

MYRTLE BEACH
Resorts

Sea Crest
OCEANFRONT RESORT

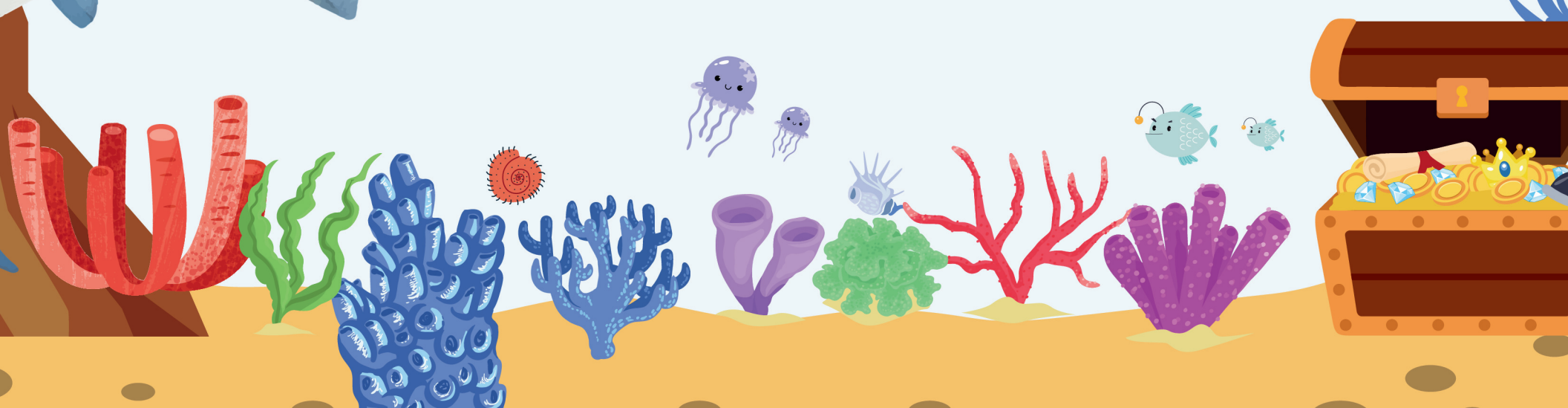
Coral Beach
RESORT + SUITES


Holiday Pavilion
RESORT ON THE BOARDWALK



Shark Science 101

The Ultimate Myrtle Beach
Shark & Beachcomber Guide





Welcome to the Grand Strand!

Get ready for an epic coastal adventure! South Carolina's Grand Strand is 60-miles of continuous oceanfront perfection. It stretches from Little River down to Murrells Inlet, making it one of the most famous and fossil-rich coastlines on the East Coast.

DID YOU KNOW?

Millions of years ago, the ocean covered much deeper inland. As the coastline shifted, ancient fossils were preserved in underwater beds - and today, the waves wash them right up to our sandy shores!



Keep this guide handy while walking the tide line, or print activity pages so you can have fun in your room or by the pool!





What is a Shark?

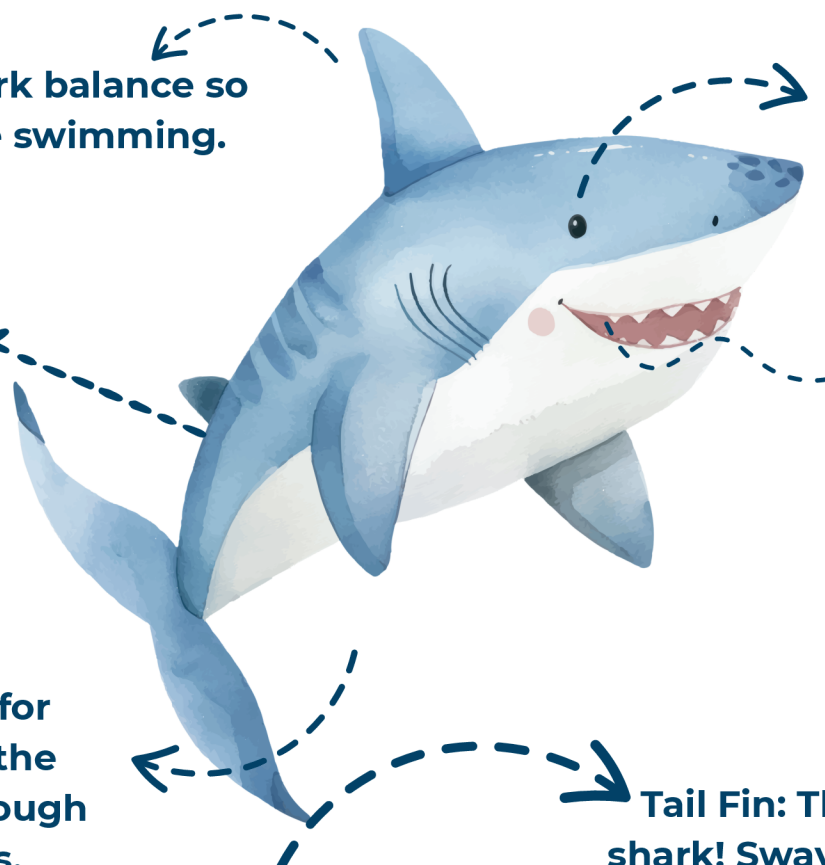
Sharks are incredible ocean creatures called fish, but they are very special! Unlike most fish that have bones made of hard bone (like humans), a shark's entire skeleton is made of **cartilage**. Cartilage is the same flexible, lightweight material that makes up the tip of your nose and ears! Because it is much lighter than bone, it helps sharks swim fast and stay buoyant in the water.

DID YOU KNOW?

Sharks have been swimming in the world's oceans for over **400 million years** - that means sharks were around long before the first dinosaurs walked the Earth!



Cool Shark Anatomy



Dorsal Fin: Helps the shark balance so it doesn't roll over while swimming.

Skin: Covered in tiny tooth-like scales called dermal denticles. These scales help them swim smoothly in the water.

Eyes: Sharks can see very well in dark water.

Teeth: Sharks have multiple rows of teeth and they continuously grow! When one falls out, another one moves in.

Pectoral Fins: Used for steering and lifting the shark up or down through the ocean currents.

Tail Fin: The primary engine of a shark! Swaying this tail side-to-side propels the shark forward.

How do Sharks Move & Breathe?

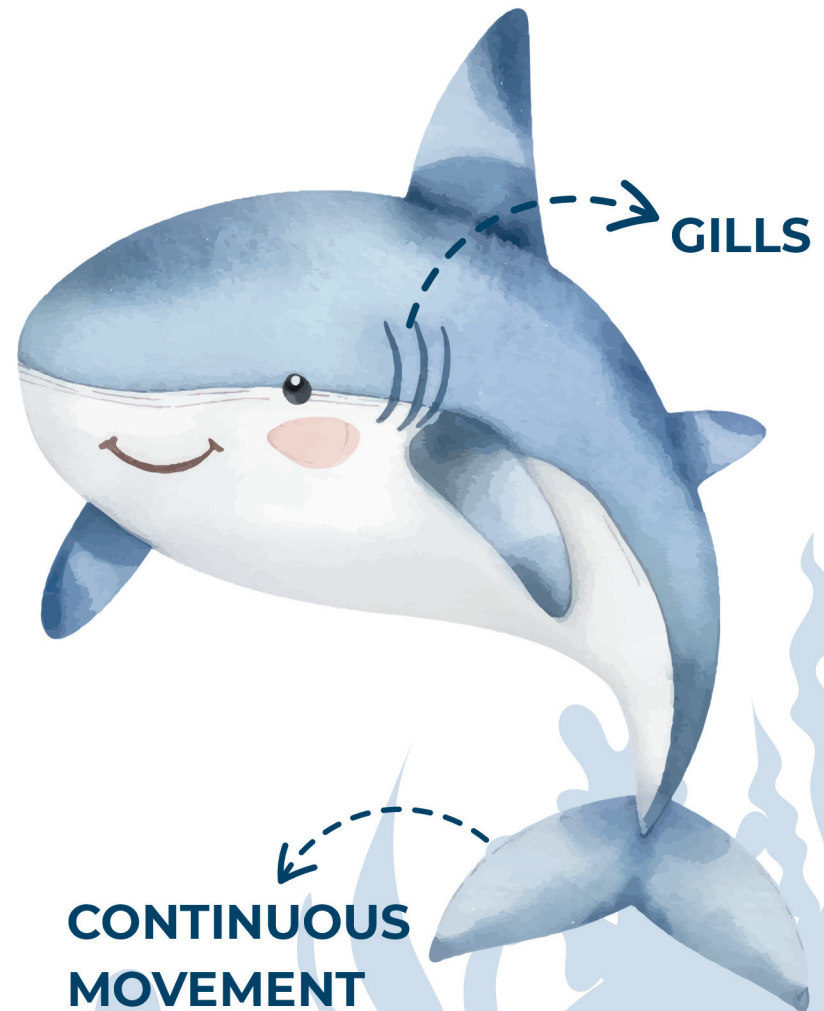
UNDERWATER BREATHING



While humans use lungs to breathe air, sharks use gills to take in oxygen from the ocean water. As water passes over the gills, tiny blood vessels absorb the oxygen they need to survive.

BUILT FOR SPEED

Most fish have an air bladder inside to help them float, but sharks do not! To stay afloat in water, they rely on their lightweight cartilage skeletons and constant movement, even while they are resting!



What Do Sharks Eat?

Sharks have a huge variety of diets depending on their size and species! Most sharks are **carnivores** (meat-eaters) that help keep the ocean ecosystem healthy and balanced by hunting older or weaker sea life.

- Small & Medium Sharks: Eat small fish, crabs, shrimp, squid and clams along the seafloor.
- Large Sharks: Hunt larger prey like stingrays, bigger fish, and occasionally marine mammals in deeper offshore waters.
- Whale Sharks (The Giants!): The largest sharks in the ocean don't eat big fish at all - they are filter-feeders that scoop up tiny **plankton** and tiny shrimp!

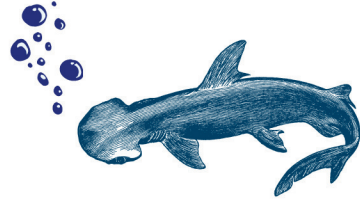


Meet the Sharks of the Atlantic



DID YOU KNOW?

Coastal sharks are naturally shy, timid creatures! While smaller species inhabit our coastal ocean waters, they actively avoid humans and prefer to stick to their natural diet of fish, crabs, and shrimp.



Bonnethead Shark

Average Size: 3 - 4 ft. long

Key Feature: A smooth, shovel-shaped head

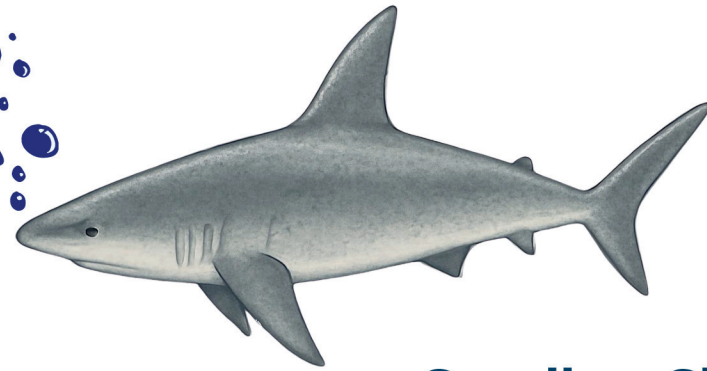
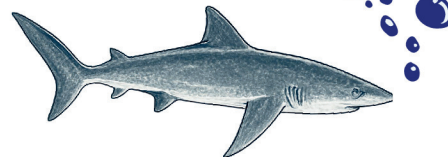
Habitat & Diet: Inhabits shallow coastal waters and estuaries, spending its time hunting for crabs, shrimp, and small fish along the seafloor.

Atlantic Sharpnose Shark

Average Size: 2 - 3 ft. long

Key Feature: Sleek, slender body with a long, pointed snout and distinct white spots along its sides.

Habitat & Diet: A small, fast-swimming coastal shark common along the South Carolina coast, feeding primarily on small schooling fish.



Sandbar Shark

Average Size: 5 - 6 ft. long

Key Feature: A very tall, prominent triangular dorsal fin on its back.

Habitat & Diet: Prefers swimming over smooth, sandy sea bottoms in gentle ocean currents just offshore, preying on flatfish and crustaceans.

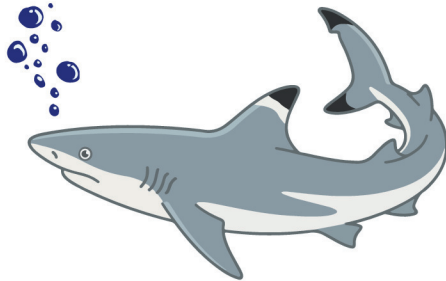


Meet the Sharks of the Atlantic

Continued...

CHALLENGE!

While these ocean swimmers stay out in the waves, they leave behind millions of fossilized teeth that wash right onto our beaches! Turn the page to learn how to find them.



Blacktip Shark

Average Size: 5 - 6 ft. long

Key Feature: Distinctive dark black tips on its dorsal and pectoral fins.

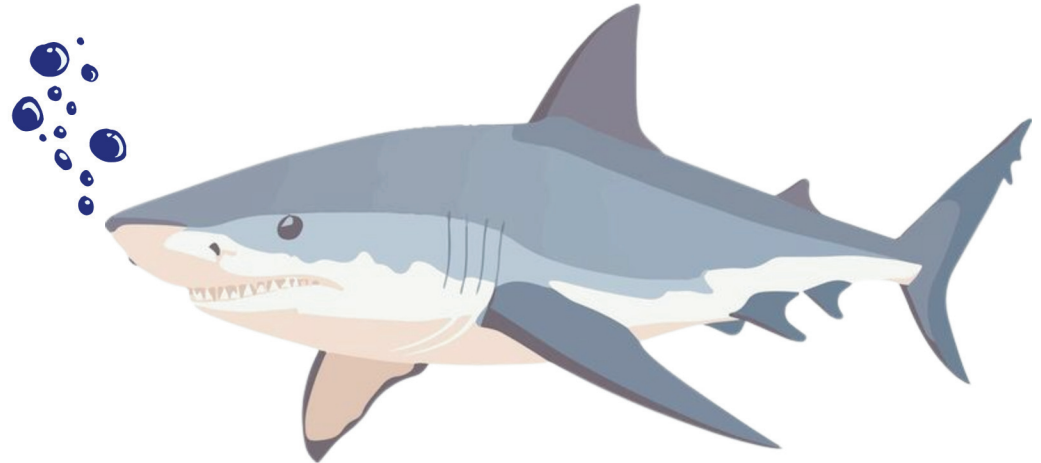
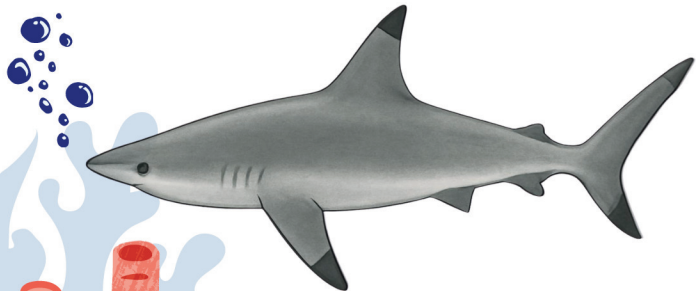
Habitat & Diet: Famous for leaping high out of the water while chasing schools of fish in offshore waters.

Spinner Shark

Average Size: 6 - 7 ft. long

Key Feature: Slender body with dark-tipped fins, named for its acrobatic spinning leaps.

Habitat & Diet: Hunts in schools in deep coastal waters, spinning through the water to catch fast fish.



Tiger & Bull Sharks

Average Size: 7 - 12 ft. long+

Key Feature: Tiger sharks have dark, tiger-like stripes; Bull sharks have broad, heavy-set bodies..

Habitat & Diet: Large ocean predators that stay in deep offshore waters far away from swimming areas..

Sink Your Teeth Into This!

How to Hunt for Fossilized Shark Teeth on the Beach

Shark teeth come in all shapes and sizes, each one a unique fossilized treasure from the sea! While spotting a fin in the surf can be exciting, the real treasures of Myrtle Beach are often hidden right underneath your feet. Collecting shark teeth is a favorite pastime for beachcombers of all ages.

Best Local Spots to Search for Shark Teeth

- **Right Outside Your Resort!** The beachfront directly in front of any of our oceanfront properties.
- **Myrtle Beach State Park:** Rich natural tide lines and shell beds.
- **Huntington Beach State Park:** Quiet, expansive beaches with great wash-ups.
- **Garden City Beach:** Excellent tide pools and gravel patches.





Pro-Tips for a Successful Hunt

UP NEXT:

Found a tooth? Turn the page to identify which ancient ocean shark it belonged to with our Tooth Identification Chart!

Master the Art of Beachcombing

1. **Search the Tide Line:** Focus your search on the wet sand right along the water's edge - especially 1-2 hours after low tide or right after an ocean storm when waves churn up deeper fossil layers.
 2. **Target the Shell Beds:** Don't scan plain white sand! Walk along the dark patches of broken shells, coarse gravel, and debris lines where waves naturally drop heavier items.
 3. **Look for "Black & Glossy":** Fossilized enamel has a unique, smooth, shiny surface that reflects sunlight. Scan for glossy, jet-black, triangular shapes popping out against dull shells.
 4. **Beat the Crowds:** Take advantage of early mornings! Fewer beachgoers on the sand means higher chances of finding undiscovered fossils washed up overnight.
 5. **Bring the Right Gear:** You don't need fancy tools, but bringing a mesh bag or a small sifter/strainer makes it super easy to scoop up shell beds and rinse away sand.
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What Did You Find?

Grand Strand Shark Tooth Identification Guide



Sand Tiger

No serrations
Long, narrow spike
Prominent cusps
0.5-1 inch



Tiger Shark

Heavy serrations
Curved, notched
Flat, wide
0.5-1.5 in



Lemon Shark

Smooth edges
Narrow, smooth
Forked root
0.5-1 inch



Bull Shark

Light serrations
Broad, stout
Thick, flat
0.5-1 inch



Megalodon

Heavy serrations
Broad, triangular
Thick, V-shaped
3-7 inches

EXPLORER TIP:

Place your found tooth
directly over these cards
on your screen or printed
page to match the size
and shape!

PLANNER TIP:

Program schedules, feeding times, and ranger talks change seasonally! Be sure to check each location's website or call ahead to inquire about their current educational ocean schedules.

Dive Deeper into Shark Science!

Where to Learn More



Ripley's Aquarium of Myrtle Beach



- **The Experience:** Walk through the famous Dangerous Reef tunnel surrounded by giant ocean sharks, or book a Glass Bottom Boat Adventure to ride right over the main shark tank!
- **Highlights:** Live feeding shows, touch tanks with stingrays and small sharks, and interactive marine biology exhibits.

Myrtle Beach State Park Nature Center

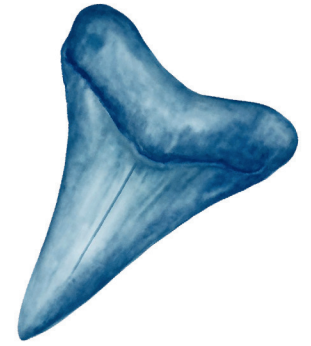
- **The Experience:** Tucked right along the coast, this nature center features interactive touch tanks, ocean exhibits, and ranger-led programs.
- **Highlights:** Ask the park rangers to help identify the fossilized shark teeth you found on the beach, or join a seasonal beachcombing walk!

Huntington Beach State Park Nature Center

- **The Experience:** Located in Murrells Inlet, this coastal nature center offers hands-on exhibits highlighting local Atlantic marine life.
- **Highlights:** Touch tanks, educational displays on local predators, and guided tidal marsh programs run by state park rangers.



Take Home the Magic!



Where to Find Shark-Themed Souvenirs

Want to bring home a shark tooth necklace, a plush predator, or a cool souvenir tee? Here are the best spots along the Grand Strand to shop for ocean treasure!

Our Resort Gift Shops

- Conveniently located right on-site at our Sea Crest and Coral Beach oceanfront resort properties!
- What to Look For: Quick beach gear, fun shark plushies, local post cards, and shark tooth jewelry to commemorate your stay.

The Gay Dolphin Gift Cove

- Myrtle Beach's iconic, multi-level oceanfront gift shop right on the Boardwalk!
- What to Look For: Thousands of unique shells, real fossilized shark teeth, shark jaw replicas, and classic Grand Strand keepsakes.

Broadway at the Beach

- A massive open-air shopping and entertainment complex centered around Lake Broadway.
- What to Look For: Specialized ocean boutiques, coastal gift stores, and official aquarium souvenir shops filled with shark gear.

Local Surf Shops & Beachwear Stores

- Explore local surf boutiques and classic beachwear shops along Ocean Boulevard and Highway 17.
- What to Look For: Shark graphic tees, beach towels, sifting nets for tooth hunting, and unique coastal decor.





READY FOR YOUR NEXT BEACH ADVENTURE?

Now that you're a certified Myrtle Beach Shark & Beachcombing Expert, it's time to start planning your family's next getaway to the Grand Strand!

Book your stay directly with any of our oceanfront resort properties to enjoy prime beach access, lazy rivers, pools, and incredible Atlantic views—right where the shark teeth wash ashore!



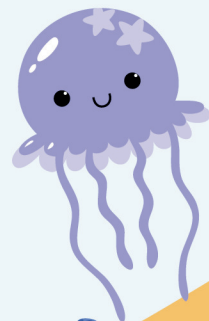
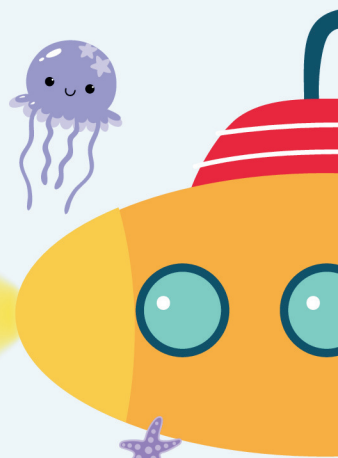

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WAIT! THERE'S MORE:

KEEP SCROLLING FOR FUN PRINTABLE SHARK ACTIVITIES & COLORING PAGES!



Ultimate Beachcomber Scavenger Hunt

Check off as many ocean treasures as you can during your Myrtle Beach Vacation!



☐ A Fossilized Shark Tooth



☐ A Whole Sea Shell



☐ A Sand Dollar



☐ An Olive Sea Shell



☐ A Coquina Clam



☐ Sea Oats or Sand Dunes



☐ A Pelican



☐ A Ghost Crab



☐ A Piece of Driftwood



☐ A Hermit Crab



☐ A Dolphin in the Waves



☐ A Shell with a Hole in it

NAME: _____

TOTAL SCORE: _____ /15

Ocean Animal Word Search

Can you find all of the following ocean themed words?

P	H	M	W	V	B	G	P	E	L	I	C	A	N	E
X	G	E	Y	I	A	O	L	S	H	I	R	G	P	R
S	H	G	K	S	J	T	N	S	E	A	G	U	L	L
U	O	A	J	W	S	K	S	N	T	C	M	W	L	S
B	S	L	C	E	T	H	D	T	E	L	R	K	Z	C
M	T	O	T	O	L	I	A	O	A	T	Q	A	Y	H
A	C	D	D	V	S	L	G	R	L	R	H	F	B	K
R	R	O	X	M	C	T	Y	E	K	P	F	E	N	S
I	A	N	M	T	S	S	I	F	R	T	H	I	A	I
N	B	Q	P	L	Y	Y	C	N	I	S	O	I	S	D
E	M	C	T	S	G	P	Q	F	G	S	H	O	N	H
M	P	X	O	C	T	O	P	U	S	R	H	A	T	A
E	B	U	L	L	S	H	A	R	K	R	A	N	R	H
U	M	V	H	I	F	O	S	S	I	L	A	Y	X	K
L	G	U	E	K	S	E	A	T	U	R	T	L	E	H

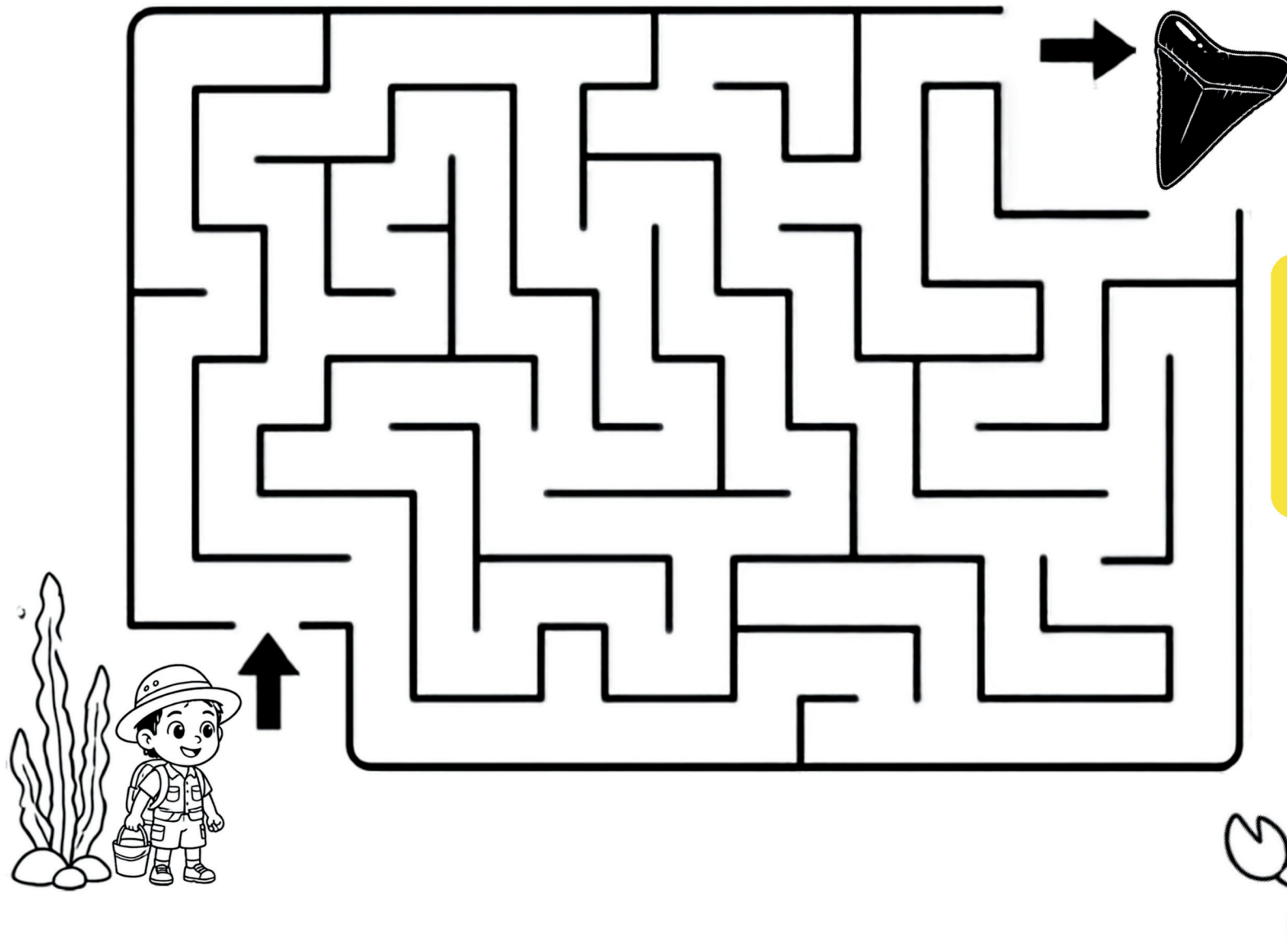
- bonnethead
- fossil
- stingray
- megalodon
- dolphin
- pelican
- seagull
- ghostcrab
- seaturtle
- starfish
- jellyfish
- submarine
- octopus
- tigershark
- bullshark
- sharktooth
- crabs
- shrimp

WORD SEARCH TIPS:

- Scan in All Directions: Words can run left-to-right, top-to-bottom, or diagonally (slanted)!
- Use a Highlighter: Highlight or circle the words in the word bank as you find them so you don't search for the same word twice!

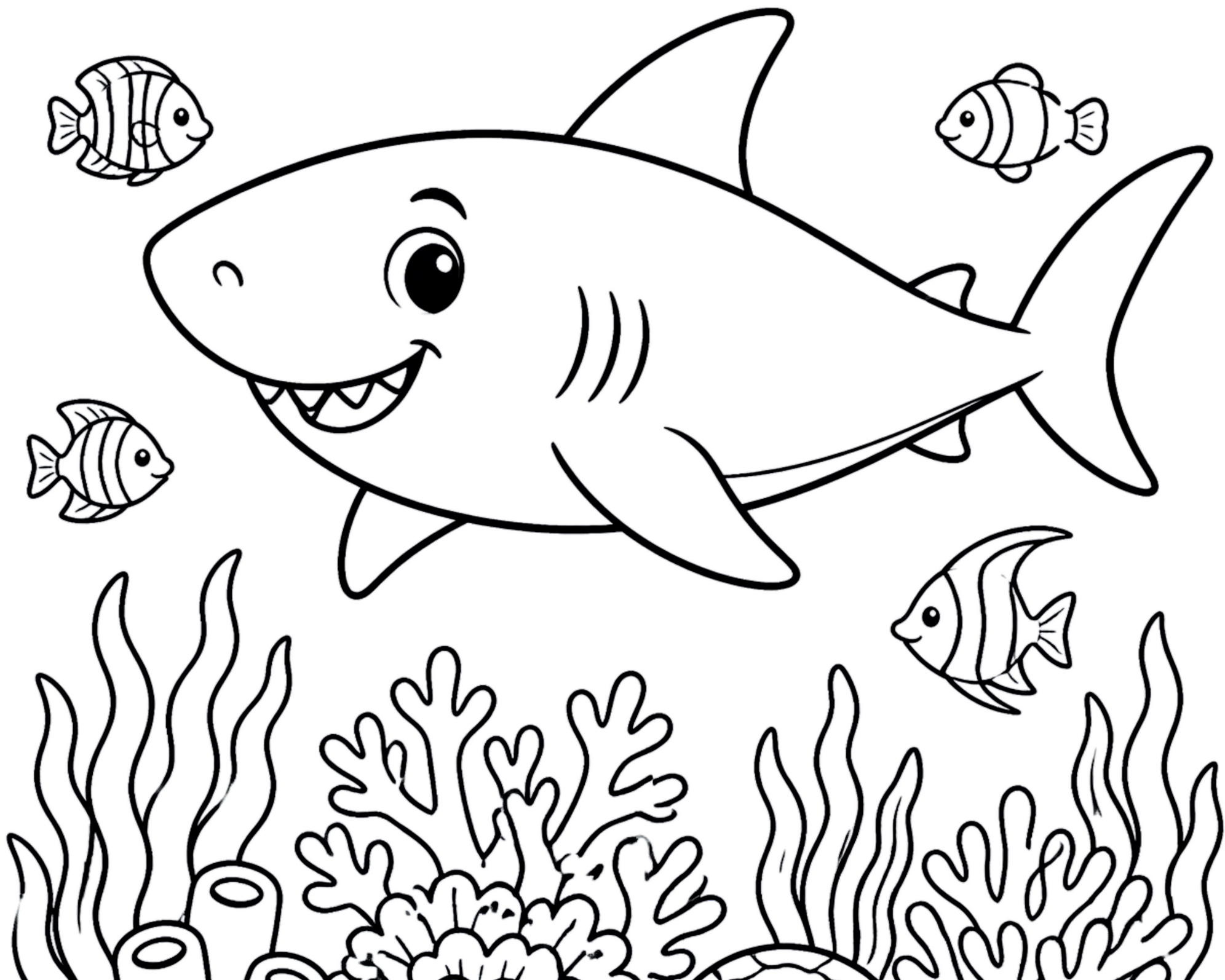
The Great Shark Tooth Maze!

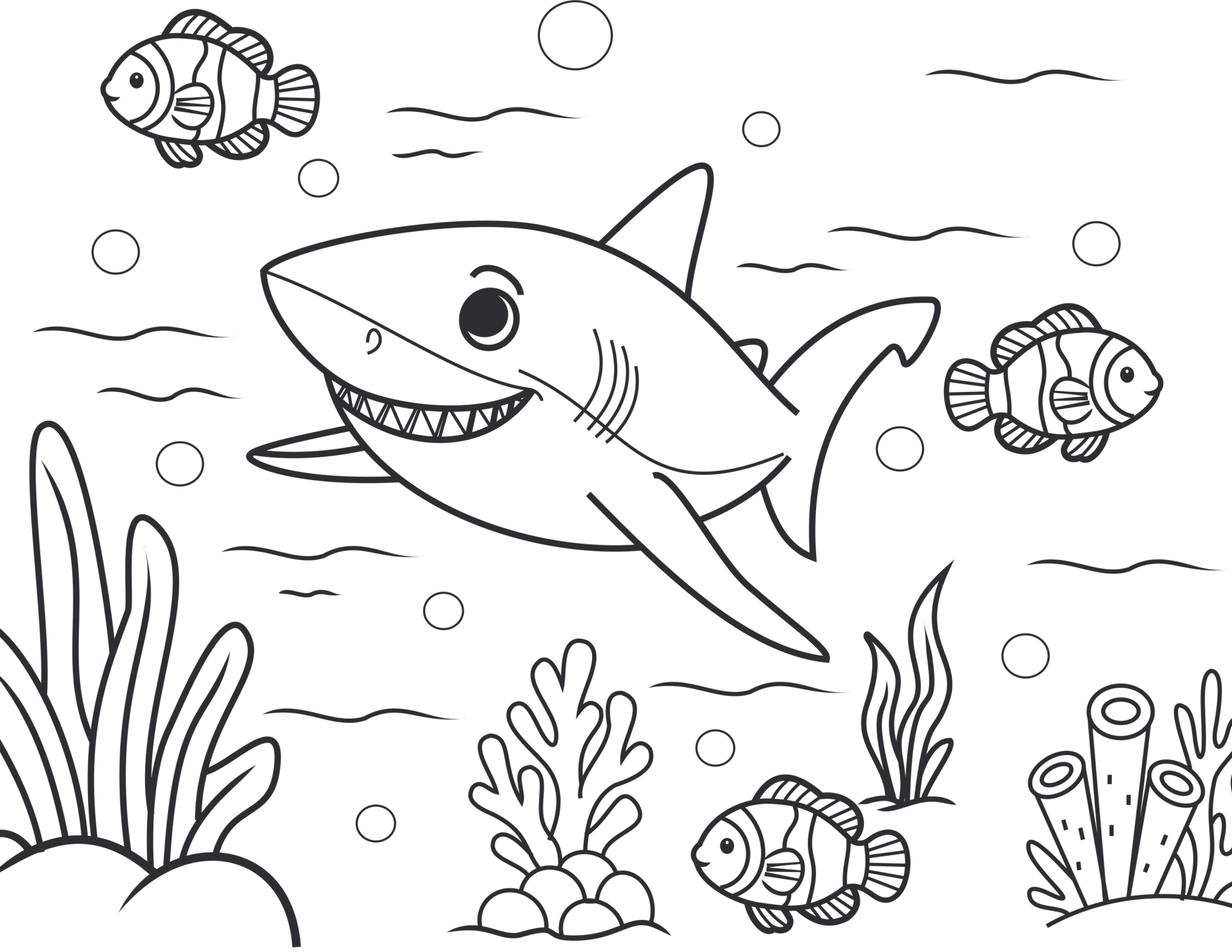
Help our ocean explorer find the fossilized shark tooth!

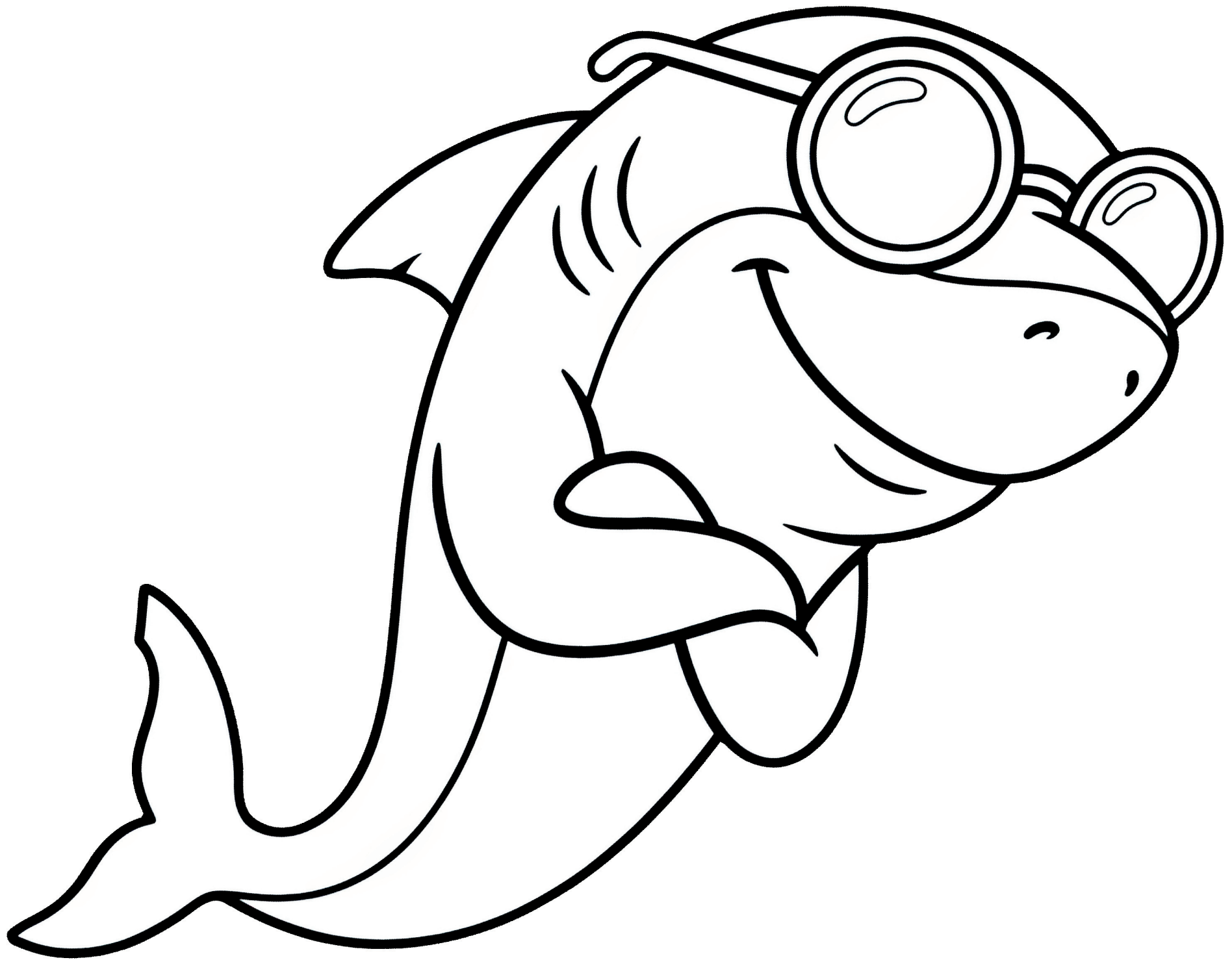


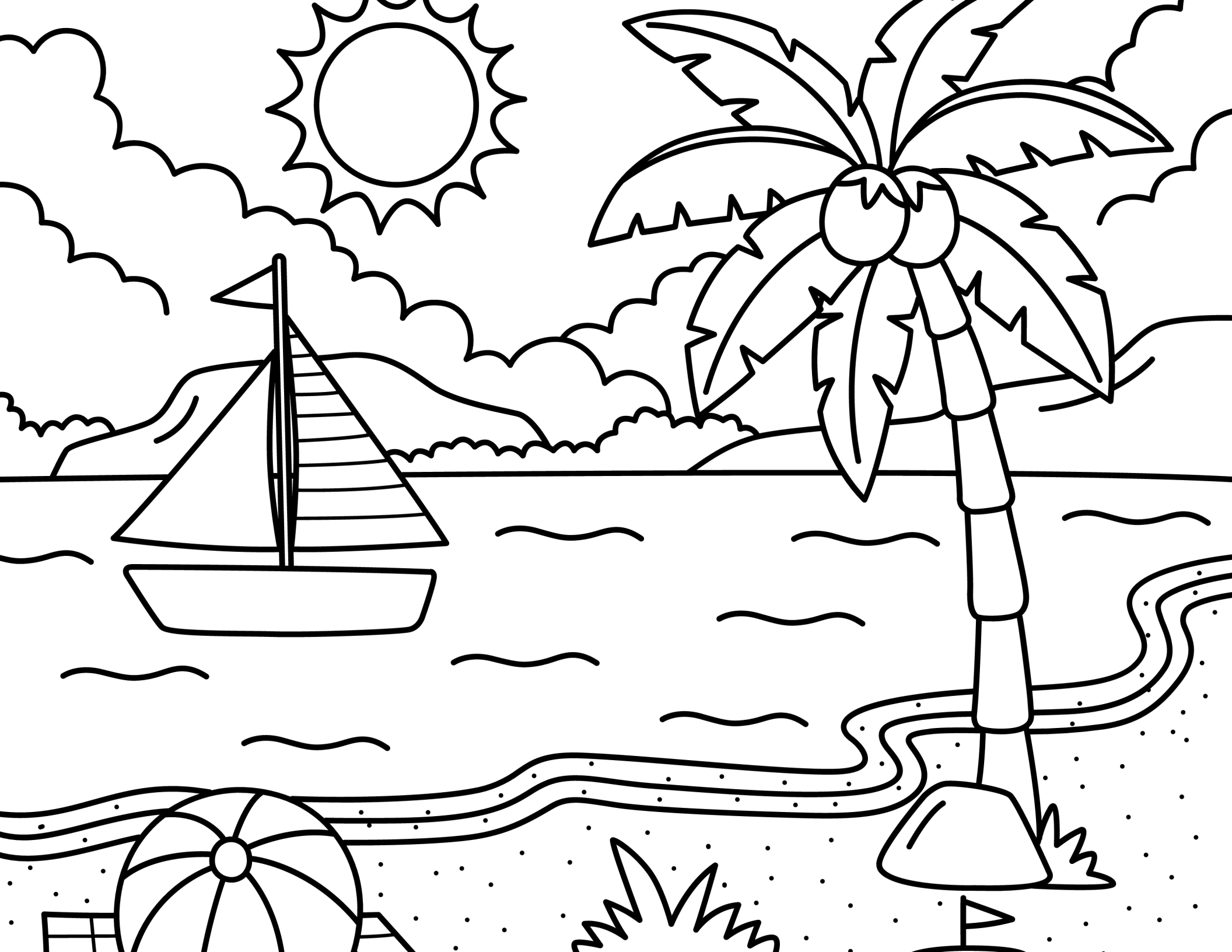
FUN FACT:

Fossilized shark teeth can spend thousands of years tumbling through ocean currents before washing up on Myrtle Beach!









See You at the Beach!

Thank you for exploring with us. Keep your eyes on the tide line, stay curious, and happy beachcombing!

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