

All About
SHARKS

Units of Measure

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For teachers' inspection ONLY

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Sharks

When you think about the ocean, what animals do you think of? Perhaps you think of fish. If you do, then you could be thinking about sharks. Sharks are fish.

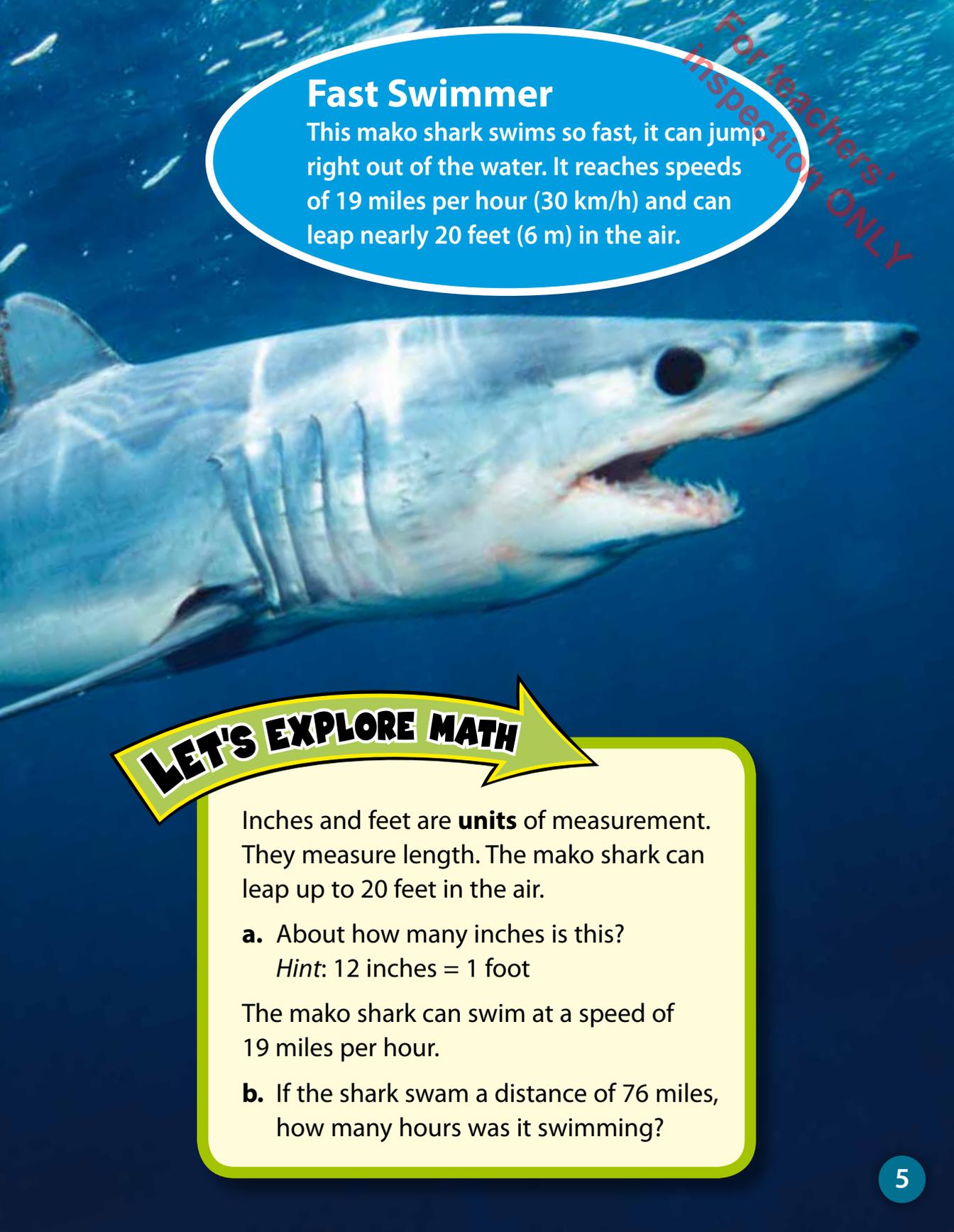
There are about 350 different **species** (SPEE-seez) of sharks in the world.



Slow Swimmer

The wobbegong (WOB-ee-gong) shark swims slowly along the seabed. Its speed is less than 0.6 miles per hour (1 km/h).

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Fast Swimmer

This mako shark swims so fast, it can jump right out of the water. It reaches speeds of 19 miles per hour (30 km/h) and can leap nearly 20 feet (6 m) in the air.

LET'S EXPLORE MATH

Inches and feet are **units** of measurement. They measure length. The mako shark can leap up to 20 feet in the air.

- a.** About how many inches is this?

Hint: 12 inches = 1 foot

The mako shark can swim at a speed of 19 miles per hour.

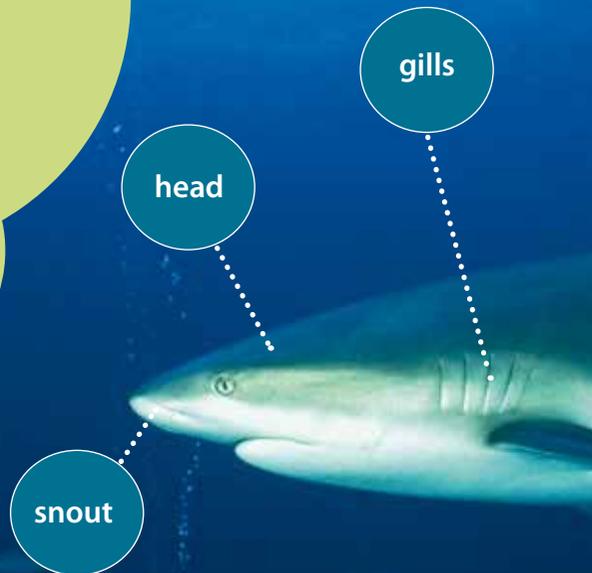
- b.** If the shark swam a distance of 76 miles, how many hours was it swimming?

Bodies Without Bones

Unlike many other fish, sharks do not have bones. They have **skeletons** (SKEL-uh-tuhns) made of **cartilage** (CAR-tuh-lij). You have cartilage in your ears and your nose.

A shark's body shape helps it swim well through water. Its strong fins move it forward.

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Sharks have **gills**, which they use to breathe under water. Sharks have 5 to 7 rows of gills.

dorsal fin

tail fin

fins

Smallest Shark

The smallest shark is the dwarf dogfish. It grows to about 6 inches (15 cm) and weighs just 1.5 ounces (42 g). It is small enough to fit into an adult's hand.

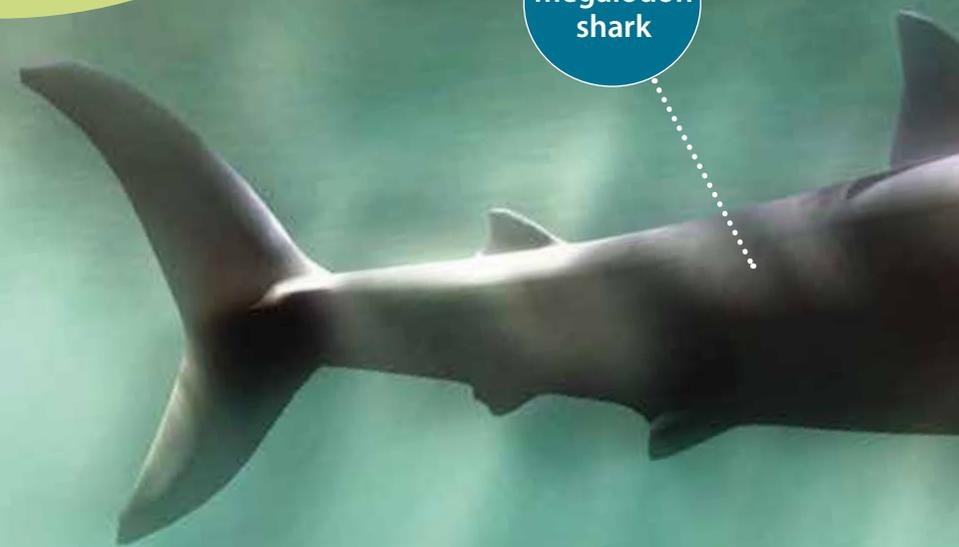


Ancient Sharks

Different sharks have lived in the ocean for almost 400 million years. The megalodon (MEG-uh-luh-don) shark lived 1.6 to 16 million years ago.

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megalodon shark



A megalodon shark tooth



The megalodon measured up to 50 feet (15 m) in length. Its jaws were 6.5 feet (2 m) wide. Its teeth were up to 8 inches (20 cm) long. It weighed around 20 tons (18,144 kg), which is as much as 5 elephants.



A megalodon shark was around 3 times the length of a great white shark.

great white shark

LET'S EXPLORE MATH

A ton is used to measure large amounts of weight. A megalodon could weigh as much as 5 elephants, or a total of 20 tons.

a. About how much does each elephant weigh?

Megalodon teeth were up to 20 centimeters in length. Great white shark teeth are around 5 centimeters in length.

b. How many times bigger is the megalodon tooth?

PROBLEM-SOLVING ACTIVITY

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Sharks in the Classroom

Students at Seaview Elementary have been learning about sharks. They want to make life-size shark pictures to display on their classroom walls. Each wall of the classroom is 45 feet (13.7 m) in length.

The students decide to display pictures of the following sharks:

Type of Shark	Length of Shark
thresher	15 feet (4.5 m)
angel	5 feet (1.5 m)
Greenland	20 feet (6 m)
bullhead	3 feet (0.9 m)

