

SC Aquarium Public Program Worksheet

(Adapted from NAI, *Certified Interpretive Guide Training workbook*)

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Program Title: Fishing for Answers (Q&A Dive Show)

Theme: The Great Ocean Tank spawns many questions amongst our visitors, and this is a great opportunity to “fish for answers” about the GOT with our expert divers.

Audience: General public: adults, families, school groups, locals, and tourists

Goals:

- Allow visitors to ask their very own questions about the Great Ocean Tank
- For our divers to answer the questions that our audience asks
- Encourage audience participation in a fun and interactive way

Objectives:

- Guests will submit at least two questions to the inbox/board before the show starts.
- Guests will be able to name two ways the volunteer divers help take care of the exhibit and the animals in it.
- Guests will be able to recall 2 of the feeding methods the volunteer divers use to feed the animals.
- Guests will learn at least one thing they can do to help wildlife in our oceans.

How will you measure your objectives?

- By the audience reaction. Do they smile, laugh, leave the show, etc.?
- 60% of audience stays for entire show.
- Look at the inbox/board to see how many people wrote questions.
- 1- 3 additional questions will be asked by the audience at the end of the show.

Materials Needed: (if using submission box)

- Check inbox for submitted questions
- Fishing rod
- Bowl with questions in them
- Props from dive show bin (educators choice)
- Microphone

Materials Needed: (if using the portable white board)

- Check the board for questions written by guests.
- Dive show props (educators choice)
- Bowl (optional)
- Microphone

PROGRAM OUTLINE**Introduction:**

Welcome guests to the SCA, introduce yourself and ask the audience where they're from. Has anyone here ever gone fishing before? Today we are going to be "fishing for answers" to questions that you, the audience, have submitted about the GOT. Then introduce the diver and ask them a question (ex. How is the weather in the GOT today?). Explain to the audience how we will be fishing for answers (using the fishing rod to "catch" the questions in the bowl, just pulling questions out, or using the board that people have written questions on).

**If using the white board, you can either pick the questions that you think are best or you can write your favorite questions on the fish and keep using the "fishing for answers" method. Be creative! 😊

Body

The information that is discussed during the show can vary greatly depending on what questions are submitted by the audience/other visitors ahead of time. Education will have 5 common questions prepared ahead of time in case we need to use them. These questions are:

- 1) How big is this tank?
- 2) How much water can this tank hold?
- 3) How many animals live in the tank?
- 4) Do the animals in the tank eat each other?
- 5) Is the diver afraid of the sharks?

It would be good to review the white board on the third floor of the GOT and/or other dive show write ups for information about the Great Ocean Tank. Listed below are some facts that will help answer most of the questions that will be submitted by guest.

- **How many animals live in the tank:** We have around 550 animals that live in the GOT. These animals represent around 40 different species that we would find off the coast of South Carolina.

- **Size of the tank:** Have the diver mention briefly the dimensions of the exhibit (depth: 42 feet, width from window to back: 40 feet, width from side to side: 50 feet) and how much water it holds (385,000 gallons). Have the diver discuss the three different marine habitats represented in the tank: Shallow reef habitat, deep reef habitat, and the deep, open ocean.
- **Number of Sharks:** There are a total of 11 sharks inside the GOT representing 5 different species. The sharks in our tank are Blacknose, Blacktip, Nurse, Sandbar and Sand Tiger.
- **Window thickness:** Bring a volunteer from the audience up to give the diver a high five. Have the diver give the thickness of the window (18 inches). Explain how acrylic holds water back, but doesn't magnify and distort like glass, so the diver looks relatively normal to the audience and the audience looks relatively normal to the diver. All of the animals in the tank are true to size because of this.
- **Cleaning:** Mention one of the reasons we can see the diver is because the water is so clean. Ask the diver where the water comes from (Answer: The Cooper River. It is collected and filtered in the basement before entering the GOT. Once in the GOT, it is continuously being filtered.) Ask the diver what else they do to clean the exhibit and how often they do it. Have them talk about cleaning while you show the scrub brushes to the audience. Feeding 60 lbs. of food a day to this tank creates a lot of waste.. what goes in must come out! Have the audience give the diver a round of applause for all of the hard work that they do.. for FREE! 😊
- **Diver fears:** One question the audience may ask is which animal in the tank would the diver be the most afraid of. They'll probably think it would be the sharks. Ask the diver if this is the case and have them talk about other animals in the tank that are more territorial or naturally curious, such as the Bermuda Chub, Sergeant Majors, and Caretta, our Loggerhead Sea Turtle. This can also be a great segway into talking about how we feed the sharks and other animals in the tank.
- **Feeding:** Depending on the questions that are submitted you can discuss only one feeding method or all of them. Have the diver talk a little bit about preparing food and how we have 6 different feeding methods for the all of the animals –
 - broadcast and target feeding for the large, predatory fish near the surface
 - Sea turtle pulled off exhibit (put in a large crate) and fed with tongs
 - PVC pipes to feed our nocturnal moray eel
 - Use long blue tongs to feed salmon and mackerel to our 11 sharks

- Use yellow chum buckets to release food in our rocky reef and deeper parts of the tank. Chum includes shrimp, krill, smelt, squid, and mackerel.
- **Conservation message:** Our Great Ocean Tank is very clean thanks to the work of our volunteer divers, but that is not the case in the natural ocean. Unfortunately, trash (marine debris) is often found in the ocean and can harm animals. Hold up the bag and ask the audience what animal it could look like (jellyfish). Ask the diver what animal in the GOT might eat it (sea turtle) and what could happen if they do (tangled up, choke, starve, etc.). Encourage the audience to always throw their trash away properly, recycle whenever possible, and use reusable bags instead of plastic. *Or* you can discuss Good Catch program and discuss the importance of the choices we make when purchasing seafood. Good Catch cards should be offered for restaurant suggestions and to support the program. Bring a small stack to hand out to the audience.

Conclusion:

Restate theme. Encourage the audience to ask any additional questions they may have about the tank while they have access to a diver and an educator. Thank the audience for coming to the aquarium and for hanging out with us. Let them know the time of the next show and that you will be sticking around for questions after the show. 😊