

Unit Guide

Natural Barriers to Storm Surges

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This unit explores how little oysters can have a big impact on the ecosystem. The unit is designed for a Social Studies class but can be adapted to Science or ELA. Students will be introduced to how oyster reefs slow down storm surges and reduce the damage caused by hurricane winds. In addition to reading and researching oyster reefs, students will also research coral reefs to compare and contrast what they do, how humans have impacted them, the economic impact they have on society and ways that people can help restore reef systems. Students will identify how human culture has changed the reefs and the effect it has had on the coastlines adjacent to the reefs. Connections to the economic impact of changing the natural environment will lead students to identify unintended consequences when the regions are faced with natural hazards. In conclusion students will create a final product to address the need to replenish/restore the oyster reefs and reduce the impact of humans upon coral reef systems.