

BIG OCEAN GIANTS, *Tiny Food!*

**BIG SIZE.
TINY BITES.
HUGE IMPACT.**

Different animals, same tiny food source – plankton and krill.

MANTA RAY
(*Mobula alfredi*)



Filter Feeder
Eats plankton in huge mouthfuls of water

-  **Average Size**
4 – 7 metres (wingspan)
-  **Diet**
Plankton, tiny fish, krill, fish eggs
-  **Feeding Method**
Swims with mouth open, filtering thousands of litres of water per hour
-  **Where found in QLD**
Great Barrier Reef, Coral Sea and around the coastline (especially Ningaloo and Lady Elliot Island)

WHALE SHARK
(*Rhincodon typus*)



Filter Feeder
Eats plankton, tiny fish and fish eggs

-  **Average Size**
8 – 12 metres (largest fish in the ocean!)
-  **Diet**
Plankton, tiny fish, krill, fish eggs
-  **Feeding Method**
Swims with mouth open, filtering thousands of litres of water per hour
-  **Where found in QLD**
Great Barrier Reef, Coral Sea and occasionally along the coast

HUMPBACK WHALE
(*Megaptera novaeangliae*)



Filter Feeder
Eats krill and tiny crustaceans

-  **Average Size**
12 – 16 metres
-  **Diet**
Krill, plankton and small crustaceans
-  **Feeding Method**
Uses baleen plates to trap tiny food in huge gulps of water
-  **Where found in QLD**
Humpback whales migrate along the QLD coast every winter (Jun – Nov)

GREAT WHITE SHARK
(*Carcharodon carcharias*)

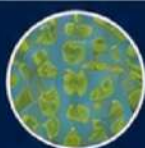


Predator
Eats large animals, not plankton

-  **Average Size**
4 – 6 metres
-  **Diet**
Fish, seals, squid, other marine animals and whales (often seen following humpback migration up the coast!)
-  **Teeth**
Triangular serrated teeth, for cutting and tearing
-  **Where found in QLD**
Along the entire QLD coastline.

WHY DO THEY EAT TINY ANIMALS?

Plankton and krill are tiny but there are billions of them! These animals have special adaptations that help them collect huge amounts of food efficiently while using very little energy.



Phytoplankton (tiny plants)



Zooplankton / Krill (tiny animals)

FUN FACT!

Whale sharks can filter up to 6,000 litres of water an hour. That's like filling a bath over and over again – every hour!



Healthy oceans. Healthy planet. Healthy future.

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SHARK AWARENESS MONTH CLASSROOM ACTIVITY SHEET



Name: _____ Date: _____

1. TRUE OR FALSE?

Circle True or False for each statement.

- Whale sharks are the largest fish in the ocean. True / False
- Whale sharks eat seals and other large animals. True / False
- Humpback whales have teeth. True / False
- Plankton are tiny living things in the ocean. True / False
- Sharks play a crucial role in keeping the ocean healthy. True / False
- Plankton are the start of most ocean food chains. True / False



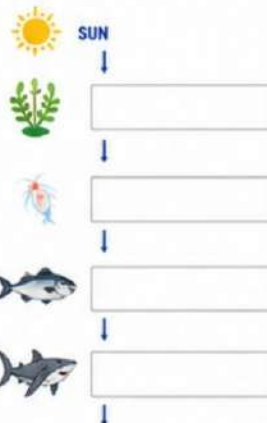
2. LABEL THE FILTER FEEDERS

Add labels to the manta ray and whale shark to show how they feed.



3. FOOD CHAIN CHALLENGE

Write the missing organisms in this food chain.



Who is the top predator in this food chain?

4. DESIGN A FILTER FEEDER

Design your own giant filter-feeding animal. Draw your animal and label its adaptations.



What does it eat? _____
Where does it live? _____
How does it collect food? _____
Why is it important in the ocean ecosystem? _____



5. THINK LIKE A SCIENTIST

Why do you think it is smart for whale sharks, manta rays and humpback whales to eat tiny animals instead of big ones?



DID YOU KNOW?

Sharks come in all shapes and sizes and play many important roles in our oceans – from top predators to gentle filter feeders.

TAKE ACTION!

One thing I can do to help protect sharks and our ocean is...

