

LESSON 12

Art from Ghost Nets

In this lesson, students learn about the problems associated with discarded rope and nets in the marine environment and that such ropes and nets can be used to make baskets, weavings, sculptural fish, shadow puppet plays and even carpet!

Meets Science ACSSU072 Living things have life cycles

Arts ACAVAM111 Use materials, techniques and processes to explore visual conventions when making artworks

Arts ACAVAR113 Identify intended purposes and meanings of artworks using visual and arts terminology to compare artworks, starting with visual artworks in Australia including visual artworks or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

Sustainability OI.1 - OI.9 In summary, all life forms, including human life, are connected through ecosystems on which they depend for their wellbeing and survival. Sustainable patterns of living rely on the interdependence of healthy social, economic and ecological systems. Actions for a more sustainable future reflect values of care, respect and responsibility

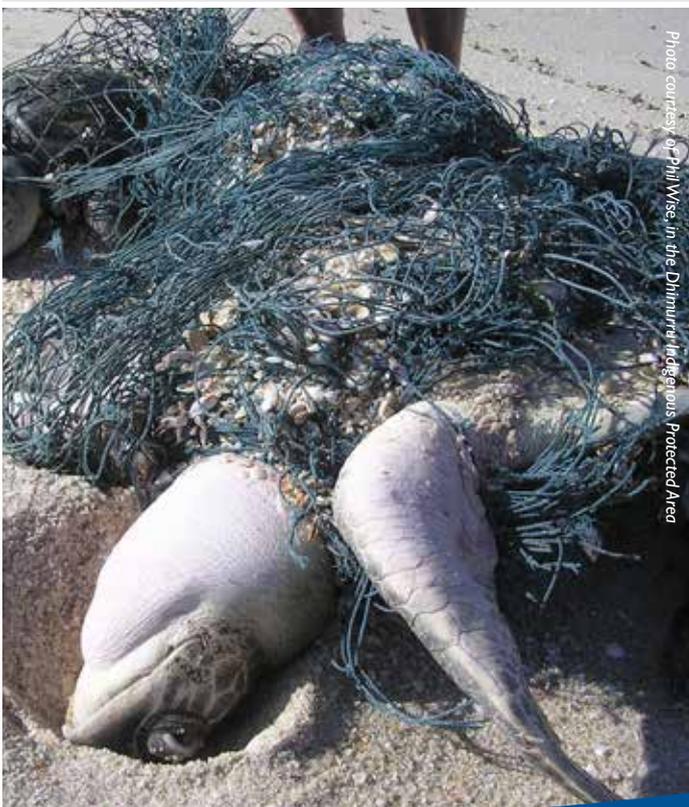


Photo courtesy of Jim Wise, in the Dhimurru Indigenous Protected Area

You will need

- Discarded marine rope and/or nets
- Large darning needles
- Scissors
- Fishing line or similar thin, strong nylon string

Suggested Teachers Script

ENGAGE

(Have the children sit on the carpet on the floor). Ask them if they know what the carpet is made from?

A long time ago, all carpets were made with woollen fibres, which meant rearing and shearing sheep, dyeing fleece, spinning yarn, weaving on huge looms. Nowadays, most carpet is made from nylon, a type of plastic.

Imagine how much carpet is used in the world, in houses and offices? And when it gets old and worn, it gets thrown out. In Australia and New Zealand, 5000 garbage trucks of commercial carpet make their way to landfill each year (Australian Ethical Investments 2015)

Interface Carpets have been working with a yarn supplier company called Aquafil, who can convert used nylon product, such as used fishing net, to a yarn that can be used for carpet. Interface buy old discarded nets from developing countries such as the Philippines for use by Interface in carpet tiles. Carpet tiles (or squares) are good – why do you think they are good? (Because if you get a worn or stained square, you can just replace that one). To date, 41,400 kg of nets have been collected. Stretched end to end, that would be the distance around the planet! (Australian Ethical Investments 2015)

It is good that carpet can be made from used fishing nets, because discarded or escaped nylon fishing nets ('ghost nets') are having a devastating impact on marine wildlife, which gets caught in it.

Possibly the greatest Australian 'hotspot' for these is in northwest Western Australia, stretching to the Northern Territory coast, but a lot of marine debris also ends up on the coast of Tasmania, including rope.

Method

Show the students the following website about ghost nets. See <http://www.ghostnets.com.au/resources/videos/>

Watch the videos "The Young Man and the Ghost Net", from Moa Island in the Torres Strait, and the Blackmores Ghost Nets

LESSON 12

Art from Ghost Nets

continued

Art Project. Explain where the Torres Strait Islands are, and that the islanders are also Australians.

Suggest that we can also re-use old fishing nets or rope to make art works, which can stimulate discussion and action about marine pollution.

Activity

EXPLORE

Choose which activity you would like to undertake with your children. To make coiled coasters or baskets, have a look at the web page <https://au.pinterest.com/pin/567523990522872089/>

Or maybe use “The Young Man and the Ghost Net” shadow puppet play as an inspiration to do your own play.

Marine rope can also be woven into an existing wire frame/ washing basket/wire basket/chicken wire/refrigerator shelves or gutter guard – any lattice/perforated frame.

In response to community concerns about the buildup of marine debris along the shoreline in Tasmania’s D’Entrecasteaux Channel and Huon River areas, marine farming operators and local community members have ‘adopted’ areas of the shoreline, and regularly conduct marine debris clean-ups. Staff and volunteers have been trained to reduce disturbance to shorebirds when conducting these shoreline clean-ups.

Another initiative includes the adoption of a unique rope design for use in aquaculture (‘fish farms’). One salmon producer is supplied with rope uniquely identifiable to that company only. In addition to greater accountability, the unique rope design helps them to manage their waste reduction processes.

EXPLAIN/ ELABORATE/ EVALUATE

Ask the children to write a statement about their woven basket or piece. If they put on a shadow puppet play, ensure that the children do the text for the play with a message about the problems related to plastic in the sea.



Photo EPA Tasmania



Photo EPA Tasmania

References

Australian Ethical Investments 2015, Good Money magazine, Issue 5, Australian Ethical Investment, Sydney.

Ghost Nets Australia 2016, viewed on 16 January 2018, <http://www.ghostnets.com.au/resources/videos/>

Pinterest, viewed on 16 January 2018, <https://au.pinterest.com/pin/567523990522872089/>