

# Lesson Plan: Coral Reef Creations

## A Vocabulary Adventure with "One Less Fish"

### Materials Needed:

- The book "One Less Fish" by Kim Michelle Toft and Allan Sheather
- A shoebox or small cardboard box
- Construction paper (blue, green, brown, and other bright colors)
- Scissors and glue or tape
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- Modeling clay, pipe cleaners, or small plastic sea animal toys (optional)
- Index cards or small pieces of paper
- A pen or pencil

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**Subject: English Language Arts & Art Integration**

**Grade Level: 3rd Grade**

**Topic: Contextual Vocabulary, Creative Writing, and Environmental Awareness**

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### 1. Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- Identify and define at least five key vocabulary words from the story "One Less Fish."
- Use the new vocabulary words correctly in original sentences.
- Create a diorama of a coral reef that illustrates scenes or concepts from the book.
- Write a short, creative story or description about their diorama, incorporating the target vocabulary words.

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### 2. Instructional Activities (The Lesson Plan)

#### Part 1: Introduction & Vocabulary Hunt (15 minutes)

1. **Engage:** Ask the student, "What do you think life is like for a fish in a coral reef? What beautiful things might you see? What dangers might be there?" Discuss their ideas briefly.
2. **Introduce the Book:** Show the cover of "One Less Fish." Explain that it's a counting book but also tells an important story about the ocean.
3. **Vocabulary Hunt:** Give the student 5-7 index cards. As you read the book aloud together, have them listen for interesting, descriptive words. When they hear one, pause and help them write it on a card. Aim for these target words:
  - **Gleamed:** Shone brightly with reflected light.
  - **Darted:** Moved quickly and suddenly.
  - **Shimmered:** Shone with a soft, wavering light.
  - **Reef:** A ridge of rock or coral near the water's surface.
  - **Fringed:** Edged or bordered.

- **Pollution:** Harmful things that dirty the water, air, or land.
  - **Drifted:** Was carried slowly by the water.
4. **Define in Context:** After reading, go over the vocabulary cards. Read the sentence from the book where the word appeared and work together to come up with a simple definition for the back of each card.

## Part 2: Creative Application - Coral Reef Diorama (45-60 minutes)

1. **Explain the Project:** Tell the student they will build their own coral **reef** in a shoebox. Their mission is to create a scene inspired by the book. It can be a beautiful, healthy reef, or one that is threatened by **pollution**.
2. **Build the Diorama:**
  - Line the inside of the shoebox with blue paper for the water. Add sandy-colored paper for the seafloor.
  - Use other construction paper, pipe cleaners, or modeling clay to create coral, seaweed, and rocks. Encourage creativity! How can you make coral that looks like it is **fringed** with color?
  - Create fish and other sea creatures. They can be drawn on paper, cut out, and glued in. Make a fish that has scales that **gleamed** or **shimmered**. Make another fish that **darted** behind the coral.
  - If the student chooses, they can add "**pollution**" elements like crumpled gray paper or plastic bits to show the story's message.
3. **Teacher Guidance:** As the student works, ask guiding questions that use the vocabulary. "Where will you put the coral reef? Can you make a fish that looks like it's darting? What part of your diorama will shimmer?"

## Part 3: Vocabulary Storytelling & Wrap-Up (15 minutes)

1. **Write the Story:** Once the diorama is complete, give the student a piece of paper. Ask them to write a short story (3-5 sentences) about their diorama. The challenge is to use at least **four** of the new vocabulary words.
2. **Share and Celebrate:** Have the student present their diorama and read their story aloud. Praise their creativity and their excellent use of the new words. Display the diorama and the story together.
3. **Closing Discussion:** Revisit the book's message. Ask, "After reading the story and building our reef, why is it important to keep pollution out of the ocean?"

## 3. Differentiation & Inclusivity

- **For Extra Support:**
  - Focus on just 3-4 vocabulary words.
  - Instead of writing a full story, have the student write one sentence for each vocabulary word that describes their diorama.
  - Provide pre-cut shapes of fish and coral to help with the artistic part of the project.
- **For Enrichment / Extra Challenge:**
  - Challenge the student to find more vocabulary words in the book or another ocean-themed text.
  - Encourage them to write a longer, more detailed story with a clear beginning, middle, and end, using all the vocabulary words.
  - Have the student research one of the animals from their diorama and write a few fun facts about it.

## 4. Assessment

Learning will be assessed through observation and the creative project. Use this simple checklist:

- ☐ Student helped identify vocabulary words during the reading.
- ☐ The diorama visually represents a coral reef scene.
- ☐ The student wrote an original story/sentences about their diorama.
- ☐ The student successfully used at least 4 new vocabulary words in their writing.
- ☐ The student can explain the meaning of the words when asked.