

## Design a Dwelling

### OBJECTIVE

Challenge your students to become architects and create a protected environment that will meet all of a manatee's needs, thereby encouraging breeding.

### MATERIALS

- white construction paper
- colored markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils

### ACTION

1. Divide the class into groups of four or five students. Each team includes animal care specialists and architects responsible for designing a modern exhibit. Let each group decide what species of manatee they would like to exhibit.
2. Visit the school, local, or nearest college library to research the lifestyle of your manatee species. Take notes on information that will help you engineer your exhibit.
3. Make sure you include the following elements in your design:
  - Feeding areas
  - Viewing areas for visitors
  - Landscaping
  - Areas where animal care specialists can isolate the manatees for medical care
  - Shade
4. Let the students design and draw the exhibit. Encourage them to be very creative.
5. Have each group stand up and give a brief description of their exhibit and what makes their exhibit unique.

### DEEPER DEPTHS

Have the students create a three-dimensional model from their drawing. Use craft supplies such as clay, popsicle sticks, and construction paper and natural materials such as leaves, twigs, and grass to make their dwelling as similar to their habitat as possible. Include sections that will encourage the manatees to display natural behaviors.



The deepest a manatee has been seen diving is 10 m (33 ft.). They normally dive no deeper than 3 m (10 ft.) below the surface of the water.