



Productive Plankton: Grades 5 and up

The word plankton comes from the Greek word “planktos” meaning to wander. Plankton creates 80% of the world’s atmospheric oxygen every day. It is the bottom of the food chain and therefore some of the most important plants and animals in the ocean. Plankton is a key player in the carbon cycle and Global Warming.

What to expect:

- Students play the Meroplankton Match Up game.
- In Plankton Races, students will “build” their own plankton and race each other.
- Students will collect plankton (this can be a dry or wet activity), prepare slides and view the plankton under microscopes.

What to wear and bring:

- Bathing suit or other clothes to get wet (weather permitting).
- Shoes to get wet (old tennis shoes -not sandals are recommended).
- Bring a towel to class.
- This can also be a dry activity.

Key Words to Review with Your Students:

- Plankton
- Zooplankton
- Phytoplankton
- Autotroph
- Heterotroph
- Photosynthesis

