of that organism’s environment.

### Technology Standards (ISTE)

Students use keyboards and other common input and output devices efficiently and effectively.

# Dear Marine Biologist *(cont.)*

Example from Step 1:

People	Animals Affected	Harmful Act	Helpful Act
Fishermen	Dolphins	Net fishing catches dolphins.	<p>Enact legislation to protect destruction of reefs and limit human interaction with reefs.</p> <p>Incomplete trench dug for ships develops into habitat for jellyfish, which sea turtles eat.</p> <p>Cleaning up beaches on Earth Day.</p>
Beachgoers	Sea turtles	Litter inhibits baby sea turtles from reaching the ocean.	
Legislators	Coral reefs		
Military	Sea turtles		
Boy Scouts	Sea turtles		

## Assessment

Use the “Dear Marine Biologist” assessment rubric (file name *s5rbrc.doc*). Students should have written a letter to a particular group of people, as if they were animals affected by the people’s actions. Their letters should explain at least one way the animal is affected, and the actions they want stopped or that they appreciate.

Dear Marine Biologist Assessment Rubric		
Criteria	Possible	Earned
Letter includes: date, greeting, body, closing, signature	10	
Letter identifies appropriate human group	10	
Letter identifies ocean animal	10	
Letter includes information about how the human group is affecting the ocean animal	20	
Letter includes information about why the ocean animal should be protected	20	
Letter includes at least one clip art	10	
Letter is neat and well organized	10	
Conventions are correct	10	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	
Teacher comments:		
Student comments:		

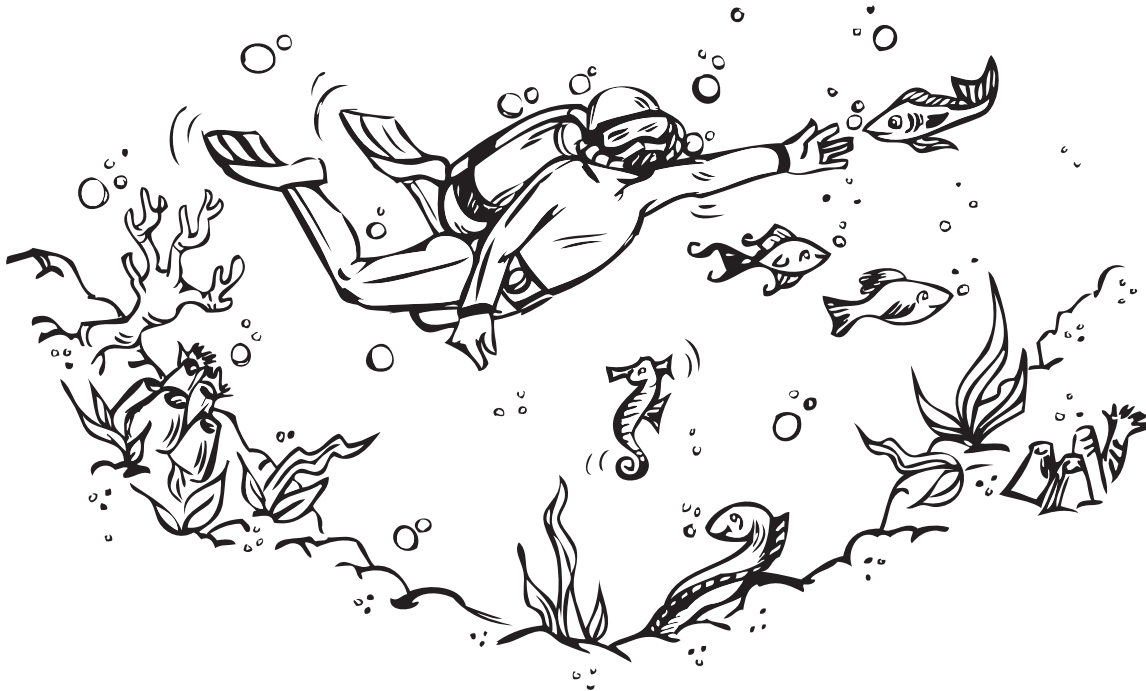
## Extension

Have the pairs use miscellaneous craft materials, such as cups, plates, yarn, craft sticks, and pipe cleaners to design and create a model of an invention to help protect the animal they researched. In the student example, the students might devise a machine that sends out electronic impulses that repel starfish from coral reefs yet do not harm any living ocean organisms.

# Dear Marine Biologist *(cont.)*

## Directions for Students

1. Open a word-processing program, such as *Microsoft Word*. If using *Microsoft Works*, choose the option to create a letter. You will type a letter to a group of people as if you were an ocean animal. Your letter must persuade them to stop the actions that are harming you.
2. If using a letter template, create and type your return address as an ocean animal. Be creative, yet as specific as possible.
3. Type the date.
4. Type the greeting.
5. Use the information from the "Ocean Life" research page to explain your situation and type the letter. Start by introducing yourself and explaining how the group's actions are affecting you.
6. Explain why you feel you should be protected. Be specific about what actions you feel should be taken. Explain why those actions are necessary.
7. Close your letter. Press the **Return** key to leave space for your signature and then type your ocean animal name.
8. Include a piece of clip art or drawing that is appropriate for your letter.
9. Save and print your letter. Sign your animal name in the space between the closing and printed name.

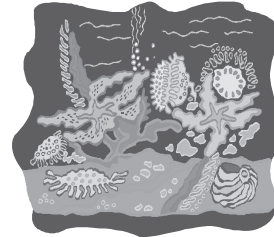


# Dear Marine Biologist

(cont.)

## Sample

5555 East Ocean Drive  
Any Ocean 55555



April 16, 2005

Dear Mr. Marine Biologist,

I am a starfish. I am writing this letter to ask that you please stop harvesting my kind for biology study. Fishermen, too, harvest us for tourists. For some reason, tourists like to take our dried-out bodies home with them as souvenirs.

People also hunt us because they think they are protecting the reefs upon which we feed. Sure, we have been known to completely devour entire reef systems. But that is what we do! I do not believe our punishment should be death.

In addition, our place in the ocean ecosystem is vital. We are part of a delicate food chain. With us gone, this leaves a hole in this precious chain. This may, in turn, complicate other sea creatures' ability to feed, and they, too, may die out. And I know you do not wish to harm other ocean life, such as the octopus or stingray.

The preservation of us starfish in the ocean ecosystem is essential. I implore you to stop taking us from our homes.

Sincerely,

Jenny Starfish

