Activities

The Magic School Bus Takes a Dive

Grades: PreK–K, 1–2, 3–5

Overview
Children learn about the importance of cooperation as they play a survival game about life in a coral reef.

Field Trip Notes
When Wanda finds out that one of Ms. Frizzle’s ancestors was Redbeard the Pirate, she naturally wants to follow the treasure map he left. The map leads them to a coral reef, and the kids find out firsthand that life here is risky. To survive, some plants and animals sometimes form the most surprising partnerships. But Wanda’s not interested in partnerships. She just wants to find that treasure. To get the kids in the swim of things, Ms. Frizzle turns them into different sea creatures, and Wanda-Anemone, Wanda-
Shrimp, and then Wanda-Remora begins to understand that partnerships are more important than she thought.

**Tied Together**
*Time*: 20 minutes  
*Group Size*: 2

Wanda thinks she can reach the treasure alone, but she soon learns that survival on the coral reef often depends on cooperation. Your kids find out how partners can help run a race.

**What You Need**
For each student:
- 4- or 5-foot scarf or cloth strip for each pair
- Clock with second hand
- Copies of TIED TOGETHER page

**Talk About It**
Ask: Why do we cooperate with each other? Does cooperation benefit you?  
Ask: Do wild animals live in our community? Which ones? Why might they want to live here?

**What To Do**
1) Ask: Are humans the only ones who cooperate? Why might coral reef animals become partners? (Cooperation benefits one or both.)
2) Mark “Start” and “Finish” lines on a racecourse. The finish line is the safety of the reef. Place the clock for all to see.
3) Set the scene: Imagine you are a coral reef critter, with only one leg. A big, HUNGRY fish is chasing you. You must get to the reef to hide. Can you make it in time?

4) Round 1: Kids hop on one leg down the racecourse. Yell the time for Start, and have them time themselves to the finish.

5) Ask: Could you run faster with more legs? For Round 2, pair kids of similar heights and abilities. Help them tie ankles together - left ankle of one to right ankle of other. They cannot communicate, but they must not drag the other. Let pairs time themselves down the course.

6) Ask: Could you run faster if partners cooperated? For Round 3, let pairs plan how to coordinate three-legged movements.

7) Ask: Could cooperation help partners survive?

Subjects:

Cooperation and Teamwork, Fish and Marine Life, Habitats and Ecosystems, Science, Oceans, Lakes, Rivers, Plants, Observation, Animal Adaptation
Big, FAST hungry fish are chasing you to the safety of the coral reef. Can cooperation help you survive, or will you be fish food?

**What to Do:**

**ROUND 1**

Hop down the racecourse on one leg. Time yourself.

**ROUND 2**

Will another leg get you to safety faster? Tie ankles with your partner. Do not communicate in any way. Race for the reef.

**ROUND 3**

That’s not fast enough! Plan with your partner how to get to the reef faster—with your legs still tied together! Then test your plan and race to safety.

**Take-Home Challenge:**

Do you have a pet? Ask your family: What are three ways your pet benefits you? How do you benefit your pet?