



Aquatic Ecosystems

An underwater scene featuring a large, textured coral reef in the foreground. The reef is composed of various shades of brown and tan. Numerous small, colorful fish, including purple, orange, and green ones, are swimming around the coral. The background is a clear, blue ocean with more fish visible in the distance.

Card Sort

Use your marker to divide the sorting mat into two habitats: freshwater (ponds, lakes, rivers) and saltwater (oceans and estuaries)

Sort the organisms on the aquatic cards into the habitat to which each belongs.

What is an aquatic ecosystem?

In Spanish, the word “agua” means “water”.
In Italian, the word “acqua” means “water”.

Using those word roots, what do you think an aquatic ecosystem is?

Aquatic ecosystems are habitats that exist in bodies of water.

Freshwater Ecosystems

Lakes



Rivers



Ponds



Producers in freshwater ecosystems



cattails



Water lilies



algae



reeds



duckweed

Consumers in freshwater ecosystems



Freshwater fish



Ducks



Frogs and Toads



beaver



Water Moccasin



Boatman Insect

Discussion Question

Producers make their own energy.

Consumers eat other organisms to get energy.

Decomposers break down dead, decaying organisms.

Which of the following organisms is a decomposer? How do you know?



bacteria



turtle



goldfish

Saltwater Ecosystems



oceans



National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration/Department of Commerce

saltwater marshes



estuaries

Saltwater ecosystem producers



kelp



seaweed



sea grass



algae



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salt marsh grass

Saltwater ecosystem consumers



sharks



jellyfish



starfish



pelican



fish



plankton



coral

What is an estuary?

Estuaries are ecosystems that form where freshwater from rivers and streams blends into the saltwater ocean.



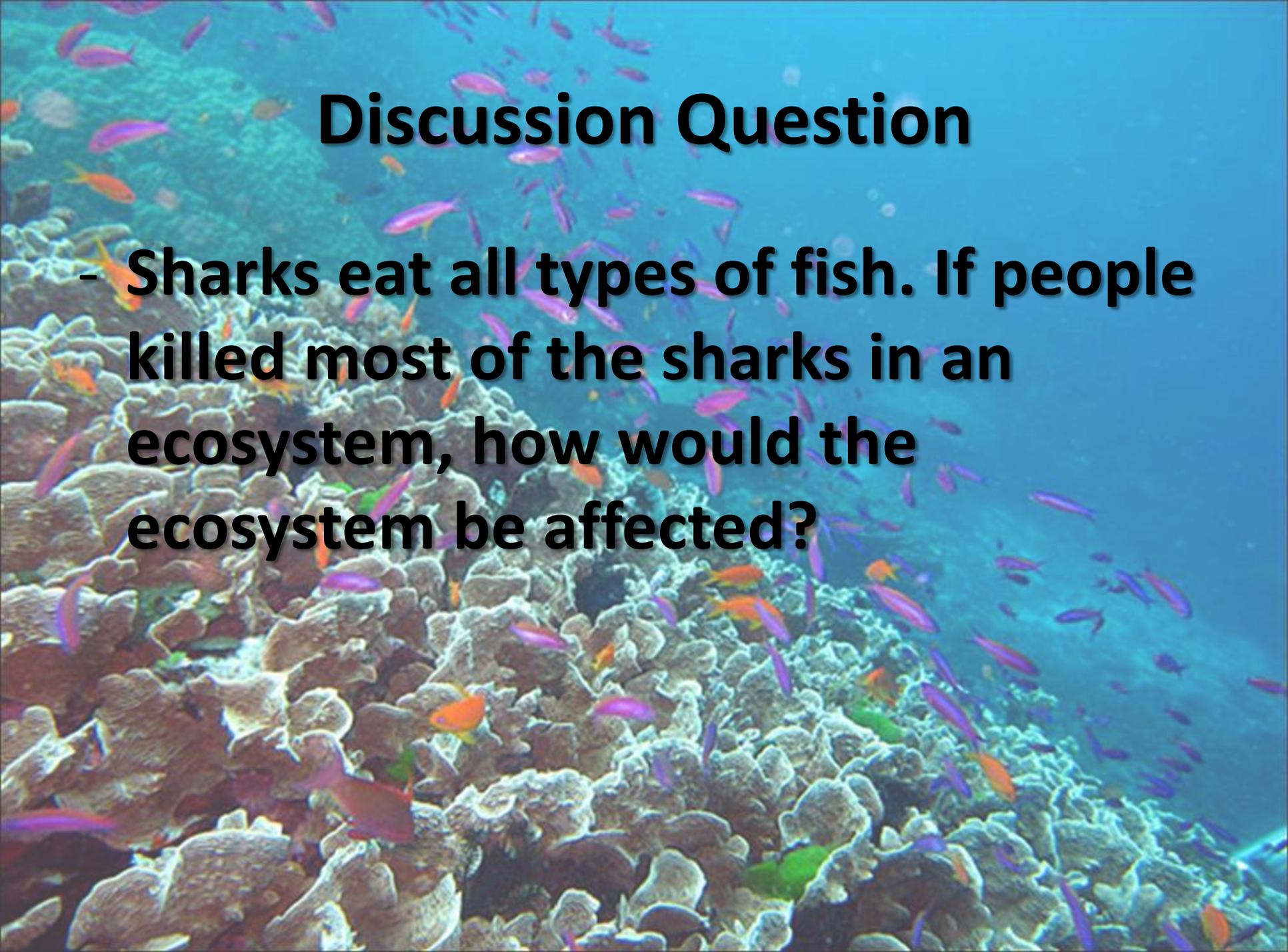
Estuaries are...

- Important habitats for many plants and animals.
- Responsible for filtering out pollution and dirt that have travelled down the river before it reaches the ocean.
- Areas where many people live, fish, boat, and bird watch.



Discussion Question

- **Sharks eat all types of fish. If people killed most of the sharks in an ecosystem, how would the ecosystem be affected?**



Discussion Question

- The majority of organisms that exist in the ocean choose to live in the upper layer of the water closest to the surface. Why do you think seaweed would be found here?
- Why would jellyfish prefer this area?

Re-Sort

Turn your sorting mat over to the blank side.

Divide your cards into producers and consumers.

Take the pile of producers and put them to one side. Take the consumers and sort them into carnivore, herbivore, and omnivore based on the diet listed on the cards.

Final Question

Choose the best answer. Then explain your answer in your science notebook.

Which of the locations on this diagram of a pond would be the most likely to have the greatest number of producers?

- A) Point A
- B) Point B
- C) Point C

