

# DOLPHIN RESEARCH CENTER

## Sea Life Musical Chairs

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**Grade Level:** K-2<sup>nd</sup>

**Objective:** Introducing the concept of a food chain will enable students to learn more about the interdependence of ocean life forms in the Florida Keys habitat in a fun way and understand the need for protection of the natural systems on earth.

### Florida Sunshine State Standards:

#### Science

SC.G.1.1.2: The student knows that plants and animals are dependent upon each other for survival.

SC.G.1.1.3: The student knows that there are many different plants and animals living in many different kinds of environments (e.g. hot, cold, wet, dry, sunny, and dark).

SC.G.2.1.1: The student knows that if living things do not get food, water, shelter, and space, they will die.

SC.G.2.1.2: The student knows that the activities of humans affect plants and animals in many ways.

### National Science Standards:

**Content Standard C (K-4) - Characteristics of Organisms:** Each plant or animal has different structures that serve different functions in growth, survival, and reproduction. For example, humans have distinct body structures for walking, holding, seeing, and talking.

#### Content Standard C (K-4) Organisms and Their

**Environments:** All animals depend on plants. Some animals eat plants for food. Other animals eat animals that eat the plants.

**Background:** About 25% of all marine life depends on coral reefs for survival despite the fact that the reefs only make up a small part of the ocean floor. Coral reefs are also known as the rainforests of the sea and are home to a large variety of marine life. Some coral reefs are hundreds of miles long and are the largest living structures on Earth.

Coral reefs look like rocks or plants, but really they are structures made by tiny animals the size of a thumbtack! The Florida Keys are home to the third longest coral reef in the world! It is important to keep our reefs healthy not only for the marine life who live there, but also for people because they are a vital source of food (fish, etc), medicines, and even protection from erosion. Unfortunately, due to human activities, most of the world's coral reefs have been severely damaged. We must protect this precious ecosystem and the food chains they nurture. To learn more about coral reefs and what you can do to help protect them, please visit [www.coral.org](http://www.coral.org).

### Key Terms

**Coral reef:** A colorful, massive structure made of limestone that is deposited by living things. Coral reefs are tropical ecosystems home to 25% of all plants and animals that live in the ocean.

**Food chain:** A community of organisms where each member is eaten in turn by another member.



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**Teacher Prep Notes:** Make copies of the life forms and laminate to last longer. Punch holes: one in the top left corner and one in the top right corner of each. Thread string through the holes and tie knots at each end. (This is so that students can wear the life forms as signs around their necks.)

## Materials:

- Select interdependent life forms. (See attached sheets.)
- Laminated labeled signs with a picture of each life form. Each should have string attached so that the child can wear the sign.
- Tape or CD player.
- Tape or CD: *The Little Mermaid* (suggested).
- Chairs for each player.

## Procedures:

1. Read aloud **Coral Reefs** by [Anita Ganeri](#); [Beatrice MacLeod](#); [McGraw-Hill Childrens Publishing](#).
2. Assign each child a life form and have that child wear that sign.
3. Have children sit in a circle on chairs.
4. Allow each child to stand up and identify his/her animal or plant, and discuss its primary food source. To give an example of a food chain, have students stand according to the levels in a food chain: i.e. squid, dolphin or manatees, sea grass.
5. Play musical chairs. Have the students walk around the chairs while the music is playing. Once the music ends, the student without a chair is out. If that student has another life form dependent on it, that life form is out as well. Finally, if the child wearing the sun is out, then the game is over, since all the life forms depend on the sun.

**Wrap Up:** Discuss who is left and why. Make sure to reinforce the importance of each one's role in a food chain.

## Taking it Further:

- As a class, have students make a collage of a coral reef to hang on the wall or board including some of the life forms they learned about from the game.



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## Interdependent Life Forms

### ***If you are out:***

The Sun

Squid

Herring

Plankton

Coral

Grunt

Sea grass

Sea weed

Shrimp

Small crab

Sponges

### ***They are out as well:***

Everyone

Dolphins

Dolphins, Heron, Pelican

Herring, Shrimp, Sponge

Parrot Fish

Barracudas, Dolphin, Heron, Pelican

Manatees

Sea Turtles

Grunt, Snapper

Spiny lobster

Snapping shrimp

