

## Build Your Own Plankton Net

**Overview:** Students build their own plankton net.

**Ages:** 5 – 9

**Time:** 30 – 40 minutes

**Materials Required:** stapler, panty hose (one pair for every 2 children); small plastic containers, such as yogurt cups or small water bottles with the ends cut off (1 for each student); plastic gutter guard material (12-15" per student), 3 12" strings and 1 36" string per student.

**Objective:** Scientists use plankton nets and bottom trawls to collect samples from the ocean to study. In Antarctica many scientists study plankton because there is so much plankton in the Antarctic waters. Plankton are tiny, one-celled plants and the tiny animals that feed on them. Plankton are food for birds, krill (small, shrimp-like creatures) and fish.

Students create their own plankton net that they can use at the ocean or on a lake. Students look at a diagram of a research ship, which has plankton nets and bottom trawls, which researchers use to collect samples.

### Instructions:

- Bend the gutter guard into a circle and staple at the end, creating a hoop.
- Tie three pieces of string around the gutter guard.
- Tie the three pieces to the fourth long string.
- Cut the pantyhose in half and distribute one leg to each child.
- Attach the pantyhose to the gutter guard by
- Cut a hole in the toe-end of the panty hose & stretch the pantyhose over the plastic container.
- Attach the pantyhose to the plastic container by

### Follow-up Questions:

Have you ever brought a fishing net to the beach?

How big were the holes?

What were you able to catch?

What slipped through the net?

What would happen if the pantyhose had holes in them?

What would happen if you used wider netting like fishnet stockings?

How do the scientists decide what kind of netting they need?