



TIDEPOL DESTRUCTO

Theme: Tide pool Ecology & Ethics **Time:** 10- 20 minutes

Grades: K-6 (or families) **Optimal Group Size:** 15 – 50
(but will work for more or as few as 8)

Learning Objectives:

- Develop a basic understanding of various intertidal species
- Appropriate behaviour in the intertidal zone

Materials/Resources: None

Procedure:

Divide class up into groups to correspond to the different “characters” in the story. Have one student volunteer to be “Tidepool Destructo”, and the other groups will represent (1) Kelp (seaweed), (2) The Tide, (3) Barnacles, (4) Sea Stars, (5) Mussels, (6) Sculpins, (7) Anemones, and (8) Crabs (8 groups in all).

Give each group a couple of minutes to decide what their action will be to represent their creature (leaders can help with this). Some ideas are: Kelp can stand tall and sway. The tide swooshes in and out (like “the wave” with a loud swooshing noise). Barnacles can be on their backs, kicking their legs in the air to catch plankton. Sea Stars can make a star by spreading their arms and legs apart standing up. Mussels can be doing push-ups. Sculpins can dart around like little fish. Anemones can stand in a circle and sway their fingers around, as if they are feeding. And Crabs can crawl around in a crab walk position. Place the Sea Star and the Mussel groups next to each other (as they interact in the story). “Tidepool Destructo” should be instructed on his/her specific role (ie. Pretending to kick and be careless with the creatures, trying to take a crab, and taking a sea star with him/her at the end of the story).

Tell the group to listen to the story, and when they hear the name of their character, they should do the corresponding action. Read on and have fun!

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Once upon a time, not too long ago, in a **tide** pool near you, lived a colorful and diverse **tide** pool community. The creatures that lived there were content, but life was not always easy. Each day the **tide** came in and went out, and came in and went out again for a second time.

When the **tide** came in, the creatures came to life. **Mussels** did push-ups to ensure that they remained nice and strong so that they would be able to hold onto the rocks. The **sea stars** often got into fights with the **mussels** because they also liked living on the rocks. **Sea stars** were happy if they could out muscle a **mussel** and steal its home.

Then there were the **barnacles**. These silly creatures stood on their heads and kicked their feet in the currents to catch their food.

The **anemones**, bright green animals that looked like flowers, wiggled their sticky tentacles hoping that an unfortunate **crab** might fall into its grip and be the **anemone's** next lunch.

**Sculpins**, tiny fish, darted around looking for some fun.

Even the **kelp** waved gently in the incoming **tide**.

But six hours later the **tide** went out and all the intertidal creatures closed up and clamped down to conserve water. Now the animals had to survive heat, air, and rain. The **crabs** scamper about, looking for shelter under rocks or in cracks.

**Anemones** close up by pulling their flowery tentacles into a squishy blob. **Barnacles** hide inside their hard protective homes.

Even the **sculpins** settle at the bottom of the tide pool, waiting for the tide to come back in.

The **kelp** stops waving. There is no water to float in anymore.

Even the **mussels** and the **Sea Stars** hold still.

But there is something else the intertidal creatures have to protect themselves from: Tidepool Destructo! Tidepool Destructo was the horror of any **tide** pool. He usually struck at low **tides** and on sunny days.

He stomped on the **tide** pool rocks, squishing the poor **anemones** and crushing all the **barnacles** to their deaths. Tidepool Destructo took great pleasure in smashing **mussels** off the rocks and feeding his garbage to the **sculpins**. He loved turning over rocks in search of **crabs** and other wonderful critters but he never turned the rocks back over to the way he found them, so the **crabs** were left without a home.

Once Tidepool Destructo caught a **crab**, but this made the **crab** very crabby. He had an escape plan: he pinched Destructo, dropped his leg and ran away.

Destructo had had enough. He decided to go home, but not before ripping out some unlucky **kelp** and stealing a **sea star** from its rock and taking it home.

The **tide** eventually came back in, but that little **tide** pool, not so far from here, isn't quite the same.

**THE END**

Now...talk about how Tidepool Destucto could have been a Tidepool Protector...What could Tidepool Destructo have done differently?