

# Pointers For Parents

## Making Connections: Exploring The Themes Of 'Splash And Bubbles' With Preschool Children

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(NAPSA)—Whether we live in Idaho or India, we are bound together by, and intimately connected to, the ocean. It covers 71 percent of the Earth's surface and over 90 percent of the habitable space; it is the source of half the oxygen we breathe; it regulates the temperature and creates the climate and weather we rely on to survive.

Meanwhile, beneath the surface swims the most amazing life—glow-in-the-dark fish, disappearing octopuses, scallops with 200 eyes and just about any other weird and wonderful thing you could imagine. The ocean is weirder, funnier, richer, more colorful and dynamic than the craziest world our imaginations could ever conceive of. Yet unlike the fictional worlds of Neverland, and the many enchanted kingdoms, the ocean realm is real—and it's a vast world to which we are all intimately connected.

These are the reasons I jumped at the chance to be the Curriculum Advisor for The Jim Henson Company's new marine science-based preschool show, "Splash and Bubbles" (airing daily on PBS). It's a show that celebrates our one big ocean and all its wackiness while exploring marine biology concepts ranging from currents to cephalopods and camouflage. The show is built around five curricular themes that have both marine biology and social-emotional connections.

**Diversity:** Differences in how we look and where and how we live are worth celebrating!

Splash and Bubbles discover and celebrate the value of diversity as they explore new habitats, make new friends, and learn about all the different ways life looks and lives in the ocean.

**Talk about it:** Use moments in the show as jumping-off points to discuss diversity in our own land-based communities.

**Interconnectedness:** We are all connected to the ocean and to each other.

For example, in many episodes, we learn that the more we discover how diverse the world truly is, the more we realize how connected we all are.

**Talk about it:** Use these ocean examples to start a discussion about the many ways we all rely on each other.

**Individuality:** Everyone has something valuable to contribute. The gang learns that everyone on the reef has an important job to do.

Biologically speaking, every living thing has a role to play in the web of life. From a social-emotional perspective, we all have something valuable to contribute in our homes and communities.



**Splash, Bubbles and their best friends Dunk and Ripple go on epic adventures, discovering marine biology and oceanography as they meet all kinds of "citizens of the sea."**

**Talk about it:** Explore with your child what valuable contributions they make at home, among their friends and in their community.

**Empathy:** Awareness and understanding of another's feelings help us be good friends.

Empathy grows as self-awareness develops in children. In the "Double Bubbles" episode, Ripple can see that Bubbles is upset about something.

**Talk about it:** Ask children whether they've ever felt that way and what would have made them feel better.

**Celebration of learning:** It's fun to share what you've learned with others.

Scientists are inherently excited about learning and sharing what they've learned with others. So are preschoolers. And so are the Reeftown Rangers.

**Talk about it:** Give young viewers an opportunity to tell you about what they've learned and share in their excitement.

"Splash and Bubbles" demonstrates and celebrates diversity, interconnectedness, individuality, empathy and a love of learning while exposing viewers to concepts of marine biology. The stories and characters make them relevant and highlight the connections to viewers' own land-based lives. As you watch "Splash and Bubbles" with the children in your life, I encourage you to look for and explore those connections.

"Splash and Bubbles" is a production of The Jim Henson Company and Herschend Studios. The series is executive produced by Lisa Henson and Halle Stanford of The Jim Henson Company, Julie Phillips and Merrill Puckett-Miller of Herschend Enterprises, as well as John Tartaglia, Michael Shawn Lewis and Jill Shinderman. The series is funded in part by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and by the National Science Foundation (NSF). Airing daily on PBS (check your local listing) and streaming on Netflix.

<http://pbskids.org/splashandbubbles>