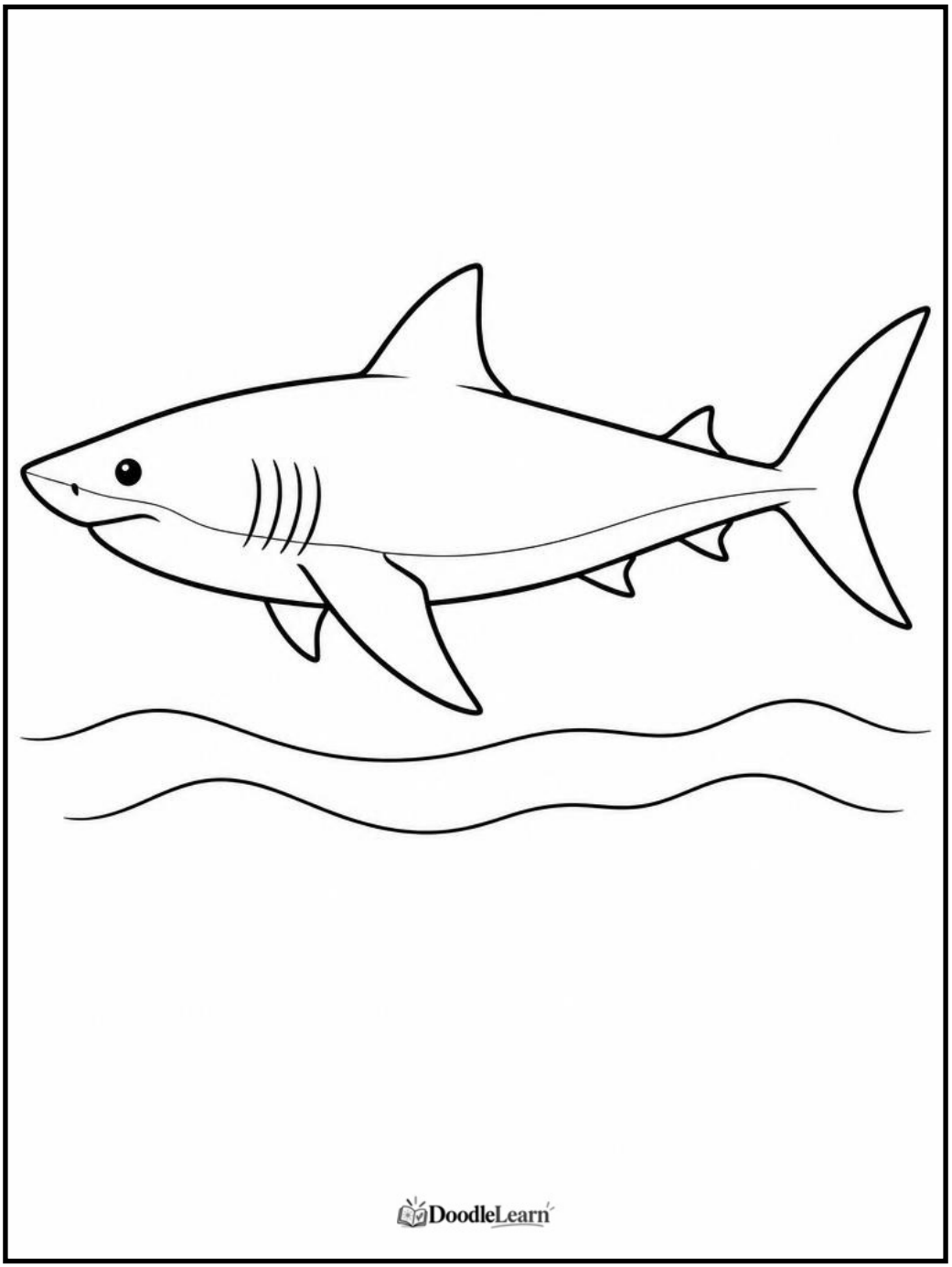
Sharks & Ocean Life

Learning Pack · Color It. Learn It. Explore It.

Ages 6–10 · Grades 1–4 (approximate) · Life Science / Marine Biology · 30–75 minutes

Name: _____



Inside: facts · vocabulary · label the shark · matching · quiz · answer key · notes

What you will learn

Learning objectives

- ☐ Explain why sharks are fish.
- ☐ Name and label six parts of a shark's body.
- ☐ Match shark body parts to the jobs they do.
- ☐ Describe how different sharks eat and live in different places.
- ☐ Explain why sharks are important for healthy oceans.

Five shark facts

Fact 1: Sharks are fish

Sharks are fish, not mammals. Like other fish, they live in water their whole lives and breathe with gills.

Fact 2: A skeleton of cartilage

A shark's skeleton is made of cartilage, the same bendy material in the tip of your nose and your ears. It is lighter than bone.

Fact 3: Breathing with gills

Sharks get oxygen from the water. Water flows over their gills, which take in the oxygen the shark needs.

Fact 4: Lots of different sharks

There are more than 500 kinds of sharks. Some are as small as your hand. The whale shark is the biggest fish of all, and it eats tiny plankton.

Fact 5: Ocean helpers

Many sharks are predators. By hunting other animals, they help keep ocean food webs healthy and in balance.

Sources (checked October 2026)

Facts 1–3: NOAA Fisheries, fisheries.noaa.gov/feature-story/12-shark-facts-may-surprise-you
Facts 1–2: NOAA Fisheries, fisheries.noaa.gov/fish-sharks
Facts 4–5: Smithsonian Ocean, ocean.si.edu/ocean-life/sharks-rays/sharks

Shark vocabulary

Cartilage	Strong, bendy material. A shark's skeleton is made of it.
Gills	Body parts that take oxygen out of the water so a fish can breathe.
Dorsal fin	The fin on a shark's back. It helps keep the shark steady.
Pectoral fin	One of the two side fins. They help the shark steer and lift.
Caudal fin	The tail fin. It swings side to side to push the shark forward.
Predator	An animal that hunts other animals for food.
Prey	An animal that is hunted and eaten by another animal.
Habitat	The natural home where an animal lives, like a coral reef.
Ecosystem	All the living things in a place and how they depend on each other.

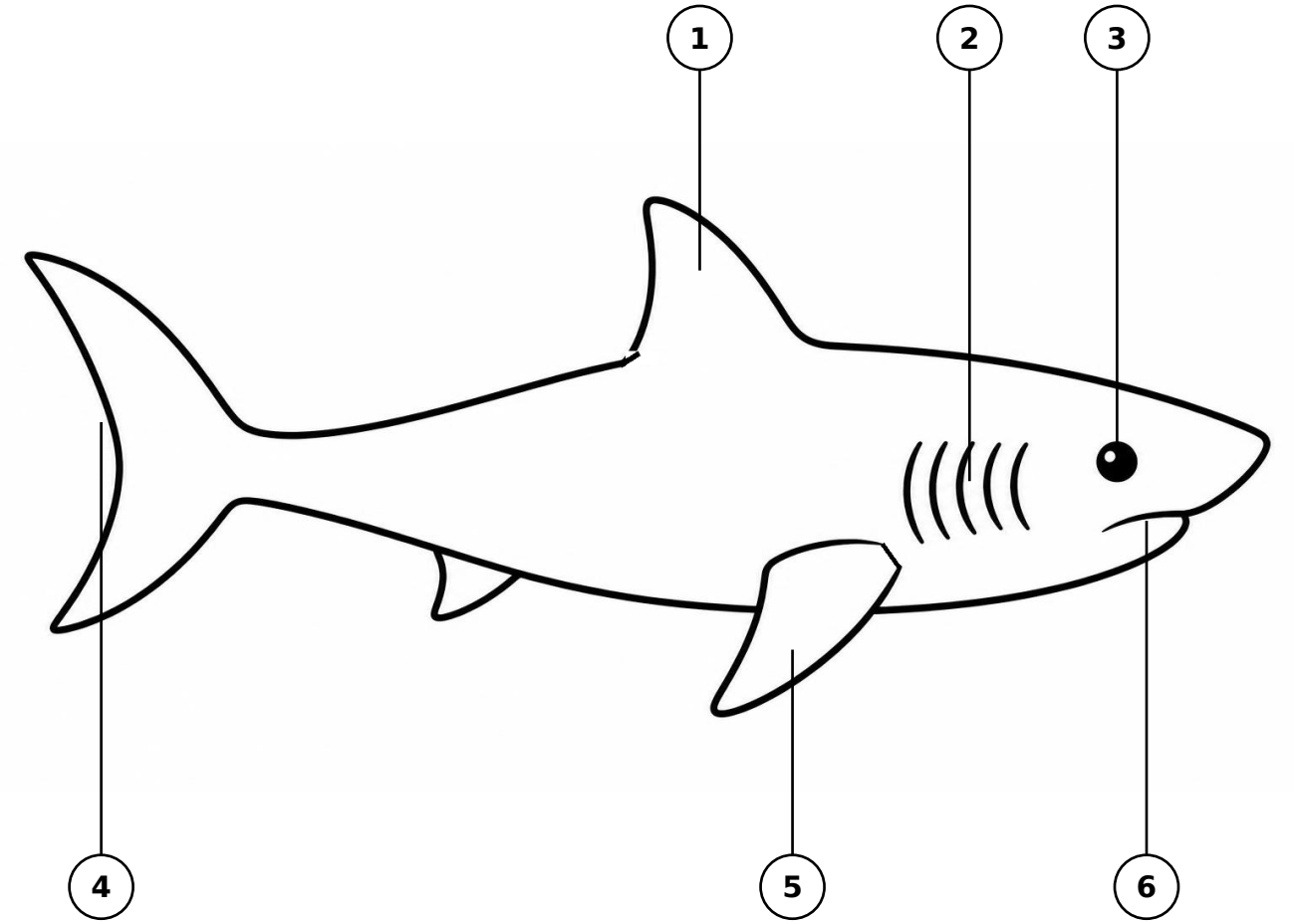
Your turn: write a sentence using one of the new words.

Label the shark

Name: _____ Date: _____

This is one kind of shark. Different sharks have different shapes, but most have these parts. Write each word from the word bank on the line with the matching number.

eye · mouth · gill slits
dorsal fin · pectoral fin · caudal fin (tail)



1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

5. _____ 6. _____

What helps a shark survive?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Draw a line from each body part to the job it does.

Gills	○	○ Pushes the shark through the water
Dorsal fin	○	○ Take in oxygen from the water
Tail	○	○ Catch or hold food (shapes differ by species)
Teeth	○	○ Help steer and give lift
Pectoral fins	○	○ Keeps the shark steady so it does not roll

Draw a shark in its ocean habitat. Add one other animal that lives there:

Shark quiz

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Sharks are a kind of...

- ◯ a) mammal
- ◯ b) fish
- ◯ c) reptile

2. What is cartilage?

- ◯ a) Strong, bendy material in a shark's skeleton
- ◯ b) A kind of shark food
- ◯ c) A fin on the shark's back

3. How do sharks get oxygen?

- ◯ a) They breathe air at the surface
- ◯ b) They use their gills
- ◯ c) They get it from their food

4. What does a shark's dorsal fin help with?

- ◯ a) Keeping the shark steady
- ◯ b) Eating
- ◯ c) Seeing

5. Why are sharks important to the ocean?

- ◯ a) They make the water salty
- ◯ b) They help keep food webs in balance
- ◯ c) They make waves

Bonus: Why is it important to protect sharks and their ocean habitats?

Answer key

Label the shark

1. dorsal fin
2. gill slits
3. eye
4. caudal fin (tail)
5. pectoral fin
6. mouth

What helps a shark survive?

Gills	→ Take in oxygen from the water
Dorsal fin	→ Keeps the shark steady so it does not roll
Tail	→ Pushes the shark through the water
Teeth	→ Catch or hold food (shapes differ by species)
Pectoral fins	→ Help steer and give lift

Shark quiz

1. b) fish
2. a) Strong, bendy material in a shark's skeleton
3. b) They use their gills
4. a) Keeping the shark steady
5. b) They help keep food webs in balance

Bonus (sample answer): Sharks help keep ocean food webs healthy. If too many sharks disappear, other animals can grow out of balance. Protecting their habitats keeps the whole ocean healthier for every animal, including people.

Teacher and parent notes

Who it is for

Ages 6–10 (about grades 1–4). Younger children can do the coloring and vocabulary pages with help reading.

Time

30–75 minutes, depending on the activities selected. Use two or three pages for a short lesson, or the full pack across two lessons.

Suggested order

1) Read the facts aloud (10 min). 2) Vocabulary (10 min). 3) Label the shark (10 min). 4) Matching and habitat drawing (15 min). 5) Quiz (10 min). 6) Color a sheet from the free Sharks collection (10+ min).

Compare two sharks

Whale shark: the biggest fish, can grow over 12 meters (40 feet); swims slowly and filters tiny plankton from the water. Great white shark: often about 4–6 meters (13–20 feet); a fast top predator that hunts fish, seals and other animals. Ask: How are their diets different? Which one has big, sharp teeth? Why?

Discussion questions

Why do sharks need gills? How is a shark's skeleton different from yours? What would happen to a reef if all the sharks were gone?

Extension for older students

Pick one shark species. Find its size, habitat and diet, and make a fact card. Compare it with a classmate's shark.

A note on the pictures

The labeling drawing shows one typical shark shape; the number of gill slits and fin shapes differ between species. Keep the tone curious, not scary — most sharks are no danger to people.

Matching coloring pages

doodlelearn.com/coloring-pages/sharks