

Hi Dr. Lam,

It is nice to meet you! My name is Stephanie Betz, and I am a fifth-grade teacher in St. Louis. I am looking forward to meeting you in our next class.

In response to the initial question, "How would you rate your own ocean literacy?" I would say I fall in the average range. I love learning about the ocean and have watched many documentaries, but there is always more to learn. I am excited to explore new activities that I haven't tried yet and possibly incorporate them into my classroom.

Regarding the diversity padlet question, "What do I know about the diversity of the ocean?" The ocean is incredibly diverse. Organisms range from coral reefs and algae blooms to the largest sperm whales. Students especially enjoy learning about creatures that no longer exist, like the megalodon.

I found the video fact that the ocean provides 99% of all habitable space on Earth fascinating. This really demonstrates to students how vast and diverse the ocean is. I also enjoy reading about newly discovered species, which reinforces that there is still so much we don't know about the ocean. Its mysteriousness is a great way to spark student curiosity.

The video on plankton further highlights the ocean's unseen diversity. I was amazed to learn that one teaspoon of water can contain one million organisms. I like sharing with students that life originated in the ocean, as it helps them understand the ocean's vital role in sustaining life on Earth.

The phytoplankton-from-space image was also interesting. I was surprised to learn that light affects population growth and decline, and that phytoplankton tend to gravitate toward coastal areas for nutrients.

I also enjoyed the Jenga food web activity. I think it effectively helps students visualize the interconnectedness of populations in both the ocean and on land.

Thank you for going through the syllabus in detail. I appreciate the clarity about what to expect in the course. I did have one question: are we able to complete an assignment more than once, such as multiple webinars, or would you prefer that we choose different activities each time to keep our assignments versatile?