1 Background
Rockpools are mini ecosystems - for a few hours each day they are cut off from the sea, providing a safe haven for creatures while the tide is out. Every rock, crevice and clump of seaweed is important to the anemones, crabs, shrimps and small fish that live there. Exploring rockpools, and the wildlife within, is both an educational and enjoyable experience for young children. Where possible, this session should involve a rockpooling trip.

2 Set the Scene
Ask if anyone has been rockpooling or heard about it. Children to share ideas of what is involved and why people go rockpooling. Examine images of rockpools (see Beside the Sea gallery) on IWB. Explain that rockpools are habitats for many creatures. In pairs, examine and discuss the creatures on the ‘Rockpool Spotter’. Describe and compare the physical features of each. Encourage students to consider why creatures have a particular body shape e.g. limpets are protected from the outside and have a strong sucker on the underneath to hold them to rocks.

3 Resources
Worksheet: Rockpool Spotter, Beside the Sea gallery and interactive game.

4 Investigate
Use the Beside the Sea interactive game (in the explorer centre) on IWB. For each item selected, students should explain why the item is useful before selecting it. If possible, visit a local beach with rockpools. Be sure to check tide times and set clear expectations of your students (see safety advice in Teach on the Beach). Examine and discuss the seashore code (within the Sea Shore Safari guide at http://bit.ly/1qQEvA4). Use ‘Rockpool Spotters’ to identify creatures found and discuss how they are adapted to their environment. If a trip to the beach is not possible, view a video clip, such as Life in a Rockpool on the BBC Learning Zone and then move onto the ‘apply’ activity.

5 Apply
Select a creature from the Rockpool Spotter to investigate further. Closely examine photographs of the creature from within the gallery, as well as in books and online. Encourage students to think about the body shape and consider why it is that particular shape. Draw a picture of the animal and annotate to show its key physical features.

6 Extend
Think carefully about the features of the animal. Add annotations to the creature to explain what the features are used for e.g. the crab’s claws are used for defence and catching prey.

7 Reflect
Choose students to share their work. Children to share identifying features of their chosen animal. Ask class to sort animals from the spotter into groups and explain their choices.
Which things have you seen? (tick the circles)

- Seaweed
- Cuttlefish
- Mussel
- Sea Stickleback
- Hermit crab
- Periwinkle
- Anemone
- Starfish
- Jellyfish
- Blenny
- Seaslug
- Sea urchin
- Limpets
- Crab
- Barnacles
- Prawn
- Dog whelk