

Dolphin Dive: Exploring Ocean Homes!

Materials: Picture book about dolphins/ocean, large blue paper, crayons/markers, optional: dolphin stickers/template, play dough, dolphin video clip.

Lesson Steps:

1. Introduction: What is a Dolphin? (10 minutes)

- Start by making dolphin clicking sounds or showing a picture/toy dolphin. Ask: "What animal makes sounds like this?" or "What animal is this?"
- Ask: "What do you already know about dolphins? Where do they live?"
- Read the picture book about dolphins together. Pause to look at the pictures and talk about what you see. Point out the ocean setting.

2. Where Do Dolphins Live? The Big Blue Ocean! (15 minutes)

- Discuss the pictures from the book showing the ocean. Ask: "What does the dolphin's home look like?" (Water, big, deep, maybe salty).
- Explain that the ocean is a huge body of salt water covering most of the Earth, and it's the perfect home for dolphins.
- Talk about dolphin characteristics needed for ocean life: strong swimmers, smooth skin, fins for steering.
- Focus on breathing: "Are dolphins fish? Do they breathe water?" Explain that dolphins are mammals, like us and dogs/cats, and need to breathe air! Show how they come to the surface and use their 'blowhole' (like a nose on top of their head) to breathe.
- *Optional:* Watch a short, child-friendly video clip of dolphins swimming and surfacing to breathe.

3. Activity: Create Your Own Ocean Habitat! (20 minutes)

- Give the student the large sheet of blue paper. Say: "Let's make an ocean home for a dolphin!"
- Have them draw waves, the seafloor, maybe some seaweed or little fish using crayons or markers.
- They can draw their own dolphin swimming in the ocean, or use a sticker or template to add a dolphin to their habitat.
- Talk about their drawing: "Where is your dolphin swimming? What else is in its ocean home? How does it breathe?"
- *Optional:* Use blue play dough to make the ocean shape and grey/white play dough to sculpt a simple dolphin figure to place in the 'ocean'.

4. Wrap-up & Review (5 minutes)

- Look at the ocean habitat artwork together.
- Ask review questions: "Where do dolphins live?" (Ocean) "Tell me one thing about a dolphin." (Has fins, breathes air, swims, etc.) "How do dolphins breathe?" (Come to the surface, use blowhole).
- Praise their great work and learning about dolphin homes!