

2025/26



OVERTURE CENTER FOR THE ARTS

ONSTAGE STUDENT FIELD TRIP RESOURCE GUIDE



National Geographic Live The Untold Story of Sharks

overture.org/onstage



ABOUT OVERTURE CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Overture Center for the Arts fills a city block in downtown Madison with world-class venues for the performing and visual arts. Made possible by an extraordinary gift from Madison businessman W. Jerome Frautschi, the center presents the highest-quality arts and entertainment programming in a wide variety of disciplines for diverse audiences. Offerings include performances by acclaimed classical, jazz, pop, and folk performers; touring Broadway musicals; quality children's entertainment; and world-class ballet, modern and jazz dance. Overture Center's extensive outreach and educational programs serve thousands of Madison-area residents annually, including youth, older adults, people with limited financial resources and people with disabilities. The center is also home to ten independent resident organizations.

RESIDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Bach Dancing and Dynamite Society
Children's Theater of Madison
Forward Theater Company
Kanopy Dance Company
Li Chiao-Ping Dance Company
Madison Ballet
Madison Opera
Madison Symphony Orchestra
Wisconsin Academy's James Watrous Gallery
Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra

Internationally renowned architect Cesar Pelli designed the center to provide the best possible environment for artists and audiences, as well as to complement Madison's urban environment. Performance spaces range from the spectacular 2,250-seat Overture Hall to the casual and intimate Rotunda Stage. The renovated Capitol Theater seats approximately 1,110, and The Playhouse seats 350. In addition, three multi-purpose spaces provide flexible performance, meeting and rehearsal facilities. Overture Center also features several art exhibit spaces. Overture Galleries I, II and III display works by Dane County artists. The Playhouse Gallery features regional artists with an emphasis on collaborations with local organizations. The Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters' Watrous Gallery displays works by Wisconsin artists, and the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art offers works by national and international artists.

Dear Teachers,

In this resource guide you will find valuable information that will help you apply your academic goals to your students’ performance experience. We have included suggestions for activities which can help you prepare students to see this performance, ideas for follow-up activities, and additional resources you can access on the web. Along with these activities and resources, we’ve also included the applicable Wisconsin Academic Standards in order to help you align the experience with your curriculum requirements.

This Educator’s Resource Guide for this OnStage presentation of **National Geographic Live - The Untold Story of Sharks** is designed to:

- Extend the scholastic impact of the performance by providing discussion ideas, activities and further reading which promote learning across the curriculum;
- Promote arts literacy by expanding students’ knowledge of music, science, storytelling and theatre;
- Illustrate that the arts are a legacy reflecting the values, custom, beliefs, expressions and reflections of a culture;
- Use the arts to teach about the cultures of other people and to celebrate students’ own heritage through self-reflection;
- Maximize students’ enjoyment and appreciation of the performance.

We hope this performance and the suggestions in this resource guide will provide you and your students opportunities to apply art learning in your curricula, expanding it in new and enriching ways.

Enjoy the Show!

We Want Your Feedback!

OnStage performances can be evaluated online! Evaluations are vital to the future and funding of this program. Your feedback educates us about the ways the program is utilized and we often implement your suggestions.

Follow this link: <https://form.jotform.com/91974450543260>

and fill out an evaluation. We look forward to hearing from you.



Photo courtesy of National Geographic

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Education Categories

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 Science

 Social Studies


 Arts



Photo courtesy of National Geographic

About ***National Geographic Live - The Untold Story of Sharks***

Leave the slush-covered streets of winter in Wisconsin behind and get ready to dive into the waters of the South Pacific with The Untold Story of Sharks.

It's been more than 50 years since sharks swam into our nightmares, to the "dum-dum, dum,-dum" accompaniment of the theme from Jaws. Dr. Jess Cramp, the presenter of The Untold Story of Sharks, and her colleagues think it's high time we get over those outdated narratives and actually learn about sharks.

Not only that, she advocates for saving sharks. That's right. Saving sharks.

As a top predator, sharks are essential for healthy underwater ecosystems, including reefs and fisheries.

Sharks were around before dinosaurs, but it's only relatively recently that humans have known much about how they live. In this National Geographic Live!

performance, Jess will take you below the waves and behind the scenes of cutting-edge shark research and conservation.

Amazing images will show you what it's like to swim with sharks, while real-life adventure stories and hard-earned wisdom expand your knowledge of these amazing creatures.

About Jess Cramp

Jess Cramp is a marine biologist and shark researcher who specializes in making connections of all kinds. She connects her research on shark movement patterns with policy initiatives to protect wildlife and promote healthy ecosystems. She connects local communities with ecosystem management.

And she connects general audiences of all ages with cutting-edge science and environmental protection efforts as a National Geographic Explorer.

Jess founded Sharks Pacific to improve understanding of the role sharks play in their marine environments and Pacific communities, and to promote responsible management of sharks and their watery homes through research, outreach, and advocacy.

She also helped champion a successful grassroots campaign to turn 770,000 square miles of the Pacific Ocean into the Cook Islands Shark Sanctuary.

Just as Jess emphasizes taking care of the marine environment where sharks live, she is equally respectful of the human communities that depend on sharks. Her efforts to establish the Cook Islands Shark Sanctuary were conducted in cooperation with local people.

Her ongoing efforts as executive director of Sharks Pacific emphasizes empowering communities, preventing human/wildlife conflict, and improving fisheries management.



Jess Cramp

Photos courtesy of National Geographic

What Is a National Geographic Explorer?

Doesn't that sound like a cool job?

The answer is yes, becoming a National Geographic Explorer is definitely an honor and brings with it great opportunities. As befits a group of real-world heroes and heroines, the position also comes with great responsibilities.

National Geographic Explorers are highly accomplished individuals from all over the world, working in a variety of fields, from deep-sea explorers to wildlife protectors to high-tech researchers. Individuals who successfully apply to the program receive funding and support from the National Geographic Society follow a strict code of conduct as they illuminate and protect our world through their work in science, exploration, education, and storytelling.

About Sharks

**There
are more
than 500
species of
sharks!**



Photo courtesy of National Geographic

If your ideas about sharks center on the famously predatory great white shark, prepare to be amazed. Variety abounds in the world of sharks. In fact, there are more than 500 different species of sharks.

Sharks can be as small as a human hand or 12 feet long. One shark species can glow in the dark. They can even be pink!

Different sharks live on different kinds of food. Some live on plankton they sift through the water and they don't even use their small teeth for eating.

Some sharks have flat teeth they use to crack the shells of the shellfish they eat. Other sharks have teeth as sharp as razors.

Sharks also have a lot in common. Even if they use their teeth for different things, sharks all have several rows of teeth lining their jaws. They also lose teeth constantly throughout their lives and grow new ones.

Perhaps the most important quality sharks share is their skeleton. All sharks have skeletons made of cartilage, similar to what your nose is made of. Cartilage is strong, flexible, and weighs less than bone, helping sharks stay afloat and swim while using less energy.

Sharks have very keen senses. They have all five senses humans have – smell, sight, sound, touch, and taste. They can also detect electrical fields and sense pressure changes in the water.

Do Sharks Really Need Protecting?



Photo courtesy of National Geographic

Surprisingly enough, yes. Sharks may be top ocean predators, but they face many serious threats.

One of the major threats to sharks is soup. Not just any soup, of course.

Shark fin soup is an Asian delicacy, but acquiring the key ingredient for this dish kills an estimated 100 million sharks a year.

“Shark finning” is the name used to describe this cruel and unregulated, but highly lucrative, practice.

The Shark Research Institute reports that the profits from shark finning are second only to the illegal drug trade.

Note that this practice is different from shark fisheries, where sharks are raised, managed, and harvested responsibly.

Even when it isn’t directed at them, overfishing is still a significant threat to sharks.

That’s because overfishing depletes the stock of fish sharks eat.

Sharks can also get caught in nets set for other fish.

Chemical pollution, garbage, and plastic can lead to illness and death for sharks.

Habitat loss deprives sharks of their hunting, mating, and nursery habitats.

There’s one more very important reason to protect sharks – they’re essential to for the oceans’ health.

They help maintain a sustainable balance of predators and food fish, keep algae under control, and protect coral reefs.

Resources



Public Domain Photo

This National Geographic Kids [website](#) is devoted to sharks

The Shedd Aquarium in Chicago has a lot of [great information about sharks](#)

A [general overview](#) of sharks

A great list of the [different species](#) of sharks

A website by divers and surfers who want to help people [learn about and protect sharks](#)

The [Shark Trust](#) works to improve the conservation status of sharks, skates, and rays and this website has lots of information on sharks of all kinds

Here's a link to lots of resources you can use to [educate your students about sharks](#)

Learn about how the U.S. government supports [sustainable shark management](#)

Arts Education Activity - Shark Mobile

from the Florida Museum of Natural History

Shark Species Hanging Mobile

This is an easy way to make a shark mobile (as adapted from enchantedlearning.com):

Materials List

- * paper and a photocopier
- * scissors
- * a stapler
- * string
- * cotton balls
- * markers or crayons
- * 2 wire clothes hangers or stiff wire (for each mobile)
- * pliers and wire cutters

Procedure (for students)

1. Photocopy the outlines of the front and back of each shark, then have students cut them out. You may enlarge the templates with the photocopier. The following shark templates have been provided for you to use:

- * Bull shark
- * White shark
- * Great hammerhead shark
- * Thresher shark
- * Whale shark

2. Color the sharks (both sides of each) and cut them out.
3. Staple the front and back of shark together, leaving a small hole for the stuffing.
4. Using some cotton balls, slightly stuff the sharks.
5. Staple up the remaining hole in each shark.
6. Staple a length of string about 1 foot in length to the top of each shark. Vary the lengths a little bit to add variety to the mobile.

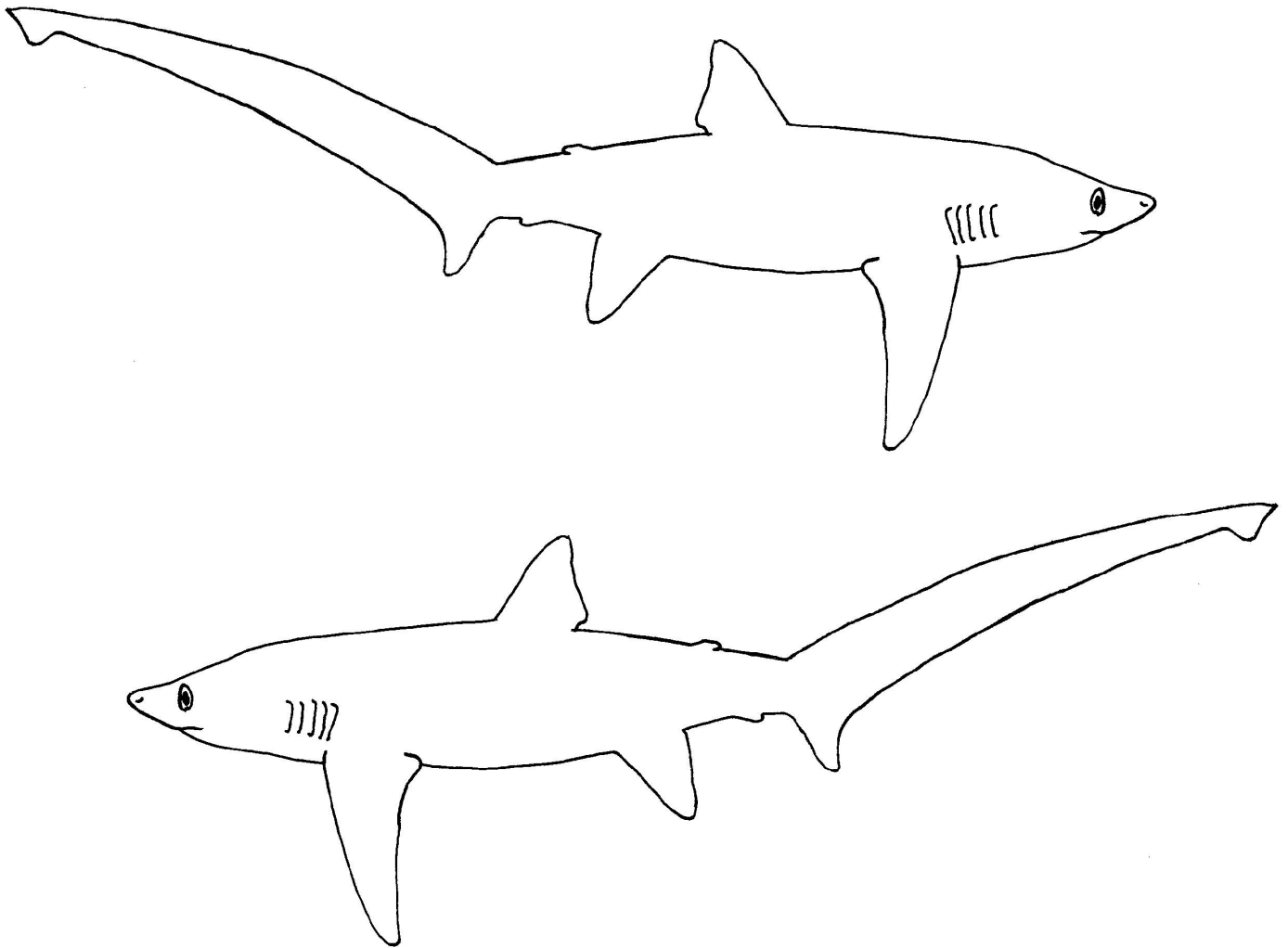
Procedure (for teachers)

1. Cut a length of wire from a clothes hanger about 1 foot long, using a wire cutter.
2. Repeat, using the other clothes hanger.
3. Using the pliers, make loops at the end of each piece of wire (these are to hang the sharks on). Make sure that there are no sharp edges exposed on the wires.
4. These steps are also for an adult: Using the pliers, make a loop in the center of one piece of wire.
5. Thread the other piece of wire through the loop you just made.
6. Bend this second wire downwards and twist, making a loop that intertwines with the center loop of the first wire.
7. Attach a shark's string to each of the four outer loops.
8. Attach a string to the top center loop - this is for hanging up your mobile.

Congratulations! You have successfully constructed a hanging shark mobile!

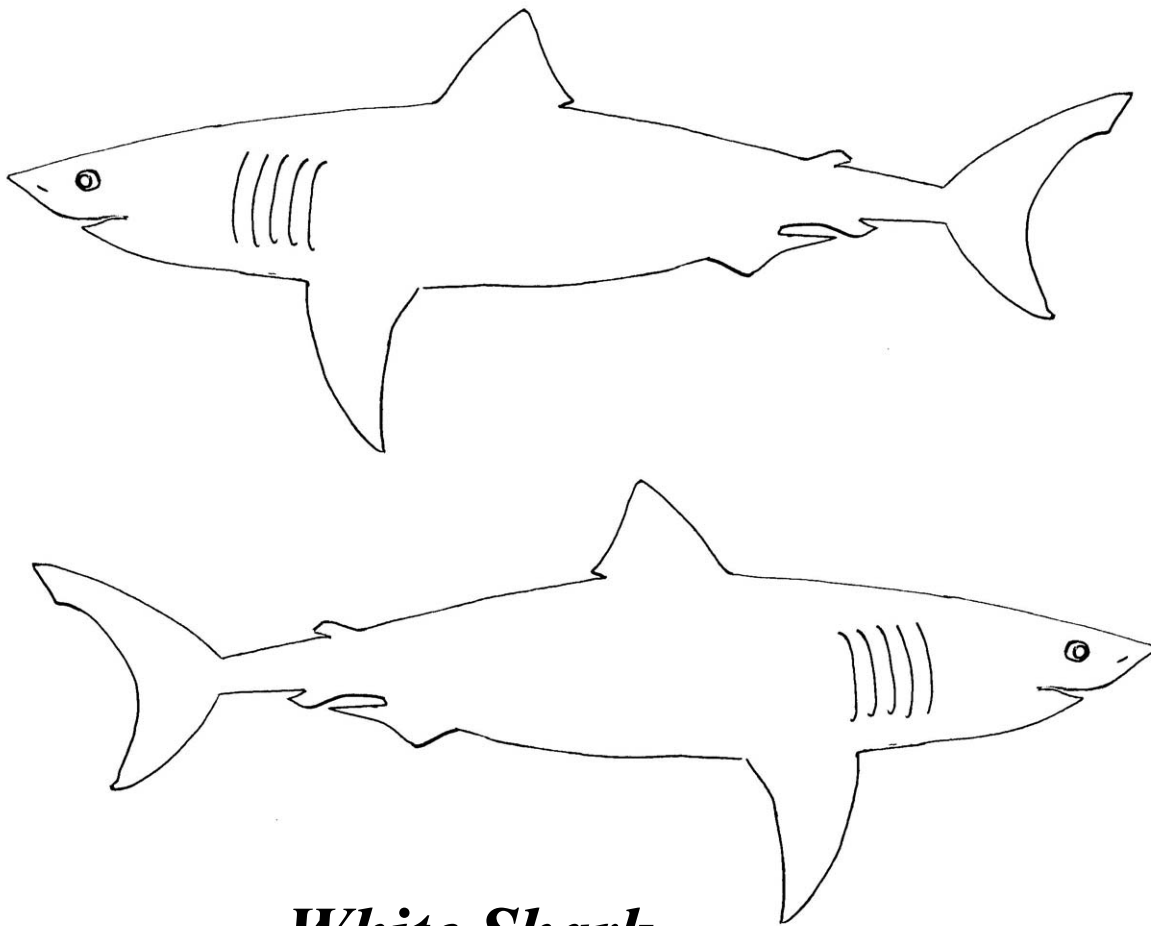


Arts Education - Shark Mobile (con't)



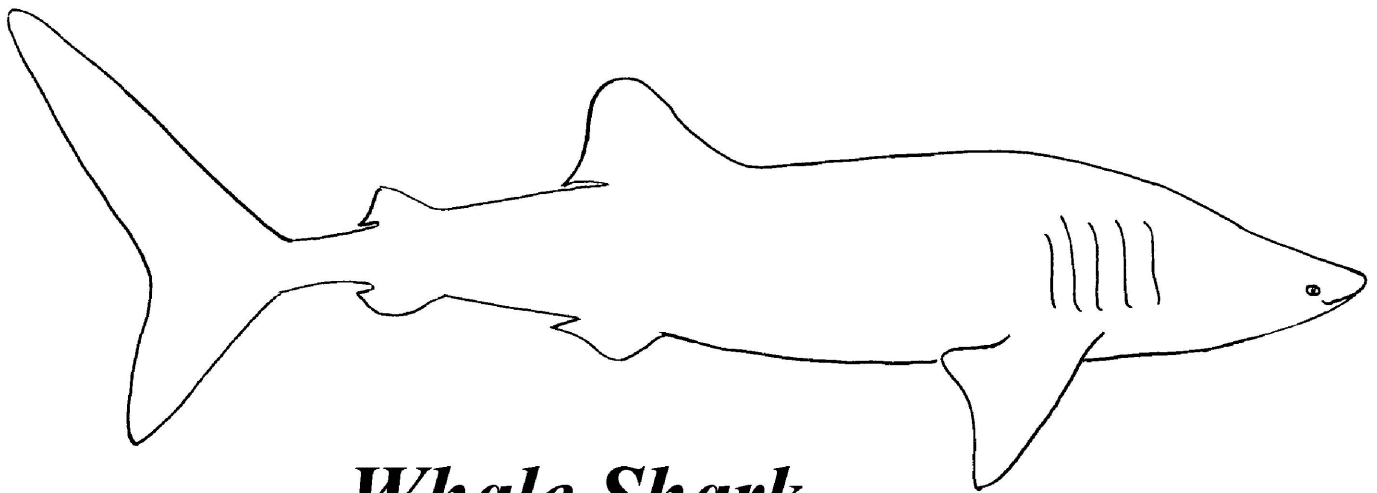
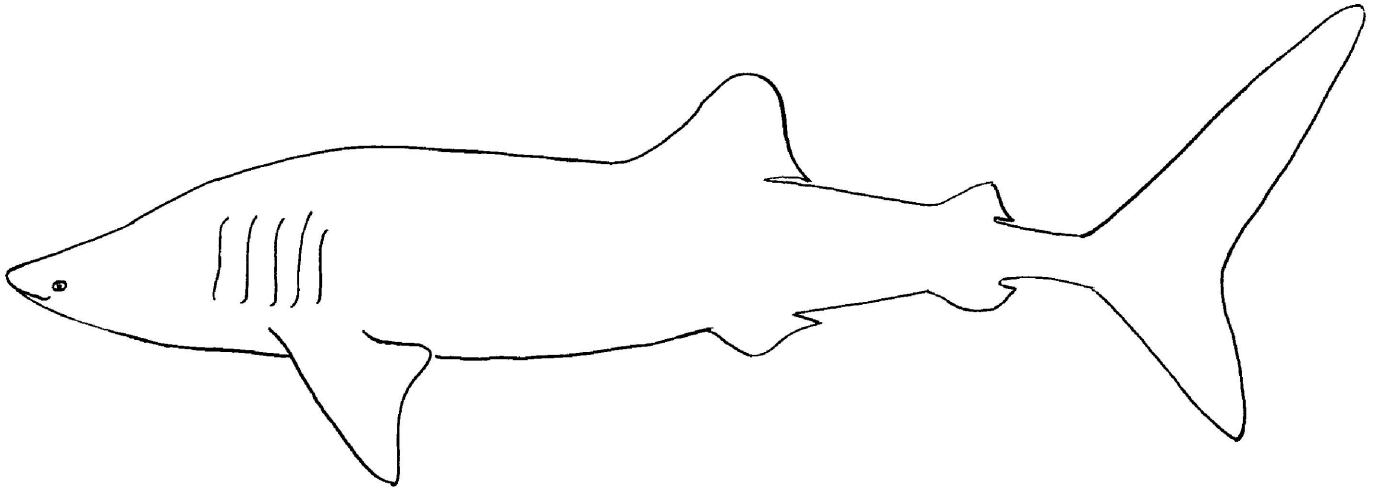
Thresher Shark

Arts Education - Shark Mobile (con't)



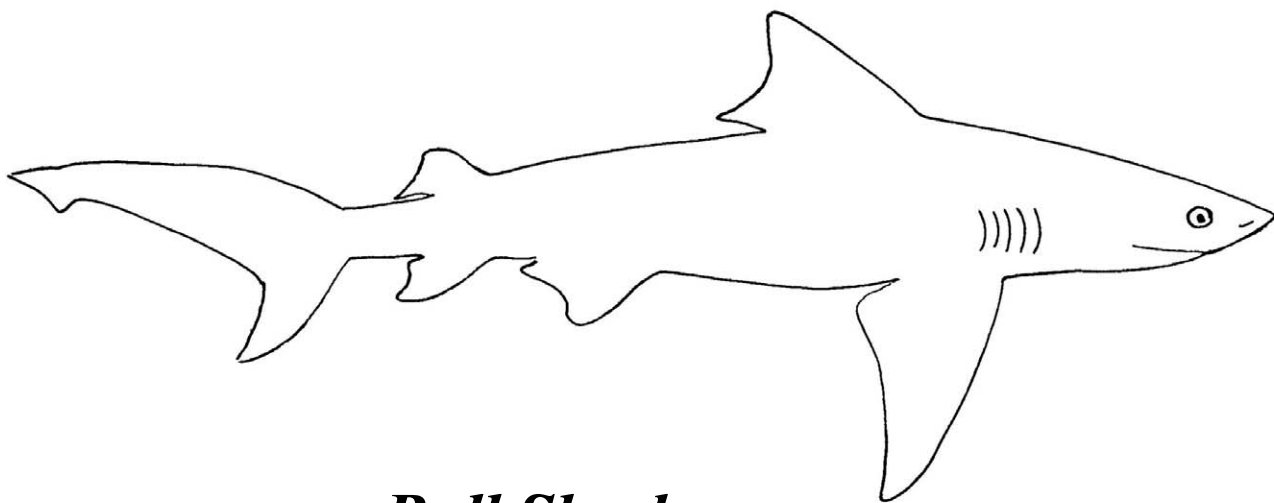
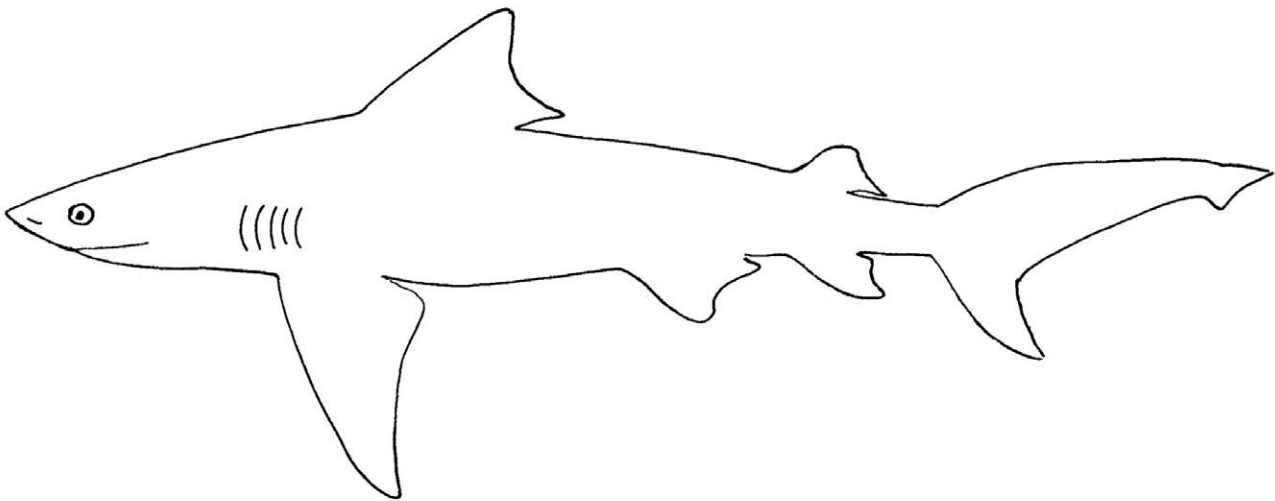
White Shark

Arts Education - Shark Mobile (con't)



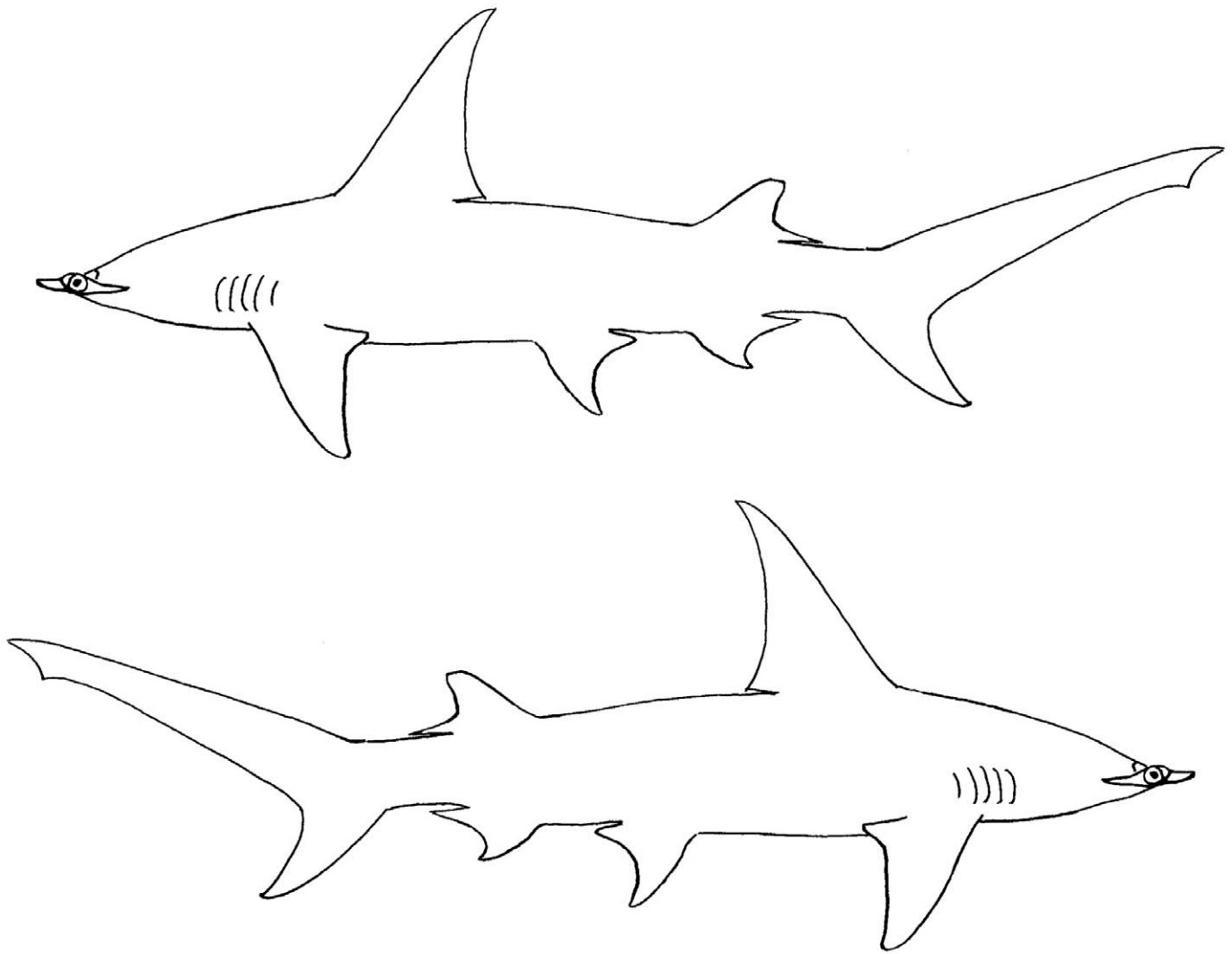
Whale Shark

Arts Education - Shark Mobile (con't)



Bull Shark

Arts Education - Shark Mobile (con't)



Great Hammerhead Shark

BE YOUR OWN CRITIC

Now it is your turn to tell us what you thought about the performance that you saw at Overture Center! Use this worksheet to brainstorm some ideas. Make sure to use specific examples from the performance. If you forgot anything, ask your friends and teachers who went to the show with you. Turn your ideas into a rough draft and then send a final copy to us!

I saw _____
(SHOW TITLE)

Overture Center is...



because...

What would you say this show is about?



Two things that I really loved about the performance were...





Two things that could have been better in the performance were...





I thought the artistic elements (scenery, sound/music, lighting, costumes) were...



because...

I would want to meet the character...



in real life because...

If I could ask the performer(s) a question, I would ask them...



Imagine that you're telling a friend about this show. What would you say?



Academic Standards

THEATER

Standard TP 3: RESPOND—Students will critically interpret intent and meaning in order to evaluate artistic work.

TP.R.7.m: Analysis – Express preferences for effectiveness of theatrical performance choices (what works and what does not work).

TP.R.8.m: Reflection – Assess personal participation in a production through critique using theatre vocabulary.

TP.R.9.m: View Performance – Demonstrate developmentally appropriate audience etiquette.

Standard TP 4: CONNECT—Students will relate prior knowledge and personal experience with theatre to cultural and historical contexts.

TP.Cn.9.m: Cultural Social Context – Examine how theatre relates to self, others, and the world in the past and present.

TP.Cn.10.m: Research – Describe the “given circumstances,” environmental and situational conditions that influence a theatrical work

TP.Cn.12.m: Cross Disciplinary – Analyze historical and cultural relationships between theatre and other disciplines.

ART

Standard AA3.RESPOND—Students will critically interpret intent and meaning in order to evaluate artistic work

A.A.R.14.m: Inquire – Compare and contrast the intent of art based on an analysis of subject matter, details, media, and context

Standard.AA4.CONNECT—Students will relate their artistic work with prior experience and external context

A.A.Cn.7.m: Interdisciplinary – Analyze works of art and design with interdisciplinary perspectives.

SCIENCE

SCI.LS1.B.m – Animals engage in behaviors that increase the odds of reproduction. An organism’s growth is affected by both genetic and environmental factors.

SCI.LS2.A.m – Organisms and populations are dependent on their environmental interactions both with other living things and with nonliving factors, any of which can limit their growth. Competitive, predatory, and mutually beneficial interactions vary across ecosystems but the patterns are shared.

SCI.LS2.C.m – Ecosystem characteristics vary over time. Disruptions to any part of an ecosystem can lead to shifts in all of its populations. The completeness or integrity of an ecosystem’s biodiversity is often used as a measure of its health.

SCI.LS4.B.m – Both natural and artificial selection result from certain traits giving some individuals an advantage in surviving and reproducing, leading to predominance of certain traits in a population.

SCI.LS4.C.m – Species can change over time in response to changes in environmental conditions through adaptation by natural selection acting over generations. Traits that support successful survival and reproduction in the new environment become more common.

SCI.LS4.D.m – Changes in biodiversity can influence resources and ecosystem services humans rely on.

SCI.ESS3.A.m – Humans depend on Earth’s land, oceans, fresh water, atmosphere, and biosphere for different resources, many of which are limited or not renewable. Resources are distributed unevenly around the planet as a result of past geologic processes.

SCI.ETS2.B: Influence of Engineering, Technology, and Science on Society and the Natural World

SCI.ETS2.B.m – All human activity draws on natural resources and has both short- and long-term consequences, positive as well as negative, for the health of people and the natural environment.

About Live Performance

Theater, unlike movies or television, is a **LIVE** performance. This means that the action unfolds right in front of an audience, and the performance is constantly evolving. The artists respond to the audience's laughter, clapping, gasps and general reactions. Therefore, the audience is a critical part of the theater experience. In fact, without you in the audience, the artists would still be in rehearsal!

Remember, you are sharing this performance space with the artists and other audience members. Your considerate behavior allows everyone to enjoy a positive theater experience.

Prepare: Be sure to use the restroom before the show begins!

Find Your Seat: When the performance is about to begin, the lights will dim. This is a signal for the artists and the audience to put aside conversations. Settle into your seat and get ready to enjoy the show!

Look and Listen: There is so much to hear (dialogue, music, sound effects) and so much to see (costumes, props, set design, lighting) in this performance. Pay close attention to the artists onstage. Unlike videos, you cannot rewind if you miss something.

Energy and Focus: Artists use concentration to focus their energy during a performance. The audience gives energy to the artist, who uses that energy to give life to the performance. Help the artists focus that energy. They can feel that you are with them!

Talking to neighbors (even whispering) can easily distract the artists onstage. They approach their audiences with respect, and expect the same from you in return. Help the artists concentrate with your attention.

Laugh Out Loud: If something is funny, it's good to laugh. If you like something a lot, applaud. Artists are thrilled when the audience is engaged and responsive. They want you to laugh, cheer, clap and really enjoy your time at the theater.

Discover New Worlds: Attending a live performance is a time to sit back and look inward, and question what is being presented to you. Be curious about new worlds, experience new ideas, and discover people and lives previously unknown to you. Your open mind, curiosity, and respect will allow a whole other world to unfold right before your eyes!

Please, don't feed the audience: Food is not allowed in the theater. Soda and snacks are noisy and distracting to both the artists and audience.

Unplug: Please turn off all cell phones and other electronics before the performance. Photographs and recording devices are prohibited.





Overture
CENTER FOR THE ARTS



PARTNERS:



OnStage is supported in part by: American Girl's Fund for Children, Madison Community Foundation, Nelnat and Patrick & Linda McKenna and contributions to Overture Center for the Arts.

Overture Center's mission is to support and elevate our community's creative culture, economy and quality of life through the arts.

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