Under the Ocean
By Nancy Bevington

A colourful book full of fun illustrations that show many wonderful creatures that live in the sea including turtles, stingrays, seals and parrotfish.

Key Messages for Parents | Children learn language by listening to it and using it.

Books are the perfect tool to introduce babies to new words.

Early interactions with books and words help babies’ brains to grow.

Let babies experiment with words and sounds by talking with them, repeating words and encouraging all their attempts to talk back.

Early Years Learning Framework | Outcome 2: Children are connected to and contribute to their world.

We can help children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment by
  • Exploring living things with children
  • Modelling appreciation for the natural environment
  • Sharing information about diverse natural environments

Setup

If you have a large screen, play a relaxing ocean video-clip while families arrive. This will naturally encourage adults to talk with their infants about the fish and other sea animals they see on the screen. It will set the scene and create a calm atmosphere.

You may like to use one of these:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eSRj847AY8U
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OVct34NUk3U
**Welcome**
Ask carers to write nametags for themselves and their babies. Welcome everyone, introduce yourself, remind adults to turn their mobile phones off and that there will be time for adults to chat after the story and songs.

**Welcome Song (or your preferred song)**
Have the words available as a handout or written on a board or butcher’s paper for the adults to read and join in.

**Welcome song - Come Along**
*Come along and sing with me, sing with me*
*Come along and sing with me, It’s time for story time*

**Repeat and replace ‘sing’ with bounce, rock, clap etc.**
*Come along and bounce with me, bounce with me, bounce with me*
*Come along and bounce with me, it’s time for story time*

**Song**
Before singing the song you may like to show everyone the whale page of the book and explain that you’re going to sing a song about another whale, a white whale. Adults can sway with their child while they sing and even pretend to swim by making breaststroke motions with their arms. Have the words on display so adults can sing along.

**Baby Beluga**

Baby Beluga in the deep blue sea,
Swim so wild and you swim so free.
Heaven above, and the sea below,
And a little white whale on the go.

Baby beluga, baby Beluga, is the water warm?
Is your mama home with you, so happy.

Way down yonder where the dolphins play,
Where they dive and splash all day,
The waves roll in and the waves roll out,
See the water squirting out of your spout.

Baby beluga, baby Beluga, sing your little song,
Sing for all your friends, we like to hear you.

When it’s dark, you’re home and fed,
Curl up snug in your waterbed.
Moon is shining and the stars are out,
Good night, little whale, goodnight.

Baby beluga, baby Beluga, with tomorrow’s sun,
Another day’s begun, you’ll soon be waking.

Baby Beluga in the deep blue sea,
Swim so wild and you swim so free.
Heaven above and the sea below,
And a little white whale on the go.
You’re just a little white whale on the go.

**Before Reading**
The title of the book is ‘Under the Ocean’.

Ask the children, “What can we see on the front cover?”

Label the objects, *octopus, fish, coral.*

*Then talk about the colours – This fish has orange on it. This fish has blue stripes. I can see some purple coral.*
**During Reading**

As you read the story encourage the families/children to repeat (echo) the name of each sea creature after you, or just have a try at making a noise or vocalisations.

Under the ocean there are:

- Turtles – *turtles*
- Dolphins – *dolphins*
- Angelfish – *angelfish*

Point to the illustration of each animal as you move through the book.

Before turning each page pose the questions, “I wonder what animals will be on the next page.”

Draw attention to some of the details in the illustrations.

- *Look! The crab has big claws*
- *I can see the shark has sharp teeth*
- *Can you see the spots on the stingray?*

**After Reading**

After reading ask everyone to join in a song. Show how you can gently wave your hands from side to side to look like fish swimming.

**Song – All the fish are swimming in the water**

- *All the fish are swimming in the water*
- *Swimming in the water*
- *Swimming in the*
- *All the fish are swimming in the water*
- *Foldy-roldy-roldy-ray*

Choose some pages in the book and change the words to fit

“All the eels are swimming (or swishing) in the water” etc.

**Extension ideas**

Sandpit play – offer children and families animal moulds and figurines to explore sea creatures during their play, if possible in a sandpit. Add some water to the sand and encourage them to touch it and talk about what happens.

Explore non-fiction books - There are many books about the ocean with beautiful engaging colour photographs. Look at the pictures of these books with children, and name the animals and talk about their features. Let children set the pace and choose which pages to look at. It’s okay to skip pages or start in the middle. You don’t need to read out the information on the page, instead talk about the pictures that children are drawn to.

Encourage families to engage in water play – In the bath or water tray give children sea animal figurines to play with. Families can create stories about the animals as they play. SAFETY NOTE: Children and babies must ALWAYS be supervised by an ADULT around water. Alternatively, children can engage in similar small world play using a tray of rice and pretending the rice is water. You could draw and cut sea animals out of cardboard to go in the rice tray.
Song – Here is the Sea
Here is the sea
The wavy sea
Here is a boat
And here is me
And all the fish
Way down below
Wiggle their tails
And away they go

Goodbye
Conclude the session with some suggestions of books that parents might want to share with their children.

An Activity Time for this book is available to download for FREE from our website. This is a great resource to share with families, you are welcome to print and distribute as necessary.

For more stories to share, we recommend the following titles and if your library has copies, make them available for families to borrow or include them in your story time session:

- At the Beach I See by Kasmani Bin Salleh
- Where is Little Fish? by Lucy Cousins
- Noodle Loves the Beach by Marion Billet
- Splash by Alison Lester

Goodbye Song
Depending on the size of your group, you may wish to insert each child’s name in the place of ‘you’ as it develops a more personal relationship between yourself, the child and the family.

Sung to the tune of (Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush) or your preferred choice.

Goodbye
This is the way we say goodbye (use a waving action)
Say goodbye, say goodbye
This is the way we say goodbye
To all our library friends (or) (to our friend......)!