

# Mollusk Matching

By Sara K. Saksewski, Project Oceanica, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC

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**Subject:** Science  
**Skills:** observation, description, comparing, matching, small group work  
**Duration:** 10-20 minutes  
**Group size:** varied  
**Setting:** beach or classroom  
**Vocabulary:** mollusk  
**SC Science Standards:** Grade 3-5 – Inquiry: IA1a, IA2a.

## Objectives

Students will learn:

- 1) to look carefully at shells and observe the differences between species; and
- 2) the names of common shells.

## 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. 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 our overuse, over collecting, or negative impact on their habitats. 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.

## Materials

- copies of the Mollusk Matching handout (next page) for each student or group of students
- the 20 shells listed on the Mollusk Matching handout, or pictures of the 20 shells listed on the Mollusk Matching handout  
(available to print online at <http://oceanica.cofc.edu/shellguide.htm>)

## Procedure

Arrange the 20 shells (or pictures) listed on the Mollusk Matching handout on a large table or other area where students can walk around to observe them. Make sure each shell (or picture) is labeled with a number 1-20. Hand each student or group of students a Mollusk Matching handout and have them write the letter of each shell in the correct numbered space provided. Keep in mind that students must be familiar with the names of these shells before the activity.

Note: This activity can be combined with the dichotomous key activity. Using the key will make identification easier for those not familiar with the shells.

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Match the numbered shells with the letters/names of the shells listed below in the boxes.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

A. Atlantic Moonsnail

B. Angel Wing

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

C. Atlantic Giant Cockle

D. Knobbed Whelk

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

E. Channeled Whelk

F. Ribbed Mussel

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

G. False Angel Wing

H. Eastern Oyster

8. \_\_\_\_\_

9. \_\_\_\_\_

I. Ark

J. Penshell

10. \_\_\_\_\_

11. \_\_\_\_\_

K. Atlantic Jackknife

L. White Baby's Ear

12. \_\_\_\_\_

13. \_\_\_\_\_

M. Lightning Whelk

N. Keyhole Limpet

14. \_\_\_\_\_

15. \_\_\_\_\_

16. \_\_\_\_\_

Q. Disk Shell

R. Scotch Bonnet

17. \_\_\_\_\_

18. \_\_\_\_\_

S. Northern Quahog

T. Slippersnail

19. \_\_\_\_\_

20. \_\_\_\_\_

Modified from the North Carolina National Estuarine Research Reserve/NC Coastal Reserve

# Mollusk Matching

Answer Sheet

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Match the numbered shells with the letters/names of the shells listed below in the boxes.

1. \_\_B\_\_

A. Atlantic Moonsnail

B. Angel Wing

2. \_\_I\_\_

3. \_\_L\_\_

C. Atlantic Giant Cockle

D. Knobbed Whelk

4. \_\_E\_\_

5. \_\_Q\_\_

E. Channeled Whelk

F. Ribbed Mussel

6. \_\_H\_\_

7. \_\_C\_\_

G. False Angel Wing

H. Eastern Oyster

8. \_\_G\_\_

9. \_\_K\_\_

I. Ark

J. Penshell

10. \_\_N\_\_

11. \_\_D\_\_

K. Atlantic Jackknife

L. White Baby's Ear

12. \_\_M\_\_

13. \_\_A\_\_

M. Lightning Whelk

N. Keyhole Limpet

14. \_\_S\_\_

O. Stout Tagelus

P. Scallop

15. \_\_T\_\_

16. \_\_O\_\_

Q. Disk Shell

R. Scotch Bonnet

17. \_\_F\_\_

18. \_\_P\_\_

S. Northern Quahog

T. Slippersnail

19. \_\_R\_\_

20. \_\_J\_\_

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From Commonly Found Marine Mollusks of the Southeastern United States. By Sara K. Saksewski,  
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