



## Fish

### Before Your Visit:

- Tell your students you will be visiting ECHO and explain that ECHO is a museum where they can play and learn about Lake Champlain and the animals that live in and around the lake.
- Create a list of "I wonder..." questions to ask a museum staff member during your field trip. Many children wonder if they will see a shark at ECHO.
- Read *A Good Day's Fishing* by James Prosek and add any new questions to the I wonder list that might be inspired by the book. One question might be, I wonder what fish we will see at ECHO? Or I wonder what the biggest fish at ECHO is?

### While You're at ECHO:

- Go on a fish scavenger hunt! Click on the provided link to see and print the ECHO Fish Scavenger Hunt or ask for one at the front desk when you arrive.
- Below is a list, fun fact and a quick description of where to find some of the fish that live at ECHO. The starred fish are the fish that also appear in the book, *A Good Day's Fishing*.
- Here are some places in ECHO to look for fish:
  - Visit the large fish aquarium on the 1st floor ***Into the Lake*** exhibit room. Here you will find:
    - Lake Sturgeon - Lake Sturgeon are the biggest fish at ECHO and the biggest fish that swims in Lake Champlain. They are an endangered species in Lake Champlain and must be released if caught while fishing.
    - \*Largemouth Bass - Largemouth like to hide under things like docks or tree branches that grow over the waters edge. How can you tell the difference between a large mouth bass and a small mouth bass? The largemouth bass has a mouth that extends past its eye.



- Catfish - Catfish have whiskers! Scientists call fish whiskers barbels and they are used to find food on the bottom of the lake. Barbels have taste buds on them like the ones on your tongue.
- Visit the aquarium on the **Mezzanine**, ECHO's small 2nd floor. Here you will find:
  - \*American Eel - The American Eels that live in Lake Champlain make a very long journey out into the ocean through the Saint Lawrence Seaway in Canada down along the east coast to the Sargasso Sea to lay their eggs.
  - Longnose Gar - The longnose gar has a long snout with hundreds of needle shaped teeth that are good at capturing little fish. Gars are ancient fish and lived long ago when the dinosaurs were still around.
- Visit the **Land of Opportunity Exhibit** on ECHO's top floor just outside of the entrance of Champ Lane. Here you will find:
  - \*Yellow Perch - Yellow Perch are popular fish to catch because of their mild and slightly sweet flavor. They can be caught year round in Lake Champlain.
  - \*Pumpkinseed - Pumpkinseed are part of a group of fish called panfish because they are good to eat and small enough to fit nicely in a pan. They have a bright red or orange spot on their gill cover.
  - \*Brook Trout - Brook Trout are Vermont's state fish. Fisherman sometimes call them "brookies" or "square tails".
- Visit **Champ Lane** and encourage the students to try their hand at fishing from the sailboat where you will find fishing poles, magnetic fish, and fishing vests.



## Back at School:

### 1. Dramatic Play - Fishing

- Create a pond or lake using a tablecloth or sheet and place magnetized fish, turtles, frogs, ducks, old boot etc. around in the lake.
- Children fish from the edge, a dock (constructed by blocks or a doormat) or a boat (a laundry basket). Give students a bucket in which to collect their catch.
- Children use a fishing pole with a magnet on the end to catch fish while trying to avoid catching the other items in the lake.



### 2. Craft - Fishy Scales

- Make copies of a fish outline.
- Cut toilet paper tubes in half along their long length.
- Prepare several plates with small amounts of different colored paint.
- Children can dip the ends of the halved tubes in paint and then stamp scales onto the body of the fish.

