



WORLD OCEANS DAY 2025

Wonder: Sustaining what sustains us

Lesson Plan: The Ocean Starts Here: Inspiring Action through Art

Focus Areas: Science, Visual Arts, Sustainability, Critical Thinking, Community Action

Learning Objectives

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Understand the connection between stormwater drains and the ocean.
- Explain how pollution travels from land to sea via drainage systems.
- Express their learning and concern through collaborative public art.
- Apply scientific and artistic knowledge to design a meaningful drain art message that raises awareness in their school or local community.

Australian Curriculum Links

Science (Years 5–8):

- **Science Understanding (ACSSU043 / ACSSU073 / ACSSU112):** The movement of water through the environment and the impact of human activity.
- **Science Inquiry Skills (AC SIS057 / AC SIS093):** Communicating ideas and information using scientific language and representations.

Visual Arts (ACAVAM114 / ACAVAM116):

- Use visual conventions and techniques to communicate meaning in artworks.
- Collaborate to plan and display art in community or school spaces.

Sustainability Cross-Curriculum Priority

- Systems thinking about how human practices affect ecological cycles.

Materials Needed

- Photographs or short video clips of local stormwater drains

- Access to a nearby stormwater drain (on school grounds or local area – optional but ideal)
- A3 paper or sketchbooks
- Pencils, textas, paints, chalk pastels (or outdoor chalk if doing temporary drain art)
- Watercolour or paint trays for in-class work
- Printouts or slides explaining:
 - What happens to rubbish that goes down a drain
 - Ocean health issues caused by land-based pollution (e.g., plastics, chemicals, runoff)
- Optional: examples of professional drain art (e.g. “Only rain down the drain” projects)

Lesson Procedure

1. Introduction & Provocation (10–15 minutes)

Class Discussion:

- Ask: “Where does water go when it flows down a drain?”
- Watch a short video or look at photos of stormwater drains leading to the ocean.
- Introduce the idea that pollution in our streets (e.g., rubbish, oil, cigarette butts) can end up harming marine life.
- Introduce World Ocean Day and this year’s theme: “*Wonder: Sustaining what sustains us*”.
- Explain the purpose of **drain art** as a creative way to spread awareness and protect the ocean.

2. Design Challenge: Your Message to Protect the Ocean (30 minutes)

Creative Task: Design a drain art concept

Students will:

- Brainstorm marine animals or ocean systems they care about.
- Consider slogans or short messages (e.g., “Protect what flows below” / “Only rain down the drain” / “The ocean starts here”)
- Draft their ideas on paper – combining images and messages in a way that catches attention.

Prompts:

- What would you draw on or around a drain to make people stop and think?
- How can your artwork inspire people to care for the ocean?
- What ocean animals or habitats are at risk from land-based pollution?

Support & Differentiation:

- Younger students can focus on drawings and simple slogans.
- Older students can include scientific explanations or links to specific species/habitats.
- Provide a list of facts for those who need inspiration.

3. Sharing and Feedback (10–15 minutes)

Gallery Walk:

- Students display their drain art drafts around the room.
- Encourage students to walk around, leave positive comments, and reflect on the power of public art to inspire change.
- Discuss as a group:
 - What messages were the most powerful?
 - How does art help protect nature?

4. (Optional Extension)

Create a Real Drain Art Mural

- Select a few student concepts to develop into real chalk art near school drains (with permission).
- Involve the community or local council for a longer-term mural project.
- Invite local media or post online as part of World Ocean Day celebration.

Group Reflection & Exit Ticket (5 minutes)

Ask students:

- “What surprised you most about the journey from drain to ocean?”
- “How can you help protect the ocean in your daily life?”
Students write or draw one idea on a sticky note to add to a **“Protect Our Ocean” board** or digital padlet.