



Understanding the Rewilding of Cape Cod Educator Guide

Unit 1: Timeline Activity

Day 1 – Rewilding of Cape Cod

Introduction – 10 minutes

As a class, watch the interview with Cape Cod photographer and naturalist, John J. King. In this video, John shares what Cape Cod looked like when he was growing up and compares it to the wild area he sees today. His personal reflection about the changes that have occurred over his lifetime, introduce the idea of rewilding. **Slide #3**

Video Reflection & Discussion – 10 minutes

Have students use the brainstorm sheet to document what they already knew, what they learned from the video, and what they want to know. **Slide #4**

- Guide students with the question, ‘How does this relate to the article from yesterday, where we learned from scientists that white sharks are increasing in numbers.’

Introduce Timeline Activity – 10 minutes

Explain to the students that to understand how the Cape got to where it is today, we need to understand the history of the region. We will be building a timeline of events to try and piece together the events that have led to the Cape being the wild area it is. **Slide #5**

As a class, students will be introduced to several events. After the class goes through some of the historical events, they will have time to do their own research about the events discussed, and to find their own events.

Students will be expected to then clean up and organize their timeline for grading.

See rubric and review rubric with students. **Slide #6**

How do we know if the event is relevant to our timeline or not? Ask these questions...
Slide #7

Begin Historical Events Discussion – 30 minutes

The events highlighted are meant to be a starting point for students. It will give them historical events that they can research further or use as jumping points to research further and find additional events.

Slides #8

1800s – Seal Bounties

Bounties were put into place in the mid 1800s which is when seal population numbers tanked. They were hunted before that and were commercially non-viable anymore to hunt because numbers were reduced, but not at the levels of the bounties. They were extirpated directly due to the bounties placed by states in the 1800s. It coincided with the all out exploitation of resources near the turn of the century (as fisheries and whales were also being decimated...) and caused the plummet in seal population numbers.

Slide #9

1857 – Henry Thoreau’s book, “Cape Cod” talks about the presence and fear of white sharks along the coast of Cape Cod

Slide #10

1936 – Earliest Known Fatal Shark Attack in Massachusetts

The incident took place in Mattapoisett and was believed to be a bite from a white shark.

1948 – This image shows a white shark that got caught in a weir fishing net outside of Barnstable Harbor.

(This photo allows us to understand that white

Slide #11

1961 – President John F Kennedy establishes the Cape Cod National Seashore

Slide #12

1965 – Seals became protected in the state of Massachusetts

Slide #13

1972 – The Marine Mammal Protection Act was passed by the Federal Government

Slide #14

1997 – White sharks became protected federally

2005 – White sharks became protected in the state of Massachusetts

Slide #15

2014 – White shark research begins to pick up off the coast of Cape Cod

Slide #16

2018 – Fatal white shark attack on human on Cape Cod

Slide #17

2022 – A collaborative research project produced preliminary results showing, the public is in support of sharing the ocean with animals that live there. [Learn more about this study here](#)

Homework

Students to read 'White Sharks Are Here to Stay in New England' article and re-watch John J King interview to pull information for their timeline project.

Day 2 – In Class Research

Allow students time to research and begin outlining their timeline. **Slide #19**

For Educators:

Use guiding questions that get your students to think about things outside of sharks and seals. If you are going to require students to include local historical events, this is where you can introduce an example of one.

- Steer them towards looking at the ecosystem as a whole
 - Fisheries related regulation (Magnuson Stevens Act)
- Encourage them to think about how the public engages with wildlife, learns to respect it/ admire it
 - Formation of aquariums
 - Development of ecotourism (whale watching, shark tours, etc.)
 - Animal rescue/ disentanglement
- You can make connections to climate change
- Look at local development
 - Waste water
 - Housing
 - Erosion issues

Exit Ticket – Submit one event, and a description about it, that is different from what was presented in class by the video or slide presentation.

Day 3 – Research and Begin to Share Out **Slide #20**

Provide students with the start of class to research further.

- During this time, you can review student work and check in one on one to evaluate student's progress.

Begin building a class timeline by looking to students to provide further content and information for the events that were discussed on Day 1.

- This timeline could be digital or on a bulletin board using large paper
 - Objective of the class timeline is for students to start seeing other historical events and to see and realize all of the different contributing factors that got us to where we are today
- Students can use this time to reinforce and strengthen some of their own facts for their individual timelines.

Day 4 – Students submit their timeline for grading

