

# Create a Display

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**Subject:** Science  
**Skills:** research, observation, classification, sorting, description  
**Duration:** ongoing  
**Group size:** one class  
**Setting:** classroom  
**Vocabulary:** mollusk, bivalve, univalve, native  
**SC Science Standards:** Grade 6-8 – Inquiry: IA1b2, IA1C1,2, IA2c, IA7b.

## Objectives

Students will learn to:

- 1) identify mollusks;
- 2) create a display;
- 3) research a particular species; and
- 4) present their findings.

## Background

Shells are a very common item picked up at the beach and a popular item to be collected. Many people, even those that live near the beach, do not know the names of the shells they find or whether they are **bivalves** or **univalves** (clams or snails). It is important to learn the names of the shells we find on the beach and to be aware that these empty skeletons were once living organisms. It is important to learn about **mollusks** because many are important as a food source (mussels and clams) or medicine (cone snails), and many are in decline because of this. By better understanding the treasures we find at the beach, the more we will understand the problems facing them and we will be more willing to help protect them. This activity will help students learn the mollusks **native** to your area and will teach them how to display several items while labeling each. They will also be able to do basic

research on a species and present their information to the class.

## Materials

- native shells collected from the beach
- a display case or other area to display shells
- white index cards to label shells

## Procedure

Collect shells at the beach or have each student bring in a shell of choice from local beaches. After having a good number of shells, display them in a case either in the classroom or hallway of the school. Arrange the display with **bivalves** together and **univalves** together. Have each student label his or her shell with the common name, scientific name, size, color, where it is usually found (marsh or front beach), and any other information you would like to include. Each student will then become an "expert" on their particular shell and will be able to present to the class everything they learned about that **mollusk**. Invite other classes into your classroom to observe the display and listen to the presentation, therefore, sharing the knowledge. After other students have been shown the display and have listened to the presentations, quiz the other classes on the identification, making your class the ones who judge the game or quiz, telling the other students if they are correct or not.