

Blacktip Shark Fin Fun



Objective

Students identify and name a shark adaptation and observe the coloration of a Pacific blacktip shark's dorsal fin.

Materials

- photo of a blacktip shark
- blacktip shark fin pattern
- beige construction paper dorsal fins (precut—two per student)
- craft sticks (one per student)
- glue
- paint-sponges or paintbrushes
- white and black tempera paint
- bowls

Background

Sharks may have one or two dorsal fins. Dorsal fins give the shark stability as it swims. Pacific blacktip sharks have two dorsal fins; the first dorsal fin is larger than the second dorsal fin. These sharks have beige bodies with black tips on all fins. They average 1.5 m (4.9 ft.)

Action

1. Review the fins of a shark. Show students a picture of a blacktip shark (google “blacktip shark.”) Ask students to describe the coloration of a blacktip shark's dorsal fins.
2. Distribute one construction paper dorsal fin to each student. Each student writes his or her name on one side and turns the fin over. Students spread glue on the side of the dorsal fin facing them.
3. As students are applying glue, distribute one craft stick and a second dorsal fin to each student. Help students place craft sticks on the straight edges of their dorsal fins with half of the stick extending below the fin.
4. Students match up dorsal fins and press halves together with the stick in between. Students leave glued dorsal fins on tables to dry.
5. Distribute paint-sponges or paintbrushes to each student.
6. Review where white is found on a blacktip shark's dorsal fin and demonstrate how to sponge-paint the dorsal fin. Distribute white paint. Students paint their dorsal fins.
7. Review where black is found on a blacktip shark's dorsal fin. Students paint their dorsal fins. Hang dorsal fins on drying rack or leave on tables to dry.
8. Students role-play with dorsal fins. Role-play a school of sharks swimming around the classroom. While holding dorsal fins above their heads, students sing Shark Chant (on fin pattern below).



Shark Chant

We're rough!

We're tough!

We're rough, we're tough,

We're SH-A-A-A-R-K-S!

(WHISPER "sharks")