

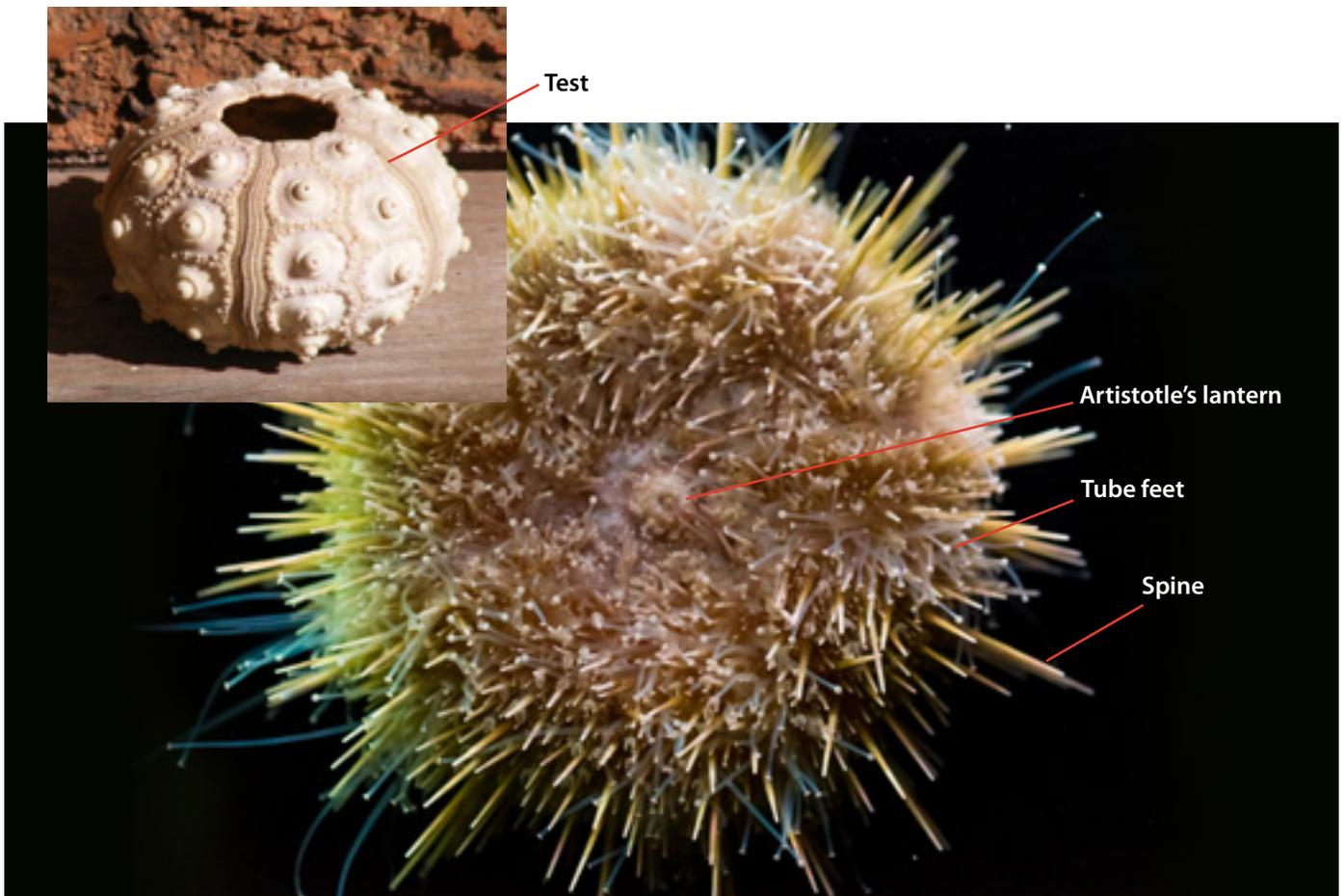
Make an urchin

Ages 6+

Background info

Sea urchins: These animals, which are found in all ocean temperatures and habitats, are round and covered with long, movable spines. They're part of the echinoderm family, which also includes sea stars and sea cucumbers. Sea urchins have the longest spines of any species in this group.

- **Spines:** Some sea urchin species have solid spines, while others have hollow spines filled with venom. Sea urchins use their spines for movement and protection, as well as to help capture floating particles in the water to eat.
- **Test:** Sea urchins have a calcareous skeleton called a test. Some plates have tiny holes through which sea urchins can wiggle their hollow tube feet.
- **Tube feet:** The tube feet have suckers and can extend beyond the spines to grip objects and the ocean floor. Some sea urchins use their tube feet to pick up items such as small rocks, pieces of shell, and bits of seaweed that they can use to disguise their bodies and blend in with their surroundings.
- **Artistotle's lantern:** The mouth of the sea urchin is found on the bottom of its body and is made up of five self-sharpening teeth that are replaced every few months.



ACTIVITY

Time:

30 minutes

Materials:

- modeling clay
- pipe cleaners
- craft supplies you have available
- your imagination



Instructions:

1. Use this worksheet to learn about sea urchins and their body parts. The main body of the sea urchin is called the **test**. **Spines** and **tube feet** stick out from the test. Underneath its body is the urchin's mouth, which is called **Aristotle's lantern**. Sea urchins have **five teeth**.
2. Make your own body into a sea urchin. Roll up tight and stick out parts of your body (like your legs and/or arms). Remember, **spines** are rigid and **tube feet** are noodle-y.
3. Now that you're familiar with sea urchins, let's make one! Roll a ball of modeling clay (about the size of a golf ball).
4. Add pipe cleaners (or something else long and thin) to your sea urchin's **test**. These will be its **spines** and **tube feet**.
5. Sea urchins like to eat seaweed. You can make a small piece of seaweed with paper and act out your sea urchin moving the food with its **spines** and **tube feet** down to its mouth. (Using craft supplies and your imagination, can you make the sea urchin's **five teeth**?)