

ABC's & 123's OF BOWFISHING

ACTIVITY
A

Learning Objective

Students are introduced to the basic bowfishing equipment and the different fish species that are connected to this life-long sport.

Activity Time

30-40 minutes

Materials List

- Computer with internet access
- Copy of the Oklahoma Fishing Guide (state fishing regulations)
- Pen
- Paper

BACKGROUND

Bowfishing is a fun and effective way to capture fish for eating. It is also a great life long activity that many across the country enjoy doing as a physical activity to stay active in the outdoors. Anyone who is already into archery will quickly fall in love with bowfishing. The skills someone has obtained either from shooting a bow for sport or hunting can be transferred easily into bowfishing.

For those who primarily use a bow for hunting, bowfishing can be a great way to stay active with archery through the summer when hunting seasons are closed.

Bowfishing is also an exciting opportunity for someone new to archery to quickly get involved. Many anglers have found a new passion in archery when they started bowfishing.



BOWFISHING

BACKGROUND *continued*

The equipment associated with bowfishing can appear at first to be overwhelming, but in reality it's nothing more than a bow with a fishing reel and line.

Bowfishing has specific regulations associated with it that differ from regular fishing regulations or hunting regulations.

When done correctly and in a safe manner bowfishing can be a lifelong activity, and something you can pass on to future generations.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is bowfishing?
2. How long has bow fishing been around?
3. Where can I bow fish?
4. When can I bow fish?
5. What type of fish can I bowfish?
6. What is the biggest species of fish that I can bowfish?
7. Do I need a fishing or hunting license?
8. What is special about a bowfishing arrow?
9. Will any bow work for bowfishing?
10. Do I use broadheads?
11. How do I get or retrieve the arrow and the fish?
12. Do I have to have a boat to bow fish?



BOWFISHING ARROW REST



BOWFISHING REEL SEAT



BOWFISHING REEL SEAT

HIGH AND DRY BOWFISHING

ACTIVITY
B

Learning Objective

The student will develop an understanding of bowfishing, different equipment involved and the aspect of this unique form of archery.

Activity Time

45 - 50 minutes

Materials List

- 1 - 3 bows **
- 10 arrows and quiver
- 5 - 10 bottles or balloons **
- Duct tape and/or construction paper
- Dark colored markers

**Educator Note: Provide various types of bows, but be sure to include the Genesis bow that will be used with bowfishing in later activities.

Use different bottle or balloon sizes to simulate that fish are not all the same size.

BACKGROUND

Bow fishing is a hunting method that has been around since prehistoric time. Bowfishing is the combination of archery and fishing. Even though bowfishing has been around for centuries, the sport's popularity has grown to new heights in the past two decades. With a growing number of new archers who are looking for more opportunities to shoot their bows, bowfishing gives them year around opportunities to do just that.



BOWFISHING

Getting Ready

- Collect 5-10 bottles (assorted sizes)
- Take tape and wrap the bottles completely. You may also use construction paper to cover the bottles.
- Using markers, put points on each bottle. The smaller the bottle, the more points it is worth. (points 5, 10, 15, 25, etc).
- You can also use balloons if you do not have bottles. Using different sized balloons, put points on each balloon. Again, the smaller the balloon the more points it is worth.
- You will need two or more bows and ten arrows.
- Locate an area outside that is appropriate and safe for the activity. You will be shooting downward, into the ground. (Don't use a hard surface). Spread the bottles on their sides. Let the students take turns shooting at the bottles. They have to stick into the bottle to earn the points. You can play individually or as teams.
- Have the student shoot from an elevated area. This gives the aspect of shooting from a boat. (You can use bleachers, benches, a bridge, or off a tailgate of a truck.)

PROCEDURES

1. Explain to students when bowfishing, your targets will vary in size and distance.
2. Show them the different types of bows and equipment.
3. Have students take turns shooting at the bottles.
4. After all of the students have shot, divide them into teams.
5. Have each team shoot five arrows per person while keeping score.

ADAPTION

- You can vary the size of the target as well as the distance based on the skill level of your students.

WHAT FISH? THAT FISH!

ACTIVITY
C

Learning Objective

Students will develop an understanding of which fish in their state are legal to bowfish, and the difference in game fish and non-game fish.

Activity Time

45 - 50 minutes

Materials List

- Cardboard (old boxes or large section of cardboard).**
- Markers of all colors, to outline and decorate the fish. Crayons will also work.
- Glue, to place fish photos on cut out.
- Scissors to cut out the fish shape on the cardboard.
- Computer with online access to research fish species.

**Educator Note: You may want to have the fish pre-cut to save time and for safety reasons. If a wood shop is available you could also have them pre-cut fish from plywood.

BACKGROUND

One important part of bowfishing is being able to identify fish species. Anyone who fishes with a bow needs to know what species is legal to fish or harvest. Just like using a bow for an animal such as a deer, elk or turkey you need to be able to identify your target before you take the shot.

The first step in accomplishing this is to practice identifying fish species, and knowing which ones are legal to bowfish and which aren't.

Knowing the shape and features of a fish will help to ensure proper identification, even when the fish is submerged in murky water. Understanding the importance of fish identification is key to becoming an ethical and responsible bowfisher.



Being able to identify a fish from a dorsal (top) view is a key skill to have.

PROCEDURES

1. Divide the students up into teams of two or three person teams.
2. Explain to the students that only non-game fish are legal to bow fish in your state. The students must make a list of five non-game fish in their state. They also must make a list of five game fish in their state. The students can use their state fishing regulations or do an online search on the computer to find these fish and what they look like.
3. Have each team pick three non-game fish and one game fish. They must draw the outline of those fish. They need to pay close attention to body shape fin shape and placement on the body, in addition to shape of the head.
4. After the fish are drawn, on the cardboard, the students will need to cut them out.
5. The students will now color and draw on these cut outs to make them look just like the real thing. The students also have the choice to print out pictures of the fish and glue them on the cut outs.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the difference between a game fish and a non-game fish?
2. Name five non-game fish.
3. Name five game fish.
4. What resource did you use to find out what fish species are legal to bowfish? Where can you obtain this resource?
5. Why is it important to be able to properly identify a fish species before you take a shot?

Getting Ready

Collect copies of the most recent **Oklahoma Fishing Guide** or access the Fishing Guide online at <http://www.wildlifedepartment.com>.

The **Oklahoma Fishing Guide** will provide information on regulations for bowfishing, and assist with fish ID of some fish.

This will help to emphasize the importance of being responsible and ethical when it comes to bowfishing.

BOWFISHING DOWN UNDER

ACTIVITY
D

Learning Objective

Students develop an understanding on how water and the depth of water will change the point of aim.

Activity Time

45 - 50 minutes

Materials List

- Trotline or small rope 100 ft long.
- Ten 3 ft. long pieces of kite string.
- 8 - 10 wooden cut outs of fish.
- 8 - 10 I bolts.
- Four 5 lb. weights.
- Two bows with reels on them.
- Two bow fishing arrows.
- Two arrow blunts.
- Pond, swimming pool or stock tank.

Educator Note: Shooting stations should be made of PVC pipe. 1 or 2 in. pipe with 2 - 4 ft. section and 1- 6 ft. section. 4 ft. section, 2 elbows and 2 t-fitting. If you are going to have more than one shooting station it will require more material.

BACKGROUND

Fish are under water, and looking at something in water can be deceiving on size and the exact location of the object. In the case of bowfishing knowing where to aim is crucial to ensure success.

In water, an object will appear to be in a different location that it actually is. This is caused by the refraction of light. Refraction results from the bending of light as it travels through two different mediums, in this case, water and air.

This is important to consider when bowfishing. Refracted light affects perception of the target's location, the archer must aim low to hit the fish.



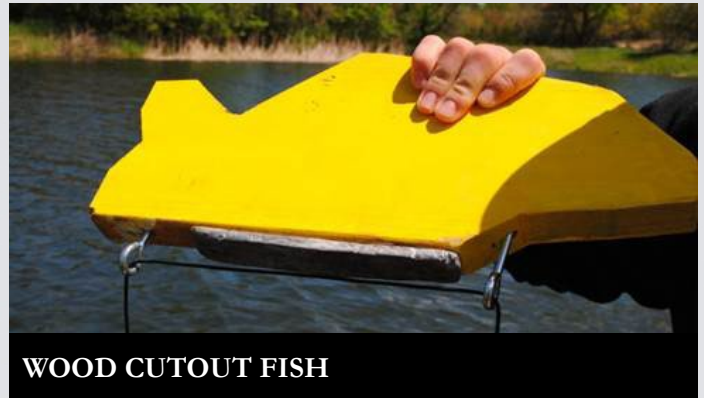
DEPTH PERCEPTION

PROCEDURES

1. Connect the short (3 ft.) line to your trotline or rope. Make sure the lines are 2 ft. apart from each other. Screw the I-screw in the bottom of the wooden fish. This is where you will connect the other end of the short line too.
2. Connect the ten 3 ft. pieces of kite string to the trotline or rope. Make sure the strings are 2 ft. or more apart on the rope.
3. Now, screw the I-bolt into the bottom of the wooden fish.
4. Connect the other end of the kite string to the I-bolt.
5. Connect the 5 lb. weights about every 15 ft.
6. Put the blunt arrow tips on the bow fishing arrows.
7. Take your trotline with the wooden fish and weights connected to it to a pond or body of water. Set the trot line in about 3 ft. of water. The string on the weights and fish should be set so the fish is just under the water a foot or so. It should be no more than 10 yd. away and no closer than 3 ft. in though the bank or edge of water.

GAME PLAY

- Have the students stand at the edge off the water and see if they can hit the fish with the arrow.
- You will find the deeper the fish is set in the water the more they will shoot over the top
- Now give the student a time to shoot his/her arrows in. They have 30 seconds to shoot and see how many fish they hit.
- If possible have the students shoot from an elevation of 2 - 3 ft. off the ground (tailgate of a truck).



WOOD CUTOUT FISH



WOOD CUTOUT FISH IN WATER

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What special equipment do you need to bowfish?
2. What was the hardest part of hitting the fish?
3. Did you have to aim different than you normally aim?
4. How would the weather effect bowfishing?

Educator Note: You can work with the wood shop class and the art class to cut out the wooden fish and decorate fish.

FLYING FISH

ACTIVITY
E

Learning Objective

Students develop an understanding and basic concept of bowfishing.

Activity Time

50 minutes

Materials List

- Bows compound and recurve, be sure to have both left and right handed.
- Three arrows for each shooter.
- Cardboard or styrofoam.
- Kite string or fishing line.
- Paper clips.
- Shooting station.
- Slip on pencil erasers for arrow ends.
- Shooting curtain/backdrop (if indoors)

PROCEDURES

1. Determine if you will shoot indoor or outdoors. (indoors must put up shooting curtain/backdrop)
2. Assemble the PVC shooting station.
3. Tie string on top pipe of shooting station. Do not use more than 10 or 12 strings. The string should be a different length across the width of the station.
4. Connect the fish targets to the paper clip.
5. Place arrows and quiver somewhere from 8 to 10 yards from shooting station. (PVC stand)
6. Place three arrows for each shooter. Two shooters at each station.
7. If indoors try to put a fan at an angle so that the fan blows on the fish on the strings. This makes the fish move with the fan. If outside the breeze or wind will give it the effect.

GAME PLAY

1. Each fish will have a point value on it 5, 10, 15 points.
2. There will be one or two game fish that is not legal to bow fish. These fish will also have a point value. 10, 20, 30 points etc. But these will be deduction from the score of the shooter.
3. This game can be a two person team or individual score.
4. Each shooter gets three times to shoot. Add up score to determine who wins.
5. You may vary the distance and amount of time they have to shoot their three arrows. Example: 15 sec to shoot three arrows.

