



## SeaWorld/Busch Gardens

# Bony Fishes

## K-3 Classroom Activities

# There's a Fish in My Dessert!

### OBJECTIVE

The student will learn a fish's habitat by representing water, rocks, and plants using food items.

### ACTION

1. Explain to students that a habitat is the place where an animal lives. Lead students in a discussion about what a fish's habitat might look like. Ask them to name some things they might see there (rocks, seaweed, coral, water, sand). Some fish stay in caves or holes during the day and come out at night to hunt; some swim alone, others swim in schools.
2. Divide students into groups of four. Distribute materials (pan, mixing bowl, gelatin package, mixing spoon, measuring cup). Help students pour gelatin mix in bowl and add water by reading package instructions out loud. (Use the recipe for "jigglers" or thicker gelatin.) Supervise handling of hot water.
3. Direct students to pour half the gelatin into their pan.
4. Distribute jellybeans, fruit roll, marshmallows, and gummy fish. Have students add jellybeans for rocks, marshmallows for coral reefs, and gummy fish in swimming positions. Students may choose to create a kelpbed habitat using strips of fruit roll for seaweed.
5. Carefully pour the rest of the gelatin around the objects in each pan. Write the students' names on a piece of tape and place it on their pan. Refrigerate gelatin overnight.
6. The next day, invite students to look at the habitats. Review items such as seaweed, rocks, coral reefs and other habitat descriptors.
7. Distribute serving bowls and spoons. Dish gelatin into bowls and enjoy!

## DEEPER DEPTHS

Introduce the concept of predator and prey relationships: who eats whom in a habitat. In assembling a habitat food chain, you need plants that convert sunlight to energy, animals that eat the plants, animals that eat other animals, and bacteria or other organisms that break down dead matter into nutrients for plants. See if students can identify three of these elements in their habitat.

## MATERIALS

### Per four students:

- one large box of blueberry-flavored gelatin
- mixing bowl
- mixing spoon
- measuring cup
- 8 x 8 inch glass pan
- assorted gummy fish
- assorted jellybeans
- fruit roll
- miniature marshmallows

### Per class:

- masking tape
- pen
- serving bowls
- spoons

### Preparation:

The gelatin requires very hot to boiling water to dissolve. Depending on your school's facilities, either get boiling water from the school or boil water at home and bring to school in thermoses. Ask cafeteria staff for permission to place gelatin in refrigerator overnight.



A coral reef habitat is home to many bony fishes.