

Essay Contest - Kyle Brand - Sixth Grade

What would happen if sharks disappeared?

Many people see sharks as big scary creatures. They have seen the bloody images and heard the sometimes fatal stories. They have a reason to be scared. But you have to look at Earth as a whole. Sharks live in an aquatic biome. Water takes up roughly 75% of our planet. This gives a home to lots of plants and animals. These organisms make up what we know as a food web. The sharks make up the top of our web (predators). Sharks feed on multiple variations of smaller fish who then feed on even smaller fish who feed on plants and small creatures like plankton. The plants get food from the sun using a process called photosynthesis. The plankton feed on micro organisms. Removing sharks from the system would cause drastic changes in our ecosystem. Without sharks, medium sized fish are less likely to get eaten, causing their population to increase. The smaller fish they eat will get eaten quicker so all of the big fish can eat. This causes a population decrease in the amount of small fish, therefore causing plants

and plankton to increase in numbers. This then decreases the population of micro organisms. As you can see, alterations in an environment can cause changes for the worse. It may even put a species to extinction. We need to take care of our animals whether they are terrestrial or aquatic. Although "JAWS" may have frightened you, sharks are crucial to the environment.

Aquatic Food Web

