

# AQUADEMY LESSON 2: FISH FAMILIES

There are so many fish in the sea!  
To make them easier to study scientists have divided them into groups called **FAMILIES**, based on their characteristics.

1

## W.O.W

Look at the tank on the left (on the same side as the photo booth). In this tank is a group of fish called Trigger Fish that can be identified by their oval shaped bodies and far set fins.



### TASK:

Find the Vampire Trigger Fish and the Picasso Trigger Fish. They are both trigger fish, but they are different. List a similarity and difference between these 2 fish from the same family.

2

## SHIPWRECK



One of our favorite families of fish live here Pufferfish!! There are many types of pufferfish in the world, 3 different types can be found in this room. They are characterized by their round bodies and unique defensive spines.

### TASK:

Using the following descriptions, try to identify each species of pufferfish.

- Find the dogface pufferfish (dark brown and has teeth)
- Find the porcupine pufferfish (large with pokey spines)
- Find the burr fish (small with distinctive 'eyebrows')

3

# THE DOME



Some families can be divided into smaller families. Tortoises and turtles together make a family called Testudines. The turtle family can be broken down into even smaller families- freshwater turtles (terrapins) or salt water turtles (sea turtles.) 6 different species of fresh water turtles live at the aquarium.

**TASK:**  
Look at these pictures and list some ways you could describe each species if you were trying to tell it apart from the others.

Common Snapping Turtle



Red Earred Slider



Alligator Snapping Turtle



Common Snapping Turtle

Alligator Snapping Turtle

Red Earred Slider

4

# SHORELINE



In some fish families, family members look nothing alike! Sea Stars, Sea Cucumbers, and Urchins are all in the same family even though they look really different! One characteristic they all have in common are **TUBE FEET**! These help animals in this family walk around, hold onto rocks, and smell!



**TASK:**

Ask an educator to point out the tube feet on a Sea Star or Sea Urchin for you.

5

## THE CAVE

Sometimes animals can look very similar and not be related at all! Can you find the Moray eels in the cave? These are true eels, but the aquarium is also home to a type of fish called a Wolf eel! Even though both animals are called eels, only one actually belongs to that family.

**TASK:** Using the pictures can you spot the differences between the two animals?



6 THE TUNNEL



**TASK:** Using the chart below, make observations to see if the two sharks are related. Ask an Educator for help if you get stuck.

Characteristics	Zebra Shark	Grey Reef Shark
Must swim all the time		
Has 5 gills		
Spiracles (Help a shark breathe-located on either side behind the eyes)		
Has a dorsal fin		

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## CONTACT COVE

**DID YOU KNOW** that stingrays are closely related to sharks?! Both have:

- Bodies made of cartilage (the same material your nose and ears are made of)
- A secret superpower called **ELECTRORECEPTION** (meaning they can detect electricity)



**TASK:** How do you think these animals use Electroreception? Do you think sharks and rays use it differently?



## SUBMARINE

The submarine is home to some of the aquarium's strangest and most interesting creatures- **Corals and Jellyfish!** While somewhat plantlike they are animals, belonging to a group called cnidarians (pronounced 'nid-air-e-ans'). We know they're animals because they are **CONSUMERS**, meaning they eat their own food. Plants are **PRODUCERS** and make their own food.

**TASK:** Using the information you just learned are the following organisms producers or consumers?  
Tree, Shark, Alligator, Flower, Fish



**Final Test!** Take this mini quiz to test your knowledge!

**Why do scientists group animals together?**

- A. To tell them apart
- B. To make them easier to study
- C. Because it's fun

**How are stingrays related to sharks?**

- A. They both have bodies made of cartilage and electroreception
- B. They both have sharp teeth and eat fish
- C. They're both grey

**Which of the following is a producer?**

- A. Coral
- B. Tree
- C. Shark

**What do scientists look at to group animals together?**

- A. Their characteristics
- B. Their colors
- C. Where they live

**What characteristics do sea stars, sea cucumbers, and sea urchins share?**

- A. They breathe air
- B. Where they live
- C. Tube Feet

**Which of the following is a consumer?**

- A. Flower
- B. Fish
- C. Tree

**You have completed Lesson 2: Fish Families!**