# Lesson: What's a Fish (Year 3)

**Phase of learning**
Years 3 - 4

**WA Curriculum**
K-10 English, K-10 Science

**Region**
North Coast, Gascoyne Coast, West Coast, South Coast, Indian Ocean Territories

**Summary**
Students will investigate the characteristics of fish.

**Outcomes**

- Students will learn about the external features of fish and how fish are grouped.
- Students will use informative texts to find information.

**Duration**
45 - 60 minutes

**Preparation**
Background information about fish anatomy can be found in the Fact Sheet: Fish Anatomy.

This lesson has an associated Presentation: Is it a fish? that you will use during the lesson, or alternatively, you may choose to print the slides out to facilitate discussion with your class.

This lesson requires students to have access to non-fiction books on fish and/or the internet. It also assumes that students have some prior knowledge of simple biological classification.

The Lesson: Is it really a fish? (Year 3) may follow this lesson.

**Western Australian curriculum**

| LEARNING AREA | STRAND | SUB-STRAND | CODES |
|---|---|---|---|
| Science | Science understanding | Biological sciences | ACSSU044 |
| English | Language | Text structure and organisation | WA3ELAT1, WA3ELAT2 |

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## Steps

1. Share Part 1 of the Presentation with students and for each image ask, 'Is this a fish?'
2. Share Part 2 of the Presentation with students. Explain that all of these are actually fish. A fish is not necessarily just what we might commonly think of as a fish (i.e. the herring and the tuna). Fish are classified into three main groups (classes) – bony fish (includes what we commonly think of as a fish); cartilaginous fish (which include the sharks and rays) and the jawless fish (lampreys belong to this group).
3. Share Part 3 of the Presentation with students. These are all bony fish. What features do you think they all have in common?
4. Allow students to work in pairs or small groups with a non-fiction book and/or the internet to discover some characteristics of fish.
5. Following their research time, ask each pair (group) to share a characteristic about fish they discovered. Use the answers to create a class mind map and answer the question, 'What is a Fish?'
6. (optional) Ask students; are there any exceptions to these characteristics? For example, do all fish have scales? Do all fish have fins? Ask students to think of examples, or research as a class.

#### Recommended Resources

Presentation: Is it a Fish?

Fact Sheet: Fish Anatomy

#### Additional Resources

Howell, I. 2015 Fact Cat: Fish, Wayland, Great Britain.

Pfeffer, W. 2015 What's it like to be a Fish? HarperCollins Publishers, New York.

Parish, S. 2008 Amazing Facts about Australian Marine Fishes, Steve Parish Publishing, Queensland.

Poster: Bony fish – external anatomy

**Related resources**

Presentation: Is it a fish?
Fact Sheet: Fish Anatomy
Poster: Bony Fish - External Anatomy (including information)
Video: What's a Fish
Poster: Marine Classification - Animals (Primary)

**Keywords**

fish anatomy, features, characteristics, living things, classification