

<b>Title:</b> Opinion Writing: Should sharks be protected from orcas?	<b>Grade:</b> 5th Grade
<b>Content:</b> Science Themed Opinion Writing	<b>Duration:</b> 10-20 minutes daily

**Standard:**

- **W.5.1:** Write opinion pieces on topics, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

**Objective:** Students will read a nonfiction article; decide if sharks should be protected from orcas; write an opinion piece using the OREO strategy.

**Materials:**

- Article: “Sharks’ Livers are like Deep-fried Candy Bars for Orcas”
  - Paper copy below  
<https://newsela.com/read/elem-orcas-vs-great-white-sharks/id/38022/>
- OREO graphic organizer (*below*)
- Blank paper
- Pencil
- Highlighter, colored pencils or pen, crayons (*optional*)

**Introduction Description:** Students will read about ----; write about their opinion.

**Steps:**

- **Day 1:** Read the article “Sharks’ Livers are like Deep-fried Candy Bars for Orcas”
  - Read aloud with someone else.
  - Read/listen to someone else read aloud.
  - Read to self.
- **Day 2:** Reread the article.
  - Find information about sharks and circle it.
  - Find information about orcas and underline it.
- **Day 3:** Start writing your opinion piece.
  - What is your opinion?
    - Sharks do need to be protected from orcas.
    - Sharks do NOT need to be protected from orcas.
  - Use the OREO graphic organizer to organize your ideas (you may draw your own OREO graphic organizer).
    - Opinion.
    - Reason and explanation.
    - Reason and explanation.
    - Reason and explanation.
    - Opinion.
- **Day 4:** Finish your OREO organizer (if needed) and start writing your opinion.
  - Remember to:
    - Indent paragraphs
    - Use capital letters correctly.
    - Use punctuation at the end of each sentence.
- **Day 5:** Finish your writing and read it aloud to someone.
  - Look over your writing and make any changes.
    - Check spelling and grammar.
    - Check capital letters.

- Check punctuation.

**Adaptations (optional):**

- Read article aloud with another person.
- Read/listen to article as someone else reads aloud.
- Draw your own illustration for the article.
- Record a video of you reading your opinion aloud.
- Draw your own OREO graphic organizer.
- Type your opinion piece on the computer.
- Include 2 reasons with an explanation.
- Add a 4th reason and an explanation.

**Finished Product:** Students will read nonfiction articles; decide if sharks need to be protected from orcas; use OREO strategy to write their own opinion piece.

# Sharks' livers are like deep-fried candy bars for orcas!

By Lauren Smith, The Guardian, adapted by Newsela staff on 11.29.17

Word Count **470**

Level **540L**



Great white sharks are fierce apex predators, but are they as tough as killer whales? Photo from: Wikimedia Commons.

The great white shark is one of the biggest killers in the ocean. It is an apex predator. That means it sits at the top of the food chain.

It is hard to imagine anything eating the great white. But earlier this year several dead great whites washed up along South Africa. The sharks had all been bitten. They had holes in the muscle between their fins. Strangest of all, their livers were missing.

The bite marks looked like they came from orcas, or killer whales. These huge creatures were seen along the shore. They probably killed the sharks.

## **Orcas Larger And Longer**

Great white sharks and orcas are both apex predators. Both can swim very fast. But orcas are a bit larger. They can grow longer. And they can weigh up to four times as much as a great white. On paper, orcas seem to have a bit of an advantage.

What orcas eat depends on where they live. Orcas near South Africa have a taste for shark. They have been targeting some of the smaller sharks in the area. The orcas have been eating the sharks' livers.

There is no doubt about it. The real question is: Why?

### **Shark Liver Is Tasty Treat**

Shark livers are large and rich in oil. They contain a lot of fat. For orcas, it is like eating a deep-fried candy bar. Shark liver is a tasty treat. It is packed with vitamins, too.

How does an orca eat a shark's liver? It does not just rip the shark apart. It takes the liver out very carefully.

In 1997, a group of whale watchers saw an orca off the coast of California. The orca slammed itself into a great white shark. This stunned the shark. The orca then flipped it over. It held the shark in place for about 15 minutes. Then the orca began eating its prey.



What the orca used to its advantage is something called "tonic immobility." It is called TI for short. TI is a natural state of paralysis. That means it leaves an animal unable to move. It happens when some kinds of fish are turned upside down.

### **Clever Way To Drown Their Prey**

For some sharks, this is dangerous. They cannot breathe unless they keep swimming. If they stay frozen too long, they die. The orcas understand this. They have found a clever way to drown their prey. It takes very little energy for the orcas.

But the sharks are clever, too. They have learned to avoid the orcas. Sightings of great whites off the South African coast went down while orcas were in the area. Once the orcas left, the great whites came back.

Task:	
Audience:	



**OREO Strategy:**

- Opinion**
- Reason**
- Evidence**
- Opinion**

<p><b>Opinion:</b> Tell the audience what you think/ believe/want (use an introduction strategy)</p>	
<p><b>Reason/Evidence:</b> Talk about one reason Explain supporting evidence</p>	
<p><b>Reason/Evidence:</b> Talk about one reason Explain supporting evidence</p>	
<p><b>Reason/Evidence:</b> Talk about one reason Explain supporting evidence</p>	
<p><b>Opinion:</b> Restate your opinion Mention reasons (no details)</p>	

Sample Graphic Organizer- Different Topic

Task:	Persuade audience
Audience:	parents, classmates



**OREO Strategy:**  
**Opinion**  
**Reason**  
**Evidence**  
**Opinion**

<p><b>Opinion:</b>            Tell the audience what you think/ believe/want (use an introduction strategy)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you see when you drive along any highway?</li> <li>• Coyotes don't need to be protected</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reason/Evidence:</b>            Talk about one reason            Explain supporting evidence</p>	<p>Coyotes breed quickly</p> <p>Females can have litters in only 63 days</p>
<p><b>Reason/Evidence:</b>            Talk about one reason            Explain supporting evidence</p>	<p>Coyotes live everywhere</p> <p>They already live in 46 states will move to all cities, towns, in the country</p>
<p><b>Reason/Evidence:</b>            Talk about one reason            Explain supporting evidence</p>	<p>Coyotes live a long time</p> <p>12 years is typical</p>
<p><b>Opinion:</b>            Restate your opinion            Mention reasons (no details)</p>	<p>Coyotes don't need protection            reproduce quickly            live everywhere            live a long time</p>

Sample written with a different topic:

### Coyotes Do Not Need to Be Protected

What animal lives in almost every state? What animal roams mostly after dark? What animal yips and howls when the sun goes down? If you guessed coyotes, you are right. Coyotes are interesting animals, but they do not need to be protected.

Coyotes reproduce quickly. A female gives birth to her litter of puppies in about 63 days. The average litter has 8 or 9 pups. Some may even have more. Reproducing quickly and in large numbers keeps the coyote population strong.

These wild canines live everywhere. Coyotes are found in almost every state as well as in Canada and Mexico. Their natural habitat is in the country, but they have moved into towns and even big cities. They are adaptable and can live anywhere. Coyotes are not going to run out of habitat any time soon.

Coyotes have a long life span. A coyote is considered old when it is 10, but often they live to be 12 years old. Even if some coyotes die, the ones that are left can live a long time.

These howling, yipping, wild canines reproduce quickly. Coyotes live happily just about everywhere, and have long life spans. They are interesting animals, but coyotes don't need to be a protected species.