Future Thinking about Beaches

Level

8+

Key question

Can we express our views about the coast in different ways?

Key outcome

Recognise that perceptions of the past and present may affect our views of the future environment of coasts.

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What you need

Worksheets and pens for small groups
Number of small cardboard/plastic boxes with lids (matchbox, food carton, shoe box)
Any beach or cliffed area

What you do

Students should work in small groups or individually. Each group or individual can choose which activity to do in any order, with the exception of the first activity. At the end of the time allowed, some of you could read your poems, display your art shapes, or explain your answers to the questions. There are no wrong answers!

The extended present

Draw a line, say, 20 m long in the sand to represent a continuum between 1900 A.D. and 2100 A.D., as shown:

1900 AD 2000 2100

Consider the scene you are in. When would this scene be best (for beauty say)? In 1900 or now or in the future? Stand along the line in the place representing the time you think this scene is best.

Consider these questions as a group:

- where are most students grouped
- why
- would your grandparents have picked the same time
- would your grandchildren pick the same
- what features of this place would you like to pass on to your grandchildren in the future.

Time capsules

Working in pairs, collect one small item (natural or human made) and place it in the box provided. Agree as to why this item could be important to include in a Time Capsule being buried here, to be dug up in 50 years. Now explain your choice and your reasons for its inclusion to another pair.

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Questioning

Do your feelings and understanding of this beach change if you write a question mark after every statement in a description of the scene (taken from a tourist brochure or text about the area).

- The region lies in an overlap between two climatic zones?
- The range of habitats found is also diverse?
- The forms and process of erosion of the landscape can be easily observed?
- The spectacular coastal cliffs show mainly erosion?
- The cliff faces display layered beds of sandstone, conglomerate and siltstone which were at the bottom of a marine environment 280-225 million years ago?
- The vegetation cover forms a varied, complex mosaic of plant community types?

Discuss

What methods of field investigation could you use to provide the answers to these questions.

A shadow	A shape	A contrast
A curve	A line	A pattern

Observing nature as art

Find a place where you can sit quietly and observe a scene. Record examples of the features of the scene in the spaces provided. Record each observation with a sketch or a description.

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Now consider the recorded observations.

- Can you link all of the features in one artistic presentation?
- Has the activity affected your perception of this environment?

Be an ecological detective

You are an ecological detective looking closely at the beach. You are looking for (but don't need to collect):

- a living thing that is growing
- something that was once alive
- something that has undergone change
- something that is impossible to count
- something you can't photograph
- a thing that doesn't form a necessary part of the ecosystem
- a natural thing which could be used as a tool.
- thing that might be food for plants and animals
- something that won't be here in 100 years.

Be a poet

View a scene or natural object by yourself and write a cinquain poem of five lines – no rhyming is necessary!

the first line is one word as a title

the second line has two words describing the title

the third line has three words expressing some action

the fourth line has four words telling about some feeling you have about the subject

the fifth line has one word to sum up.

Compare your results with others – did you all write about the same subject?

Contrasts

Contrast what IS with what WAS or MIGHT BE at this spot.

Discuss with your group the following 'scenarios'.

- what happens here if the sea level rises
- if the temperature rises
- if the use of the adjacent area changes
- if the quality of its management increases
- if the quality of its management decreases.