


HORSESHOE CRABS!

HORSESHOE CRABS

HABITAT UNSCRAMBLE

Directions: Unscramble each word associated with a horseshoe crab's habitat.

BCEAH _____

WTAER _____ 

COSTAL _____

SILLOWAW _____

SNDA Y _____ 

ONCEA _____

TDIES _____

HORSESHOE CRABS

LESSON PLAN

Day One: What are Horseshoe Crabs?
Objective: The students will be able to identify characteristics of horseshoe crabs.

LESSON PLAN: DAY ONE

Introduction (5 minutes):

*Teacher Says: This week we are learning all about horseshoe crabs. What do you know about horseshoe crabs? A horseshoe crab is a marine animal that has lived on Earth for hundreds of millions of years. Some people call them living fossils! They typically live in shallow, coastal waters and sandy beaches. They have a hard, outer shell called an exoskeleton, a long tail and even gills that help them breathe underwater. What do you want to learn about horseshoe crabs during this unit?



HORSESHOE CRABS

LESSON PLAN


Week at a Glance:

- Day One: What are Horseshoe Crabs?
- Day Two: Horseshoe Habitats
- Day Three: Diet & Adaptations
- Day Four: Life Cycle
- Day Five: Importance & Conservation

HORSESHOE CRABS

VOCABULARY SQUARE

Word: exoskeleton	Definition:
Sentence:	Picture:



HORSESHOE CRABS

HORSESHOE CRABS

can are


have

HORSESHOE CRABS

LIFE CYCLE QUICK CHECK

1. Where do horseshoe crabs lay eggs?

2. How long do horseshoe crabs live?



A COMPREHENSIVE FIVE DAY UNIT ALL ABOUT HORSESHOE CRABS!

Includes lesson plans, graphic organizers, craft ideas, projects, comprehension questions and more!

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT

az
ANIMALS

HORSESHOE CRABS

LESSON PLAN

Week at a Glance:

Day One: What are
Horseshoe Crabs?

Day Two: Horseshoe
Habitats

Day Three: Diet &
Adaptations

Day Four: Life Cycle

Day Five: Importance &
Conservation

HORSESHOE CRABS



LESSON PLAN

Day One: What are Horseshoe Crabs?

Objective: The students will be able to identify characteristics of horseshoe crabs.



LESSON PLAN: DAY ONE

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HORSESHOE CRABS

Lesson (20 minutes):

*The teacher will play the video, "Helping Hands for Living Fossils" from National Geographic Animals -
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBDQD6e_lus&t=7s

*After the video, the teacher will guide the students in completing the "Horseshoe Crabs can, have, are" graphic organizer.

*The teacher will also guide the students in writing the definition for "exoskeleton" in the "Vocabulary Square" attached below.

Independent Work (10 minutes)

*The students will independently write a sentence and draw a picture of an exoskeleton in the "Vocabulary Square" activity sheet.

Closing (5 minutes)

*With a partner, the students will share their sentence and picture from the "Vocabulary Square".

HORSESHOE CRABS

HORSESHOE CRABS

can

are

have

HORSESHOE CRABS

VOCABULARY SQUARE

Word:

exoskeleton

Definition:

Sentence:

Picture:



HORSESHOE CRABS



LESSON PLAN



Day Two: Horseshoe Habitats

Objective: The students will be able to define "habitat" and describe horseshoe habitats.



LESSON PLAN: DAY TWO

Introduction (5 minutes):

*Teacher Says: Have you ever seen a horseshoe crab? Where was it? You typically find horseshoe crabs in shallow, coastal waters along the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico. They spend most of their lives on the sandy, muddy ocean floor. They also can live in bays, estuaries and beaches. Horseshoe crabs need clean saltwater, soft sand or mud for digging, gentle waves, healthy beaches and small animals to eat.

HORSESHOE CRABS

Lesson (15 minutes):

*The teacher will read the book, "High Tide for Horseshoe Crabs". Where were the horseshoe crabs located in the book? What did you notice about their habitat? What do you think high tide means? Why do horseshoe crabs come to the beach each spring?

*The teacher will guide the students in completing the "Fact or Fiction" activity sheet attached below. The students will color in the true statements in green and the false statements in red.

Independent Work (10 minutes)

*The students will complete the "Habitat Unscramble" attached below. Each word is associated with where horseshoe crabs live!

Closing (5 minutes)

*The teacher will give each student a sticky note or index card. They will write three things that horseshoe crabs need in their habitat to survive.

HORSESHOE CRABS

FACT OR FICTION?

Directions: Color the facts in green. Color statements that are fiction in red.

They live in shallow waters.

They spend most of their lives in dry areas.

Horseshoe crabs crawl along the muddy ocean floor.

Females come on to sandy beaches to lay eggs.

Horseshoe crabs only live in freshwater lakes and rivers.

They live in nests.

Bays & estuaries are also horseshoe crab habitats.

They spend their whole lives on the beach.

HORSESHOE CRABS

HABITAT UNSCRAMBLE

Directions: Unscramble each word associated with a horseshoe crab's habitat.

BCEAH

WTAER

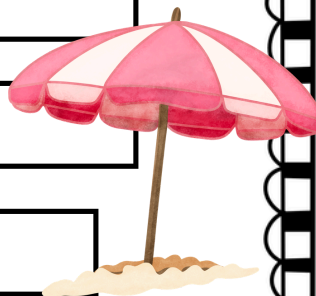
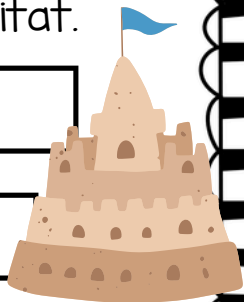
COSTAL

SLOHAW

SNDAY

ONCEA

TDIES



HORSESHOE CRABS

LESSON PLAN

Day Three: Diet & Adaptations

Objective: The students will be able to describe what horseshoe crabs eat and how they have adapted over time.



LESSON PLAN: DAY THREE

Introduction (5 minutes):

*Teacher Says: Today we are exploring more about horseshoe crab diets. Make a prediction. Do you think they are carnivores, herbivores or omnivores? Horseshoe crabs are carnivores, which means they primarily eat meat. They eat worms, clams, tiny shellfish, mollusks, small crustaceans, and dead fish or other decaying animals. They typically crawl along the muddy ocean floor to find their food. Rather than using teeth, they use the spines on their legs to crush the food before it reaches their mouth.

HORSESHOE CRABS

Lesson (15 minutes):

*The students will watch the video, "What is a Horseshoe Crab?" -

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4nysPJ_t4CI

*Horseshoe crabs also have special adaptations that help them to survive, find food and protect themselves. They have a hard shell, called an exoskeleton that keeps them safe. They have special gills that allow them to breathe underwater, a long tail that helps to flip itself back over if it gets flipped upside down, ten eyes to find food and protect from predators, five pairs of walking legs, and they are able to camouflage, or change colors to hide from predators or to sneak up on prey.

Independent Work (10 minutes)

*Using the attached, "Adaptations" graphic organizer, the students in writing down four facts about horseshoe crab adaptations.

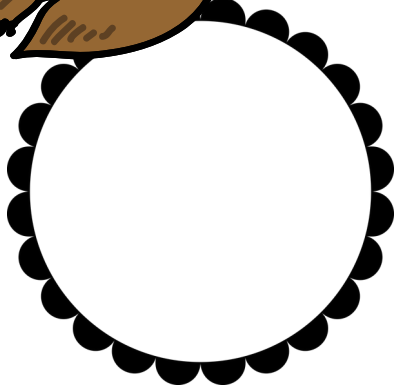
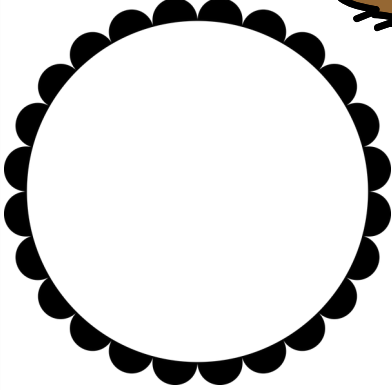
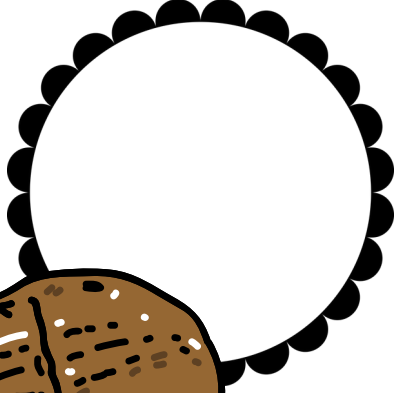
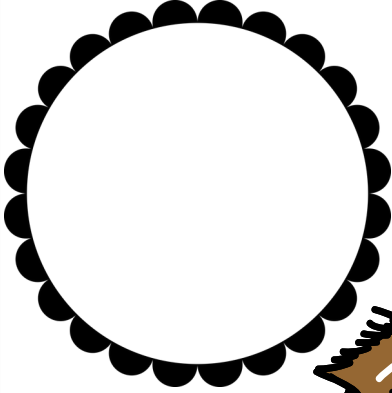
Closing (5 minutes)

*The whole group will review the facts together and various students will share what they recorded.

HORSESHOE CRABS

ADAPTATIONS

Directions: In the circles below, write down four facts about horseshoe crab adaptations



HORSESHOE CRABS

LESSON PLAN

Day Four: Life Cycle



Objective: The students will be able to describe the stages of the life cycle of a horseshoe crab.

LESSON PLAN: DAY FOUR

Introduction (5 minutes):

*Teacher Says: Today, we will explore more about the life cycle of a horseshoe crab. A life cycle is how an animal or plant grows and changes. Every spring and beginning of summer, horseshoe crabs come to the beach during high tide to lay their eggs. They dig a hole and lay thousands of eggs, then hatch in about 2-4 weeks. Then, they become larvae, which look like tiny adults without a tail. The juvenile crab grows and begins to develop a tail, then sheds their tail up to 16-17 times before becoming an adult. Then, after several years, they become adult crabs, living up to 20 years or more, living along the ocean floor.

HORSESHOE CRABS

Lesson (15 minutes):

*The teacher will read the book, "Horseshoe Crab ABC". After reading the book ask the students - Where do horseshoe crabs lay their eggs? What happens after the eggs hatch? What is a young horseshoe crab called? Why is molting important? How long do horseshoe crabs live? What stage do you think is the most difficult? Why?

*After the video, the students will complete the "Horseshoe Crab Life Cycle" activity sheet attached below. The teacher will guide the students in describing & identifying each stage.

Independent Work (10 minutes)

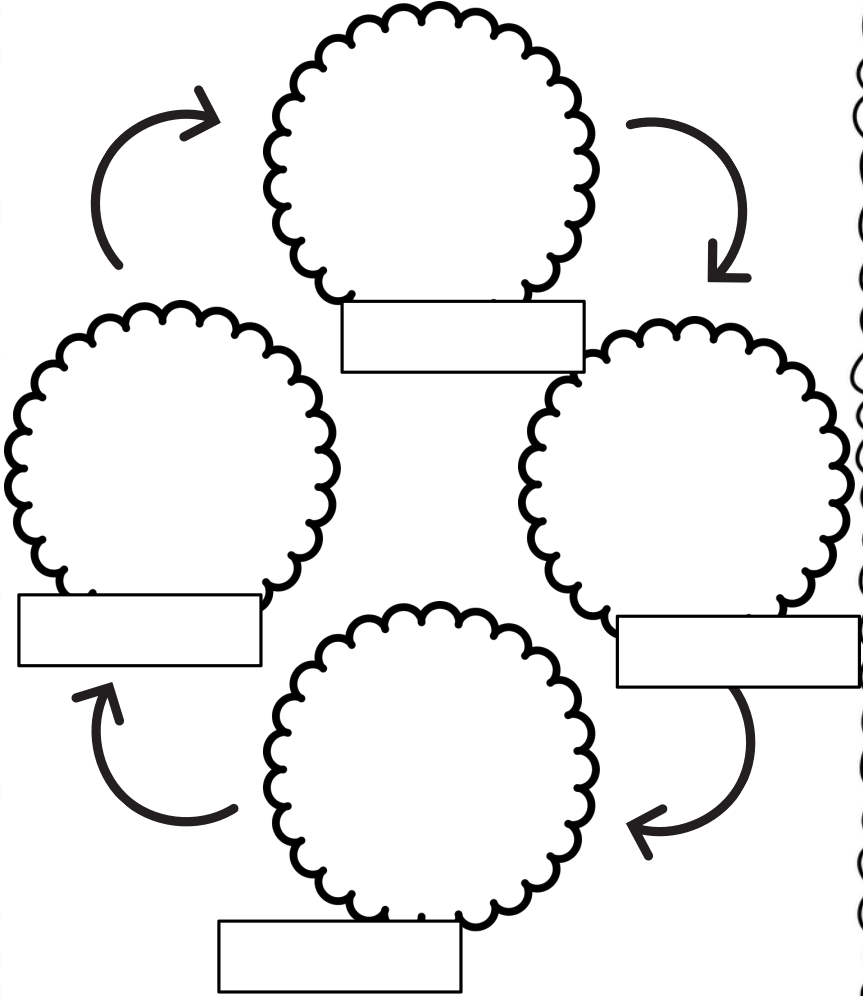
*The students will complete the "Horseshoe Crab Quick Check" attached below.

Closing (5 minutes)

*The students will review the quick check together as a class!

HORSESHOE CRABS

Horseshoe Crab Life Cycle



HORSESHOE CRABS

LIFE CYCLE QUICK CHECK

1. Where do horseshoe crabs lay eggs?

2. How long do horseshoe crabs live?

3. What are the stages of the horseshoe crab life cycle?

HORSESHOE CRABS



LESSON PLAN

Day Five: Importance & Conservation

Objective: The students will be able to explain why horseshoe crabs are important for our ecosystem.



LESSON PLAN: DAY FIVE

Introduction (5 minutes):

*Teacher Says: Why do you think horseshoe crabs are important? How do you think they help our ecosystems? Horseshoe crabs play an important role in our ecosystems. After they lay eggs on the beach, many different animal species eat the eggs, including shorebirds, fish, sea turtles and other crabs. They also have something called "blue blood", which actually contain special cells that can identify harmful bacteria. Horseshoe crabs also help keep our ecosystems balanced and healthy. How can we help protect horseshoe crabs?

HORSESHOE CRABS

Lesson (15 minutes):

*The teacher will read the book, "Harry Horseshoe Crab, A Tale of Crawly Creatures". Questions to ask during/after reading the book - What challenges does Harry face? How is Harry's habitat helping or hurting him? What facts did you learn about horseshoe crabs from the story? What adaptations helped Harry to survive? What might happen if people did not help protect horseshoe crab habitats?

Independent Work (10 minutes)

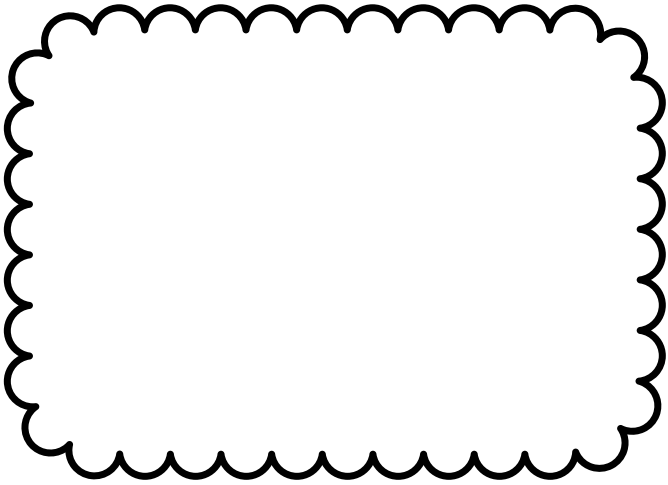
*The students will draw a picture and write a 4-5 sentence paragraph about why horseshoe crabs are important and how to keep them protected.

Closing (5 minutes)

*The students will share their writing pieces with the class or in groups!

HORSESHOE CRABS

Crab Conservation



Four sets of horizontal dashed lines for writing, each set consisting of a solid top line and a dashed middle line.