

Fishing Bait



Life Skill: Communication

Project Skill: Learning which baits and lures attract fish

Objective: Collect, draw, or make different types of baits and lures, and learn their effectiveness in attracting fish

Success Indicator: Participants display various types of fishing baits and lures and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each

Provisions Needed

- Jars or cages for keeping live bait, and appropriate food for the live bait
- Camera and film
- Material for constructing artificial lures
- Art supplies such as paper, paint, markers, or pens
- Fish field guides (see Suggested Reading)



Trailhead

Do you get excited when a fish tugs at the end of your line? If so, you aren't alone. Fishing is one of the most popular sports in America. Most everyone has a "fishing hole" near their home—whether it's a creek, pond, lake, or the ocean. Fishing can be as simple as using a cane pole, a line, a cork, and a hook baited with a worm. But you can have more fun and success if you learn as much as possible about the diets and habits of a wide variety of fish. The fisherman who knows how to make a lure attractive to a hungry predator usually will catch more fish.



Trailblazing

Consider what types of food that fish in your area like to eat. You might interview a local fisherman, or angler, about what baits that person uses to attract different species. Collect five to 10 different natural fish baits. Some natural fish baits may be rare or difficult to locate, while others may be hard to keep alive in a jar or cage. In these cases, use photographs of the bait or create a replica. Then, collect an equal number of different types of artificial fishing lures. If the artificial lures are too expensive, try drawing each on paper or making a version using material from around your home. Display and present the baits and lures to a school group or 4-H club. Include the following information in your presentation:

- Where and how did you find the various natural baits?
- What natural bait does each artificial lure imitate?



Making a lure attractive to a hungry predator will catch more fish.



18 U.S.C. 707

Fishing Bait



- What kind of fish would bite the natural and artificial baits?
- Where would you fish with each natural and artificial bait?
- How would you offer the various baits and lures to the fish?
- What fishing equipment would be required to fish with each bait or lure?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of natural and artificial baits?



Field Guide

You can catch fish using a simple setup like a **cane or fiberglass** pole with a line attached to the tip. However, rod and reel combinations offer more options for catching a variety of species and bigger fish. Three primary types of rod and reel techniques include bait casting, fly casting, and spin casting.

Bait casting works best with fairly heavy baits or lures and is used mainly to catch larger fish like largemouth bass and catfish. Bait casting rods are relatively stiff. The weight of the lure pulls the line from the reel during casting. The reel contains a revolving spool that releases and winds the line.



Fly casting is the oldest way of catching fish with mechanical tackle. The fly reel differs from other reel types because it does not operate during the cast. When casting, the angler removes the line from the reel by hand. The weight of the line carries the lightweight lure to the target spot. The line is retrieved by hand or with the reel.

Spin casting or “spinning” bridges the gap between bait casting and fly fishing. Spinning rods are less stiff than bait casters, can cast lighter lures, and can be used for all sizes of fish. A spinning reel winds the fishing line around a stationary spool. As with bait casting, the weight of the lure pulls the line from the reel during the cast.



Suggested Reading

- Page, Lawrence M., and Brooks M. Burr. *A Field Guide to Freshwater Fishes: North America North of Mexico* (Peterson Field Guide Series). Boston: Houghton Mifflin. 1991.
- Zim, Herbert, and Hurst H. Shoemaker. *Fishes: A Guide to Fresh and Salt-Water Species* (The Golden Guide Series). New York: St. Martin's Press. 2001.

Fishing Bait



SHARE

The Extra Mile

Have a casting contest with your friends. For a target, use a tire or piece of rope laid in a circle. Begin casting with the target 20 feet away.

Have each participant cast 5 to 10 times. Then move the target 5 to 10 feet farther away and have each participant try again. Continue to move the target until no one can reach it. Record the number of times the target was hit by each participant at each distance. Create a table or figure that displays the number of accurate casts at each distance. Use the table or figure during a presentation to your class or 4-H group. Explain how casting accuracy and methods of casting changed as the target was moved farther away.

Field Notes

- Which natural bait was the most difficult to find? Why?
- Which artificial lures were hardest to make? Most fun?
- How did you arrange and label the baits and lures to make it easier for the audience to follow along during your presentation?
- If you interviewed a fisherman, what useful information did you collect for your presentation?

PROCESS

- Which baits and lures would you expect to catch the most fish? Why?
- Would a fish be easier to catch with the natural or artificial baits? Why?
- How did you decide the best way to store natural baits?
- Why is it sometimes as important to show as it is to tell?
- What would you do differently if you had to make a presentation to your school or 4-H club again?

GENERALIZE

- Why is it important to present a bait or a lure in a manner that resembles the prey of the fish species you are trying to catch?
- How is communicating to an audience similar to fishing? How is it different?

APPLY

- How could the things you learned during your presentation help you in your daily activities at home or school?