

Activity: Fishy business investigation

Use this practical activity to explore the tension between fishing fleets wanting to catch fish now, and the need to protect future fish stocks.

You will need:

- For each pupil: a spoon, pot, [investigation sheet](#)
- For each group of six: a bowl or tub containing 30 dried peas, 30 popcorn kernels, 30 beads (You can use any items as long as they're sufficiently different in size)
- Extra peas, kernels and beads for refills. There are 2 refills – a maximum of 60 of each type for each group would be needed if pupils did not catch any fish.

What to do

1. Divide pupils into groups of up to 6 and give each group a bowl of peas, kernels and beads. Explain:
 - dried peas represent cod
 - popcorn kernels are hake
 - beads are plaice.
2. Give each pupil a spoon (net) and pot (boat) and tell them they are going fishing. They will be allowed to fish 3 times, for 20 seconds each time.
3. The aim is to make as much money as possible. Cod (dried peas) are worth £12. Hake (popcorn kernels) are worth £4. Plaice (beads) are worth £1*. The pupil who makes the most money will be the winner. The group that makes the most money will also win.
4. Fish for 20 seconds. Then ask pupils to count each type of 'fish' and calculate the value of their catch, using the [investigation sheet](#).



90%
of world
fish stocks
are fully
or over-
exploited
from
fishing

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What to do (cont.)

5. While pupils are calculating their 'earnings', replenish the fish stocks by adding one new pea, kernel or bead for each one remaining in the bowl. Where pupils do not have any fish left, ask if they would like to release some of the fish they caught back into the water (before they calculate their earnings).
6. Repeat the activity two more times.
7. When the fishing is finished, ask pupils and groups to calculate their overall totals. What fishing strategy did the group and pupil who made the most money use? How would pupils act differently if they were to do the activity again?
8. Reflect on collective responsibility: how did the actions of one fisher affect the whole group? Did any group work together and how did that affect their totals? How many fish did the winning team have left in the ocean? What would this mean for their next fishing trip? How could fishers be rewarded for leaving fish in the sea for future generations?

Sustainable fishing

Over 1 billion people around the world depend on seafood as their main source of protein. For years, too much has been taken out of the sea. Sustainable fishing practices allow species to be taken at a volume and in ways that allow the marine environment to grow and thrive.

For those who choose to eat seafood, it's important that they choose to eat sustainably farmed or caught fish. Our [Good Fish Guide](#) rates the sustainability of seafood, so you can stop eating red rated and only eat green. Ecolabels from organisations like the Marine Stewardship Council also highlight sustainable sourced fish.

When we choose sustainable seafood, it encourages supermarkets and restaurants to demand it from their suppliers, in turn encouraging them to adopt these practices.

Fishing investigation

Name: _____



Cod



Hake



Plaice

Catch 1

	Cod	Hake	Plaice	
Number caught				
Value	£12	£4	£1	Total
Total earned				£

Catch 2

	Cod	Hake	Plaice	
Number caught				
Value	£12	£4	£1	Total
Total earned				£

Catch 3

	Cod	Hake	Plaice	
Number caught				
Value	£12	£4	£1	Total
Total earned				£
Number of fish in bowl				Overall total
				£