Sea Urchins and Sea Anemones

Sea urchins and sea anemones are found in different habitats around the world and right here in the intertidal zone along our California coast. The intertidal zone is the habitat where the tides change between high levels and low levels, providing a changing space for a wide variety of animals to live. Both purple sea urchins and green sea anemones can be found in our local tide pools, such as at Pillar Point.

Although we are focusing on purple sea urchins and green sea anemones today, there are many different colors found in the ocean! Feel free to use whatever color you have at home that you like, and remember that your craft doesn’t have to look exactly like mine when you’re finished.

What you need:

FOR THE SEA URCHINS:
- Playdough or modeling clay
- Toothpicks
- Markers or paint

FOR THE SEA ANEMONES:
- Playdough, modeling clay, or a toilet paper tube
- Markers or paint
- Pipe cleaners or vegetable holding wire
- Glue or tape
- Scissors

Let’s start making a sea urchin.

1. Color your toothpicks with a purple marker or paint. If you choose to use paint, make sure to put down some paper to protect your household surfaces.

2. Once your toothpicks are dry, break them in half.

3. Next, roll your playdough or modeling clay into a ball.

4. Then you’re going to color your clay ball using markers or paint, whichever one works best for you.
**FUN FACT**

Sea Urchins have tiny tube feet in between their spines. These are like little arms with suction cups on the ends. They use their tube feet to move and to catch food. The tube feet also hold them tight to the rocks as the waves crash in and the water rushes by. Tube feet are really strong!

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5. Once your modeling clay is colored and dry, you are going to stick your toothpick halves into the clay all over pointy side out.

Voila! You have made your very own purple sea urchin!

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**Now let’s make a sea anemone.**

1. Start by coloring your pipe cleaners or vegetable wire with markers or paint. These will be the tentacles, so have fun with the colors!

2. As your tentacles are drying, mold your playdough or modeling clay into a cylinder and make sure the base is a little wider to support your anemone.

3. Then use your finger to lightly press into the top center of your clay to create the anemone’s mouth.
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Fun Fact

The mouth of a sea urchin is on the underside of its body. It’s called the Aristotle’s Lantern, and it looks like a circle with five triangular teeth pointing inward!

4. If you don’t have playdough or modeling clay, no problem! We’re going to use a toilet paper tube. Fold one end of the toilet paper tube onto itself and tape it closed.

5. Next, paint your playdough, modeling clay, or toilet paper tube using markers or paint, whichever works best for you. Set aside to dry.

6. As your anemone body is drying, use scissors to cut your pipe cleaners or vegetable wire into 2-3” pieces and bend them into a wavy shape.

7. Stick the pipe cleaners or vegetable wire into the clay around the top, or glue (or tape) them onto the toilet paper tube around the top.

Voila! You have made your very own sea anemone!
Fitzgerald Marine Reserve in Moss Beach is just 20 miles south of San Francisco, a half hour drive. If you want to venture further, Duxbury Reef in Marin county is 30 miles north of San Francisco. The drive is longer due to slow windy roads.

Both of these locations have some incredible marine life in their tide pools. Make sure to check the tide tables and wait for low tide before you go.

Take a lunch, a warm jacket and an extra pair of shoes and socks.

At the tide pools, you will definitely see anemones and urchins and crabs and many other tide pool creatures! Tide pool visits are wonderful adventures of discovery.

Take a family trip to the tide pools this summer!