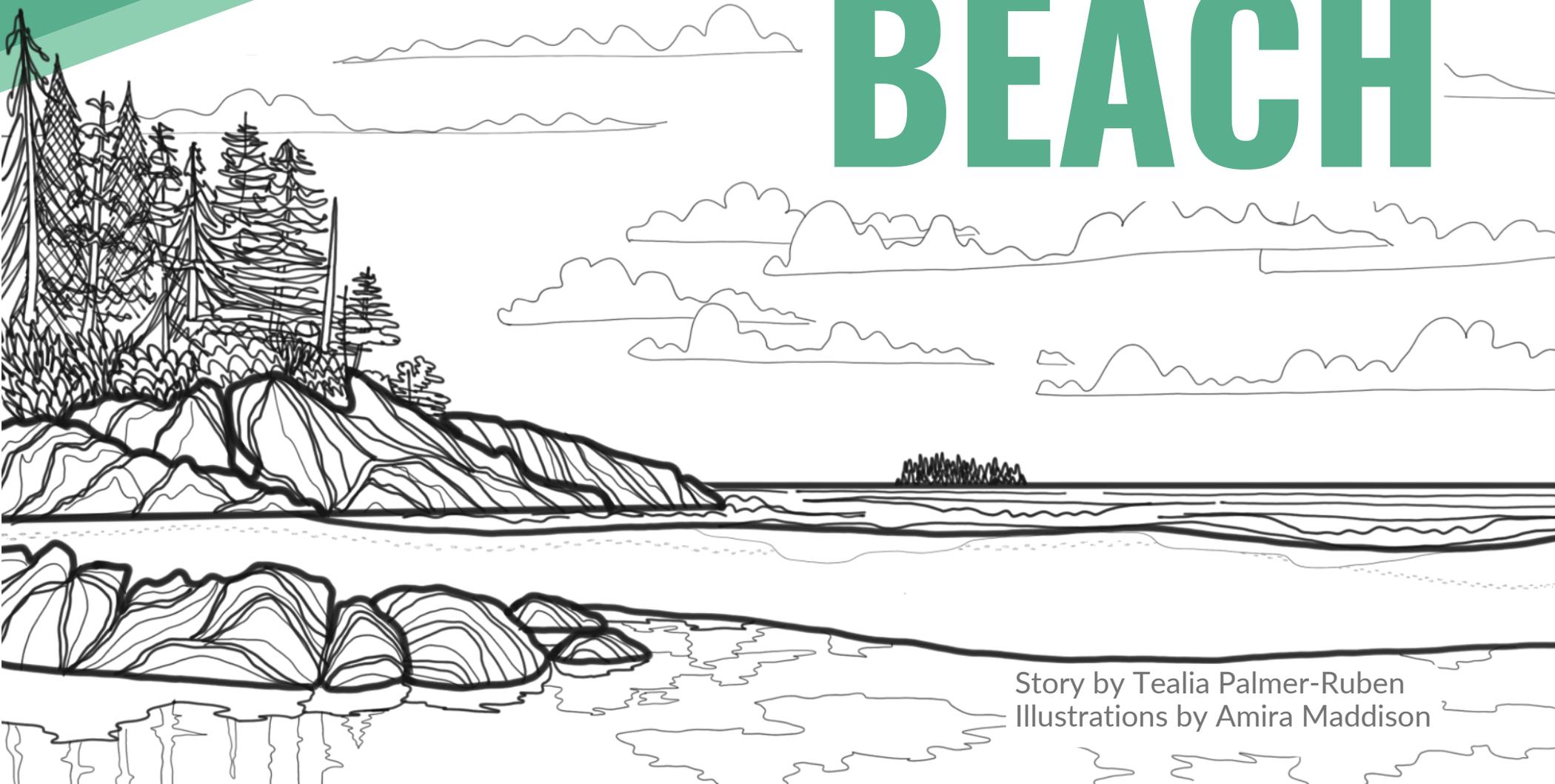




SIERRA
CLUB BC

A
WALK
ALONG THE
BEACH



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Illustrations by Amira Maddison

BEACH WALK VISUALIZATION ACTIVITY

HOW BEST TO EXPERIENCE THIS ACTIVITY

This is a storytelling exercise using visualization techniques to support your learning about the coastal beaches of British Columbia. This story will take you

on a journey along the coastline that uses your imagination to engage your senses. Based on where you live in B.C. or due to circumstances at the present time you may not actually be able to go out and visit a coastal environment. We encourage you to use this visualization activity to experience the different sights, textures and sounds of the coastline—wherever you are!

To start, you will need to find a quiet and comfortable place to enjoy the story. You will also require another member of your household to read the story out loud to you to guide you through this visualization. The other option is that YOU read aloud the story to other members of your household and guide THEM through this visualization activity. We encourage those that are not reading to do the actions and make the sounds in the story; they can look at the images in this package after doing the visualization activity. Whoever is reading should read enthusiastically to help bring the ocean experience to life.

Either way, let's start our walk along the beach together!

Suggested age range: Grades K-5

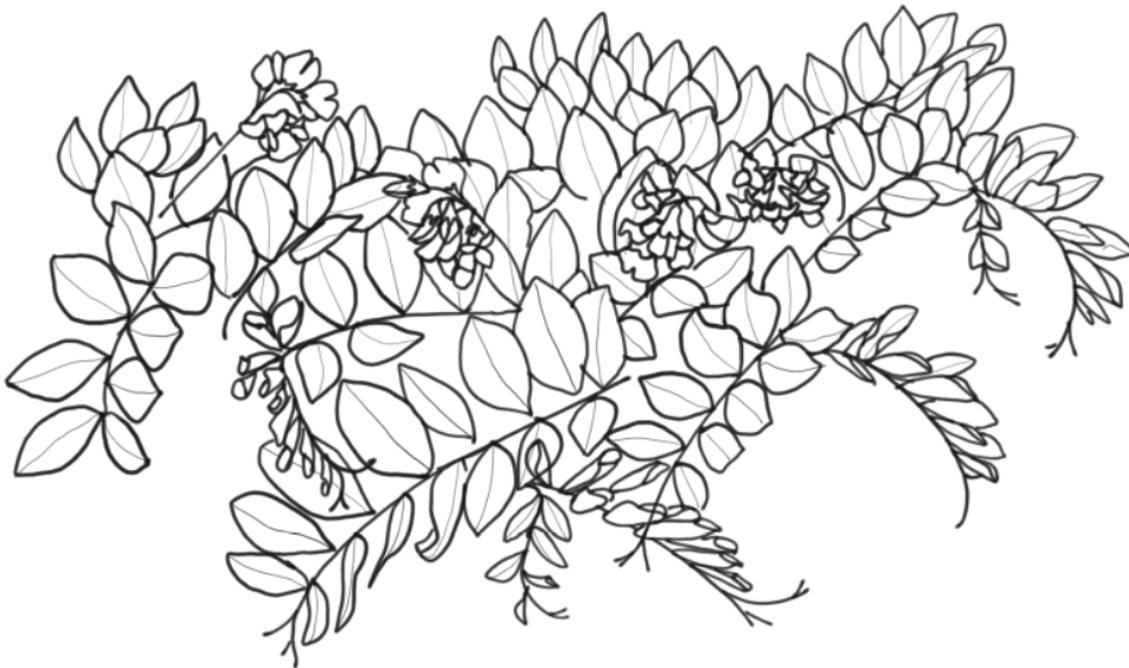
Materials required: A quiet place to enjoy the story and another person

Time required: 15-20 minutes

WELCOME **TO THE** THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST COASTLINE

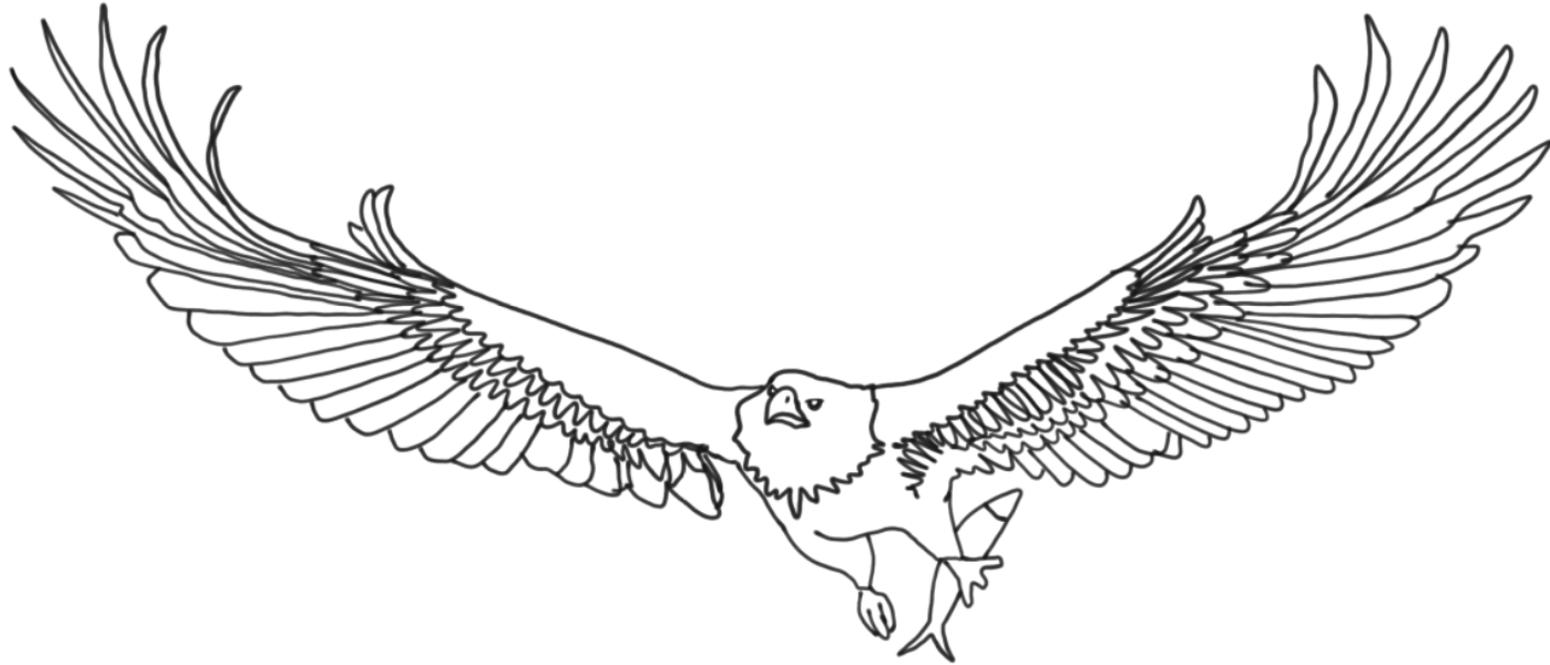
Close your eyes and imagine that you are stepping out of the rich coastal temperate rainforest and onto a sandy ocean beach. As you step onto the sand, you feel it shift under the weight of your feet. It is different than the spongy dirt you were walking on in the forest. You lean down to take a closer look at the sand below your feet. As you get closer, you notice that the sand is full of tiny specks of brilliant colour—some green, some grey, some reds and oranges.

Along the stretch where the beach meets the forest, you see a small, spirally plant craning up from the ground. Delicate pink flowers sprout from the ends. Beach peas!



Stretching back up, you take a deep breath and notice that the smells around you have also changed. The air here smells crisp and fresh. With another deep breath, in through your nose and out through your mouth, you can almost taste the saltiness in the air, coming from the ocean water.

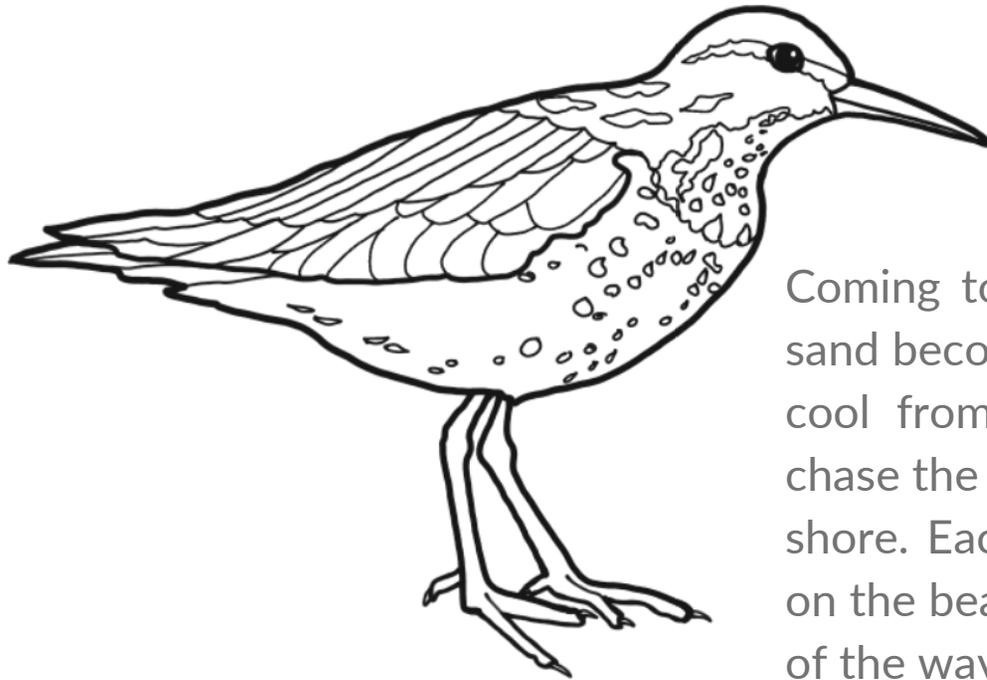
The sky is blue with thin white clouds stretching across the horizon. The clouds drift slowly across the sky, pushed along by a light, cool breeze. You feel the warmth from the sun press on your forehead and cheeks.



You hear the rhythmic swooshing of the waves. They wash up onto the sand and over the beach pebbles and rocks and then back towards the open sea. You hear the rocks as they knock together while being pushed by the force of the salty ocean water. Just like in a forest stream, you can feel the smooth round pebbles, worn by the years of water washing over them.

A loud, high-pitched SQWEEAKKK! catches your attention and you crane your eyes up towards the sun. You spot an eagle right before it swoops down towards the crashing waves in search of an afternoon snack. The bird disappears behind the swell of the sea. You keep your eyes peeled until the bird reappears. This time, it has a shimmering fish caught between its talons. It flies towards the shore to enjoy its catch.

Kelp of all kinds, like bull kelp and sea lettuce, is scattered along the beach. Some is dried up and some is still damp from the ocean water. As you get closer to a large pile of wet kelp, the rich, salty smell fills your nose. The piles of kelp that have dried smell even stronger. Kelp carries the salt out of the ocean, where it dries out under the sun on the shore.



Coming to the edge of the water, you feel the wet sand become harder under your feet. The sand here is cool from the ocean water. Like a sandpiper, you chase the waves out and back as they dance along the shore. Each wave leaves a faint line of where it was on the beach. You pay careful attention to the rhythm of the waves. Out and back, out and back.

Away from the water and back on the warm sand, you lay down on your back. Feel the warmth from the sand travelling up through your body. The sun has warmed the sand all day long and now it is sharing that warmth with you. You glide your fingers across the grainy sand, noticing again the many colours that make up the sand.

You stretch your arms out like an eagle, wide and strong. As you stretch, lift out of your body and rise to soar over the beach you have been exploring. The higher you go, the better you can see the boundary where the forest meets the beach and the beach meets the ocean. From way up high, you see that although the forest, beach and ocean have many differences, they are all interconnected and depend on each other to thrive.

Descend back down into your own body. Feel the warmth from the sand and the sun. Breathe in the salty air, the cool breeze. Rest here for a few deep breaths enjoying the sensations of the beach before opening your eyes again.



DRAW YOUR EXPERIENCE

Create an illustration of what you experienced on your beach walk journey today.
Be sure to include many details to capture the textures, sounds and colours of your experience.



Share with us! Send a photo or scan of your illustration to: education@sierraclub.bc.ca or share a picture on Instagram and tag [@SierraClubBC](https://www.instagram.com/SierraClubBC) and [#SierraClubBCEd](https://www.instagram.com/#SierraClubBCEd) or post a photo of it on the Google Classroom.

FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS

How were you able to relate to this story?

What stood out to you the most on the journey?

What senses did you use throughout the journey?

Are there other living beings you might have seen along the beach that weren't mentioned?

What do waves sound like? Make the noise of a crashing wave!

ACTIVITY: SIT SPOT

To continue the practice of developing your awareness and using your senses we suggest doing a nature connection practice called a Sit Spot. Visit sierraclub.bc.ca/online-classroom/ for a video about how to do a Sit Spot, written instructions and two options for journaling about your experiences.

LEARN MORE ABOUT MARINE ECOSYSTEMS

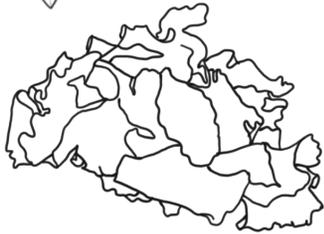
Check out our packages at sierraclub.bc.ca/online-classroom/

FUN FACTS ABOUT THE BEINGS IN THE STORY:



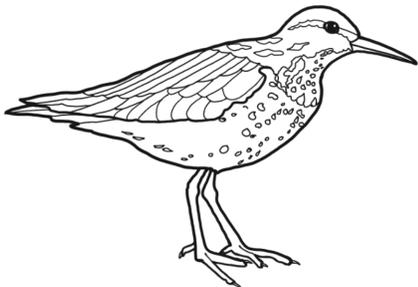
Beach pea

is a coastal trailing plant that grows on sandy beaches, dunes and amongst driftwood. Their leaves are green and oval shaped and have reddish-purple to blue flowers. They can grow up to 1.5 meters long. They are often referred to by the Haida as “Ravens canoe” when their seed pods turn black when ripe.



Sea lettuce

is a type of green seaweed varying in colour from a very pale to emerald green. The leaves are lobed, ruffle-edged. They are coarse and like a sheet and resemble a leaf of lettuce.



Sandpiper

is a common medium sized shorebird with fairly long legs, often found running in groups along the water's edge. Their call sounds like “Twee-wee-wee”

Kelp

is a type of brown seaweed found growing in nutrient rich underwater forests. Bull kelp is the largest form of brown algae. Indigenous peoples use cured bull kelp for fishing lines and rope, and the bulbs at the top are hollowed out to store liquids like seal oil and ooligan grease.

Bald eagle

is a bird of prey commonly found across B.C. The adults have a white head and tail, and large yellow bill. Young juveniles under 4 years old have dark brown bodies. Bald eagles build huge stick nests in trees that they re-use year after year. They are one of the largest birds in North America. Salmon is a key food for them, but they also hunt gulls, waterfowl and small mammals such as squirrels and rabbits.

