

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

Here are bibliographies for Pop Culture Topics. These are sorted in order of taking an explicit side to a more nuanced viewpoint within each topic. At the end are further research suggestions. If you have a bibliography you'd like to share with science teachers, please email us at: contact@readingandwritingproject.com.

At the end of this list are articles that have been adapted by teachers for classroom use.

Please keep in mind that websites are temporal and so might no longer be posted.

Bottled Water

Plastic Bottles & Ocean Pollution—great images of the ocean, sea creatures, and plastic bottle pollution. Text overlay (captions) and charts/graphs. (Con)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rf5iHqT1Rzc>

International Bottled Water Association: Which is safer? Bottled water or tap water? (Pro).

<http://www.bottledwater.org/health/bottled-water-vs-tap-water>

This article looks at the consumption of bottled water, the waste that is created by the plastic bottles, and the energy required to produce the bottles. (Con)

<http://dsc.discovery.com/news/2009/04/06/bottled-water.html>

Bottled water help Haitian relief work (Pro)

<http://www.bottledwater.org/news/bottled-water-industry-provides-assistance-haitian-relief-efforts>

Myths about bottled water (Pro)

<http://www.marieclaire.com/health-fitness/news/bottled-water-myth>

What resources are required to make bottled water (Con)

<http://dsc.discovery.com/news/2009/04/06/bottled-water.html>

News story on bottled water ban in Concord, MA (Nuanced)

<http://www1.whdh.com/news/articles/local/metro-west/12007312836285/concord-...>

20/20 article whether bottled or tap water is better (Nuanced)

<http://abcnews.go.com/2020/Health/story?id=728070&page=1-.UCM2j2jNV6J>

From *National Geographic News*, banning bottled water

<http://newswatch.nationalgeographic.com/2012/02/13/bottled-water-is-silly-but-so-is-banning-it/>

Censorship

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

An article about attempts to ban *Harry Potter* books in schools

<http://childrensbooks.about.com/cs/censorship/a/banharry.htm>

Ways kids can join the fight for free speech

<http://www.kidspeakonline.org/whatcanido.html>

An article about the freedom to read

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/freedom-read>

An article about Facebook and free speech

<http://www.allfacebook.com/study-facebook-teaches-kids-freedom-of-speech-2011-09>

An article on finding age-appropriate books for readers:

<http://www.scholastic.com/resources/article/books-for-kids/>

An article about parents attempting to ban one of their child's summer reading books

<http://www.postandcourier.com/news/2011/sep/24/parents-say-book-inappropriate-for-teens/>

Video of a local school board meeting on the book ban of *Bless Me, Ultima*

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5i_lf5zOY6Q

Child Soldiers

One of the earliest articles for teens to call attention to the plight and spread of child soldiers
Upfront Magazine (April 20, 2009) "Armed and Underage."

http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/upfront/features/index.asp?article=f042009_Armed

The efforts of the youth movement Invisible Children, to alleviate the suffering of displaced and child soldiers, and the 'night communiting' in Uganda – videos and digital text

<http://www.invisiblechildren.com>

especially: <http://www.invisiblechildren.com/videos/3765452> 'I got soul but I'm not a soldier'

United Nation's speaker Ishmael Beah's memoir, *A Long Way Gone*, about being a child soldier in Sierra Leone, and his eventual escape to the United States

http://www.alongwaygone.com/long_way_gone.html

Ishmael Beah on CBS News with Katie Couric

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ozsOLdgp_v0

Ishmael Beah interview

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5K4yhPSQEzo>

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

Ismael Beah discusses his experiences as a child soldier in Sierra Leone. 28 June 2012.
<http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=nx37eVo23Zw>

United Nations statistics on child soldiers
<http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/briefing/soldiers/soldiers.pdf>

The UN Involvement on the issues of child soldiers.
www.childsoldierscasestufy.blogspot.com

This article doubts Invisible Children "The Kony 2012 Scam And Why You Should STOP Supporting 'Invisible Children'." 8 March 2012.
<http://keepittrill.com/online/2012/03/kony-2012-scam-stop-supporting-invisible-children/>

Peace talks in Uganda offer some hope for child soldiers *Time: World* (August 2006) "Hope for Uganda's Childhood Soldiers?"
<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1226297,00.html>

Competitive Sports in Schools (Pros and Cons)

"What in the name of high school football?" By: Hill, Hank, Literary Cavalcade, 00244511, Nov/Dec2002, Vol. 55, Issue 3
<http://www.fwisd.org/aail/Documents/Argument%20example.pdf>

"Are High School Sports Good for Kids" by Daniel Gould
<http://www.educ.msu.edu/ysi/coaches/ask/2.htm>

A website dedicated to sharing the risks of High School and College sports
<http://abcnews.go.com/Health/Healthday/story?id=4508074&page=1>

"School Sports: The pros and cons" by Raven J. Railey
<http://www.courier-journal.com/article/20081228/FEATURES/812280310/School-sports-proscons>

"Your Kids! Competitive Sports! Win or Lose - Good or Bad!" by Tony (Panthers49: Yahoo! Contributor Network)
<http://voices.yahoo.com/your-kids-competitive-sports-win-lose-good-bad-6893290.html>

"Pushing too hard too young" by Jacqueline Stenson
http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/4556235/ns/health-childrens_health/t/pushing-too-hard-tooyoung/

Michael Phelps discusses his experience balancing school and sports.
http://kidshealth.org/teen/food_fitness/sports/sports_pressure.html

"Sports and School: Requiring More From Your Teen" by Dr. Phil
<http://www.drphil.com/articles/print/?ArticleID=308>

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

“Why College Football Should Be Banned” by Buzz Bissinger

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304743704577382292376194220.html>

“Would Banning College Football Actually Help Academics?” by Chris Smith

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/chris-smith/2012/05/07/would-banning-college-football-actually-help-academics/2/>

"To cheat or not to cheat?" by Tom Verducci. *Sports Illustrated*, Special Report, June 4, 2012

<http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/2012/magazine/05/29/baseball.steroids/index.html>

Health and Wellness

An article on the controversy over potatoes in school lunches

<http://www.timeforkids.com/news/hot-potato-issue/16206>

Article on maintaining a healthy diet

http://portal.acs.org/portal/PublicWebSite/education/whatischemistry/scienceforkids/articles/CSTA_015158

An article on maintaining a healthy diet, “Healthy Eating”

http://portal.acs.org/portal/acs/corg/content?nfpb=true&pageLabel=PP_SUPERARTICLE&node_id=1758&use_sec=false&sec_url_var=region1&uuid=b9bbb526-349d-4cb4-8ec1-9f6ee721ff31

Green Energy (Grades 4-6)

The pros and cons of solar energy

http://www.clean-energy-ideas.com/articles/pros_and_cons_of_solar_energy.html

An article on one negative effect of alternative energy sources, from Fox News

<http://www.foxnews.com/scitech/2011/11/05/wind-farms-disrupting-radar-scientists-say/>

National Geographic video on alternative energy

<http://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/player/environment/energy-environment/alternative-energy.html>

An article about President Obama’s promotion of clean energy

<http://www.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3756003>

An article about urban farms

<http://www.sciencenewsforkids.org/2008/10/farms-sprout-in-cities-2/>

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

Nutrition – Control: Pros and Cons of Chocolate Milk

Clip from Australian news discussing how Jamie Oliver has convinced LA schools to ban chocolate milk. Citizens in Australia are interviewed about their feelings.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eQ4wGDI56Zg>

Moo TV: a video made by grade 4 students to campaign against chocolate milk. They were inspired by a video clip their teacher showed them (Jamie Oliver's show).

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZsU-E57vea0>

Video clip showing a nurse explaining the benefits of chocolate milk.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mo3gsx05974>

Raise your Hand for Chocolate Milk: video clip showing a dietician who works for a Dairy organization explaining the benefits of chocolate milk.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t1XGy45F210>

Raise your Hand for Chocolate Milk: celebrities and authors of books on health discuss why they are pro-chocolate milk.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RjKFlusW-Xc&feature=related>

Schools May Ban Chocolate Milk Over Added Sugar by Christina Hoag. ABC news. Describes the debate and provides points from each side.

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory?id=13559159>

Sugar in chocolate milk compared to other tasty treats

<http://www.consumethisfirst.com/2010/07/29/sugar-in-chocolate-milk-compared-to-other-treats/>

Flavored milk versus white milk. Q&A with Dr. Sarah Jane Schwarzenberg, co-chair of MN-AAP's pediatric obesity taskforce

<http://mnaap.org/pdf/1108chocolatemilk.pdf>

Ad by the National Dairy Council showing benefits of chocolate milk

http://www.nationaldairycouncil.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/child_nutrition/health_kit/FinalFlavoredMilkAdvertorial110909.pdf

An article on the pros and cons of banning chocolate milk in schools

http://www.usatoday.com/money/industries/food/2011-05-09-chocolate-milk-bans_n.htm

Information about the health benefits of chocolate milk from Trumoo

<http://www.trumoo.com/nutrition/benefits/>

An article on the connection between flavored milk and increased milk consumption

http://www.whymilk.com/studies_print.php?study=milk_consumption_in_schools_dropped

NPR article and sound clip about the nutritional value of chocolate milk. Nov. 11, 2009. Debate with experts on both sides of the issue

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=120305044

USDA article on milk consumption

www.fns.usda.gov/fns/corenutritionmessages/Files/Guidebook.pdf

Ad by the National Dairy Council showing benefits of chocolate milk

http://www.nationaldairycouncil.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/child_nutrition/health_kit/FinalFlavoredMilkAdvertorial110909.pdf

“Got Milk? Chocolate After Your Workout; Fitness Magazine” by Kelly L. Phillips- downing chocolate milk might help elite athletes

<http://www.fitnessmagazine.com/recipes/healthy-eating/superfoods/chocolate-milk-after-workout/>

Chocolate Milk Gives Athletes Leg-up After Exercise, Says University of Texas at Austin Study. June 22, 2011

http://www.utexas.edu/news/2011/06/22/milk_studies/

“Chocolate Milk Refuels Muscles After Workout: Study Shows Carbohydrates and Protein in Chocolate Milk Help Muscles Recover From Exercise.”

<http://www.webmd.com/fitness-exercise/news/20100604/chocolate-milk-refuels-muscles-after-workout>

Chocolate Milk: The New Sports Drink. Feb. 24 2006.

http://www.cbsnews.com/2100-500368_162-1342839.html

These resources can help school nutrition personnel work with the rest of the school community, and parents, to help achieve the goals of Fuel Up to Play 60.

<http://school.fueluptoplay60.com/tools/nutrition-education/school-nutrition.php>

Video clip about the politics behind school lunches. Nov. 16, 2011.

<http://thelastword.msnbc.msn.com/?videoDate=20111116>

Plain milk is the best beverage choice for children, but chocolate milk can have a place in a child's diet because it supplies many of the same nutrients.

<http://www.livestrong.com/article/411888-chocolate-milk-health-benefits-in-elementary-schools/>

Video against chocolate milk in schools

<http://www.thelunchbox.org/videos/chef-ann-eliminating-chocolate-milk-schools>

NPR video about chocolate milk

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2011/11/21/142517141/whats-to-love-and-loathe-about-chocolate-milk>

The Great Chocolate Milk Debate.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1wPQ55L4hAg>

ABC News video about chocolate milk debate in schools.

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

<http://abcnews.go.com/Health/chocolate-milk-debate-rages-schools-calcium-important-calories/story?id=13359739#.T-zaUytYvek>

Occupy Wall Street

Wikipedia entry for “Occupy Wall Street,” very long overview of the movement

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_Wall_Street

Sept 28 – *DAILY NEWS*, “Occupy Wall Street Protesters Are Behaving Like A Bunch of Spoiled Brats”

http://articles.nydailynews.com/2011-09-28/news/30236515_1_pepper-spray-nypd-parade-route

Oct 10 – *USA Today*, “Occupy Wall Street is 2nd American Revolution”

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/forum/story/2011-10-11/occupy-wall-street-revolution/50721480/1>

Oct 12 – *USA Today*, “Editorial: Five Good Reasons Why Wall Street Breeds Protesters”

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/editorials/story/2011-10-11/Occupy-Wall-Street-protesters/50735960/1>

Nov 17 – *USA Today* Blog – “Occupy Protesters Try to Keep Movement Going,” Describing ‘Day of Action’ and including differing points of view on the movement

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/story/2011-11-17/occupy-protests-anniversary/51263656/1>

Nov 17 – CBS NEWS Blog Video “Arrests made during Occupy Wall Street’s ‘Day of Action’,” no commentary or reporting only video feed of mostly peaceful arrests

<http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=7388799n>

Nov 18 - *TIME* magazine blog TEXT AND VIDEO post, starting off positively supporting the movement but then criticizing some of their more recent activities

<http://swampland.time.com/2011/11/18/occupy-wall-streets-day-off-message/>

Nov 18 - ABC News “Occupy Protests Across the Country Take Toll on City Budgets,” description of costs from various cities of police response and some varying points of view on those numbers

<http://abcnews.go.com/Business/occupy-wall-street-protests-cost-cities-millions/story?id=14975940>

Nov 18 – *Wall Street Journal* Video Blog “Opinion Journal” – “Obamaville Rage,” editorial board member and a columnist against the OWS movement speak

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

<http://online.wsj.com/video/opinion-obamaville-rage/62319A01-95F7-426F-8525-70486205A4BD.html?KEYWORDS=occupy+wall+street>

Nov 19 - Newt Gingrich at Republican Forum – VIDEO - “Go get a job right after you take a bath”

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JckR3YaFLxE>

SATIRE – *The Onion* – Nov 15, “Magnanimous Banker Hires Occupy Wall Street Protesters” (CAUTION: OTHER SATIRICAL ARTICLES ON *The Onion*’s WEBSITE MAY CONTAIN ADULT TOPICS AND CONTENT)

<http://www.theonion.com/articles/magnanimous-banker-hires-occupy-wall-street-protos,26666/>

Recycling (Grades 4-6)

An article about recycling: “Recycling-Chemistry Can”

http://portal.acs.org/portal/PublicWebSite/education/whatischemistry/scienceforkids/articles/CSTA_015171

A news clip that argues recycling is the “lazy” way of saving our planet

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gVS3O5vxpJI&feature=related>

An article on the problems with plastic and attempts to create eco-friendly plastics

<http://www.sciencenewsforkids.org/2011/07/plant-powered-plastics/>

An article that argues recycling is a waste of time, money and energy

<http://mises.org/daily/1911>

Recycling (Grades 6-9)

(Courtesy of Joshua Hurley-Bruno, School of the Future)

Facts on the benefits of recycling

http://ecocycle.org/files/pdfs/why_recycle_%20brochure.pdf

Article arguing if recycling is worth the trouble and cost

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/story?id=91824&page=1#.T2i24cUgewQ>

The cons of recycling

<http://www.livestrong.com/article/124212-cons-recycling/#ixzz1cMpMKV6r>

Hidden costs of recycling (on a college student’s blog)

<http://policyeconomics.blogspot.com/2007/12/hidden-costs-of-recycling.html>

Efforts to recycling, including pros and cons

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

http://www.cleveland.com/pdq/index.ssf/2008/09/are_all_your_recycling_efforts.html

Blog about trouble with trying to get rid of plastic – and its effects

<http://quakerpagan.blogspot.com/2008/12/whats-wrong-with-recycling-trouble-with.html>

Recycling gone to waste because trucks not separating trash

http://www.woai.com/content/troubleshooters/story/Recycling-gone-to-waste/Im2Cy5_vAkmlZvoMiTP1Ow.csp

Why it's beneficial to recycle

<http://ohiodnr.com/Home/why/tabid/9402/Default.aspx>

Sports

An article about a boy's recovery from a snowboarding accident

<http://www.timeforkids.com/news/new-beginnings/9676>

A book about extreme sports

Extreme Sports by Louise A. Gikow

A video about the importance of sports safety

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w3bIY_Hohc0&feature=relmfu

An article about athletes' salaries (attached)

“Do Athletes Deserve Millions?” adapted from an article by Sarah Rodriguez

An article about whether or not athletes are good role models

<http://www.livestrong.com/article/402590-are-athletes-good-role-models-for-kids/>

An article about chemistry and how it has impacted sports: “Racing Ahead With Chemistry”

http://portal.acs.org/portal/acs/corg/content?nfpb=true&pageLabel=PP_SUPERARTICLE&node_id=1758&use_sec=false&sec_url_var=region1&uuid=b9bbb526-349d-4cb4-8ec1-9f6ee721ff31

An article about taking the pressure off of sports competition

http://kidshealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/fit/pressure.html

Impact of football injuries

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/29/sports/football/29cohen.html?pagewanted=print>

TEACHERS COLLEGE

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

Food Web Woes

Adapted from the article by Emily Sohn for Science News for Kids, March 30th, 2007.

Sharks are scary—no doubt about it. Just ask anyone who’s seen *Jaws* or other films that feature these sharp-toothed creatures.

But there’s something that might be just as scary as meeting up with a shark—at least from an environmental perspective. It’s the thought of what might happen if sharks disappeared from the oceans. That’s because sharks are important players in delicate food webs, suggests a new study out of Canada.

Fishing companies have been killing large sharks for decades. Sometimes they’ve done it on purpose, and sometimes they’ve done it by mistake. Because of these kills, the animals that sharks eat have boomed. And that’s bad news for the creatures even lower on the food web.

Along the East Coast of the United States, only sharks that are at least 2 meters (6.6 feet) long are tough enough to eat a lot of the medium-size sharks, rays, and skates living in those waters. Eleven large shark species in the region fit into that category.

Researchers led by Ransom Myers in Nova Scotia reviewed 17 surveys that counted big sharks and their prey during the past 35 years. They found that numbers of all 11 species have dropped since 1972.

As the big sharks disappear, most of the smaller sharks, rays, and skates have increased in number. Surveys have shown increases in 12 of 14 species of these sea creatures over the past 30 years. The populations of some of these species are 10 times as high as they were three decades ago.

Researcher Charles H. Peterson recently heard fishermen in North Carolina complaining that cownose rays were eating up all the region’s bay scallops. He and his colleagues at the University of North Carolina’s Institute of Marine Sciences at Morehead City decided to test whether this was really happening.

To keep rays from eating scallops in certain areas, the scientists put a protective ring of poles around the scallops. Rays are wider than most sea creatures and won’t usually swim between poles that are spaced closely together. (The rays could turn sideways and fit through, but they don’t usually do this.) Other animals, however, swim easily through the gaps between poles.

In 2002 and 2003, at the beginning of the fall season, researchers found populations of bay scallops that were healthy and dense. But after rays migrated through, the scallops nearly disappeared in areas that were not surrounded by poles. Within protected areas, only half of the scallops were gone. It’s not even certain that the missing ones got eaten, Peterson says, since they might just have swum away.

The study suggests that efforts to replace declining populations of shellfish, such as scallops and oysters, might require extra levels of protection against predators.

The findings reinforce the message from a 1998 study of a food web in Alaska. In that area, killer whales can normally eat otters. Otters eat sea urchins. And sea urchins eat kelp. When the whales ate more otters, the study found, sea urchins thrived, and the kelp suffered.

In food webs, balance is key.

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

Alarming Increase in Fatal Shark Attacks World-Wide: Science cuts through the hysteria for answers

Adapted from an article by Dr. Douglas Fields for the Huffington Post, October 11th, 2011.

Authorities in Western Australia have failed in their attempt to hunt down and kill a great white shark that took the life of a 32-year-old American diver, George Wainwright on Saturday. This is the fourth fatal attack by sharks in Australia in the last 14 months -- three times the annual average. There have been 13 shark attack deaths world-wide this year, and statistics show that the number of shark attacks have increased steadily for decades.

John West, of the Taronga Zoo, in Australia and Curator of the Australian Shark Attack File, indicated in an e-mail for this article that shark attack numbers in Australia have increased steadily over the last 20 years.

Is there a scientific explanation for these alarming data and the spike in recent fatal shark attacks?

Yes, both experts agree. The steady increase in shark attacks is easily explained by the increase in human population and growing popularity of water related sports and recreational activities. "The increase in shark attacks is largely a function of human demographics and growth. The number we get in any given year is purely a function of how many people went into the water," says Burgess.

There are, however, some new patterns emerging from Burgess' data on shark attacks.

"There has been an increase this year [in shark attacks] in a number of areas where we have not traditionally had such attacks, undoubtedly by white sharks, most notably the three series of attacks in Russia in areas of cold water most of the time," he says. This, he explains is due to warming of waters, possibly associated with global warming, that are allowing sharks to expand their range farther north and south into waters where they normally do not go, and also because warmer water induces more people entering the sea.

Most attacks on humans are mistakes. "We all need to remember that we are not a natural part of the marine environment," Burgess observes. "So therefore we are not likely to be a preferred food item of any animal in the sea, simply because we are foreign objects every time we are encountered. In fact, most commonly sharks will move away from us as we represent an unknown entity and the natural reaction is to show caution."

"Here in Florida where we have more shark bites than anywhere else in the world. These interactions are almost surely mistaken identity, because the animals involved are small--six feet or less in size--and species of sharks that are typically shrimp eaters that don't normally go after large prey items. Their teeth are not designed evolutionarily for tearing, but rather for grabbing and swallowing whole." When these sharks feed in the murky surf zone where the jostling of waves and currents forces them to rely on quick grabs to feed, a flailing leg or arm of a bather frolicking in the surf can be mistaken for the animal's normal prey.

TEACHERS COLLEGE

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

There are exceptions, however. "Other animals like white sharks, tiger sharks, bull sharks, of large size whose teeth are designed for shearing and who normally go after large prey item can in some cases see humans as simply representing an appropriate sized and perhaps appropriately behaved image of the normal prey item." The silhouette of surfer in a black wetsuit paddling on the surface can resemble a seal, for example. "You can't dismiss all bull shark and white shark attacks on humans as cases of mistaken identity; a human simply looks like something worthy of a trial."

What can be done to prevent such predatory attacks on humans? Some, as has happened after the recent fatal attack in Australia, argue for "culling" the shark population and hunting down and killing the suspected killer shark. This, Burgess argues, is futile.

"Obviously trying to kill the killer is just really a waste of time and public resources, simply because you can't identify the individual shark in any other way than to kill the shark and open the stomach and hope to find a piece of human in it. That's a shot in the dark. The chances of finding a killer are pretty much slim to none. White sharks are highly mobile and they move 40 to 50 miles a day. So the chances of the killer shark being caught after an attack are pretty much nil, because that animal has probably long gone."

The number of shark species that are dangerous is exceedingly small. "Remember there are almost 1,200 species of sharks, rays and chimaeras worldwide and the white, bull and tiger sharks [most often implicated in attacks on humans] are only three of these," observes

Gregor Cailliet, Professor at Moss Landing Marine Laboratories.

The experts advise that understanding and respecting the biology and ecology of sharks can enable one to avoid becoming shark bait.

"People need to use common sense in deciding where and when to be in the water and doing what. For example, areas where pinnipeds [seals and sea lions] have pupping grounds, and often coastal points outside of kelp beds, are "hot spots" off California, says Professor Cailliet.

The most recent fatal attack on the diver in Australia took place in an area where white sharks would have been expected to be feeding. "The place where he was [attacked] was close to a seal colony. We see a number of shark attacks on humans around seal colonies," Burgess says.

Moreover the location of the attack is in the migratory route for whales. "Whales move through this area at this time of year, every year, and where there are migratory whales there are white sharks following. We see this right along our coast--the East Coast--in the winter as the Right Whales head south off of Georgia and Florida, white sharks follow them as well. The only time we see white sharks in Florida is in the winter time when they follow the whales down."

It also appears from initial reports that this diver was engaged in spear fishing. If so, this attack would be classified in the shark attack files as a "provoked attack" because the blood and frantic movements of speared fish would

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

attract sharks to the area and provoke them to feed.

"Sharks have more to fear from humans than humans have from sharks," observes John McCosker, an expert on white sharks at the California Academy of Sciences in California. He advises people to avoid areas where there is a history of attacks, and that the new thrill-seeking "shark dives" being offered adventurous divers runs counter to common sense.

One needs to keep the risk of shark attack in perspective. These are very rare events. "Over the past 50 years there is an average of around one person killed by a shark each year in Australia, yet there is also an average of 87 people that drown every year at our beaches [in Australia], says John West.

All of the shark authorities consulted for this article agree that the general population has a distorted and sensationalized view of sharks. "I think the only words most people hear or read and retain are 'dangerous' and 'predator' even when an article or documentary is balanced," West says. "Of all the people I have spoken to over my 40 years involved with sharks, 99.5% have never seen a live wild shark yet 99% are fearful of sharks--where do they get this fear from? I think it is the media and associated movies."

People seem to have forgotten the basic biological facts with respect to humans and sharks. "When we enter the sea, we need to understand that we are visiting a foreign environment," Burgess observes. "We are terrestrial animals. Our evolution occurred on land. We don't have gills. We can't swim very

well, and as such every time we enter the sea it is a wilderness experience for us. One of the mistaken impressions that we as humans have is that we are owed the right to be safe 100 percent of the time wherever we go in the world. That's a pretty haughty view that humans have-- that we should be able to control every phase of the world we live in. In the sea we should accept a certain amount of risk, and it is incumbent upon us to reduce the chances of risk by being smart. But any way you look at it, when you enter the sea it is a wilderness experience."

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

People are More Dangerous Than Sharks

Adapted from Charles Q. Choi's article for Live Science, June 19, 2010

As dangerous as sharks may have seemed to people after watching "Jaws", the recent disastrous plunge in their numbers reveal that people have proven far more dangerous to sharks.

In the waters off the U.S. eastern seaboard, populations of many species of sharks have dropped by 50 percent and some have fallen by as much as 90 percent, said George Burgess, director of the Florida Program for Shark Research in Gainesville. Overall, nearly a third of all sharks worldwide may be [threatened with extinction](#).

This catastrophic decline is due in large part to commercial fishing of sharks. "The market for shark fins in East Asia opened up thanks to changes in their economy, increasing their ability to spend [money](#) on things such as shark fin soup," Burgess said.

However, the biggest worry for sharks and their relatives is "bycatch". Bycatch is a term used for fish or sharks that are caught unintentionally by fishermen trying to catch other fish. Often if the sharks are released, they are severely injured or killed.

When it comes to why one should [save](#) sharks, Burgess said, "I could give you the philosophical answer that all creatures deserve to be here — that they each have their own

place in the grand web that is our world, and no one animal is more important than the others."

There is also the more grounded answer that sharks are at the top of the food chain, and that by removing such predators, one could wreak havoc on the rest of their ecosystems. Indeed, research has shown that the alarming decline in sharks is [causing other species to suffer](#) as well. With the large predators gone, their prey — smaller rays and sharks — are free to feast on lower organisms like scallops and clams, depleting valuable commercial stocks.

The crux of the problems behind bringing sharks back is that "sharks are slow growing and slow to reach maturity. Sharks are live-bearers, which means females keep their young in their body just like us, but instead of nine months, it takes 12 to 18 months. Also, sharks generally can't give birth again until a year after they've given birth — sometimes they're on a three-year cycle. So once you get a shark population knocked down, this 'life in the slow lane' means that recovery is measured in decades rather than years."

Any measures aimed at [saving](#) sharks must not only consider bycatch, "which is the real killer right now," but also encourage international cooperation, Burgess said.

"Sharks are very migratory, and many species cross borders," he said. "We can protect them only by getting many governments to come aboard. That's the hardest part about this."

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

Op-Ed: Black bears, not people, in greatest danger

Adapted from an article by Ken Wightman, *Digital Journal*, April 28, 2010

After hearing police were hunting a wild black bear close to my home in London, Ontario, and that the school where my wife works was in lock-down mode, I was worried for my wife and the children. Now, I think I should have been worried for the bear.



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Large black bears are not as fierce as one might expect from their size, their claws and their large strong jaws.

A black bear was shot Tuesday in London, Ontario. The London Free Press talked with Martyn Obbard, a scientist for the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) in Peterborough, who told the paper that the police likely had no option but to kill the bear, considering its proximity to schools and homes.

Yet, the paper also reports that according to Jolanta Kowaski of the MNR in Aylmer, when it comes to black bears generally “people should not be afraid.”

London Police Chief Murray Faulkner defended the actions of his force, “. . . the bear charged at one of our officers.” To the police, unfamiliar with bears, a charging black bear was very threatening. To many biologists who study bears this is just bear bluster. In truth, the bear is frightened and it is putting on a fierce, scary display. Yesterday it worked all too well.



London police officers hunt a black bear sighted within the city limits Tuesday.

Sadly, the bear was asking for it. The bear threatened the police officer, and the officer reacted. This was the man’s first encounter with a black bear and he took the bear at its word --- or he took its actions at face value, which spoke louder than words --- and he defended himself, shooting the clearly menacing, sharp-toothed, well-clawed, large, wild animal.

Black bear myths

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

1. Bears are dangerous. Yes, they can be, but generally no.

According to *Hinterland Who's Who*:

. . . in the past century, for each human killed by a black bear in North America, approximately 180 people died from bee stings, 65 were fatally mauled in dog attacks, and 350 folk died in lightning strikes. The lowly spider, depending upon the species, can be 17 times more dangerous than the black bear.

If you really want to live dangerously, think car. According to the U.S. Dep't of Agriculture, a U.S. police officer driving to a bear sighting is in 160,000 times greater danger of dying while behind the wheel than later when facing an urban black bear.

That said, the average black bear may not be as tough as the junkyard dog, but still don't mess with one. Show a little prudence.

2. It is better to tranquilize a nuisance bear and relocate the animal than to shoot it.

Nope. This is the response that makes almost everyone feel good, except for the bear.

The sad truth, confirmed by Kowaski, is that "relocation doesn't always work." It

often does not solve the problem. If the bear is simply moved to another location, distant but still within its home range, it often returns. "The option to tranquilize and relocate is a short term solution," according to Kowaski.

Moving the bear a greater distance, to a location outside its home range, is called **translocation**. This is more costly than simple moving a problem bear a hundred miles, putting the problem out of sight and out of mind for a while. Sadly, translocation may be more expensive but it does not seem to be more successful in the majority of cases.

In the end, relocated problem bears often come to a poor end. Without the usual fear of humans, these bears are at risk of being eventually shot, or of dying by crossing roadways in populated areas, or of simply coping poorly in their new habitat hundreds of miles from their former territory.

3. Black bears rarely attack humans unless they are cornered, they or their cubs are threatened, or they are wounded.

The first part is true: Black bears rarely attack humans. It is hard to believe, but the rest is false. It is a myth. According to the USDA, "When pressed, they (bears) usually retreat, even with cubs. Attacking to defend cubs is more a

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

grizzly bear trait . . . Black bear mothers often leave their cubs and flee from people, and those that remain are more likely to bluff-charge than attack.”

This is not to say it can't happen. A little caution, make that a lot of caution, is good when dealing with bears. Often, what a bear intends to be a simple warning swipe is seen as a bear attack by an injured person. It doesn't take much to injure a human compared to a bear.

4. Black bears never stalk or hunt a person. Another myth.

After pointing out that black bears are generally not to be feared, it must be noted that many authorities agree that most, if not all, fatal attacks by non-captive black bears across North America have been unprovoked, **predatory** attacks. These are usually done without bluster or warning.

People involved in the rare attacks improve their chances for survival by fighting rather than playing dead. This refers to black bear attacks, not grizzly attacks. Surprisingly, these fatal encounters happen most often in remote areas where the bears have had little or no previous contact with people. They do not happen with any regularity in and around large, and very popular, established campsites.

**Are people dangerous to black bears?
The short answer is yes.**

Take our misreading of bear behavior, add our misunderstanding of biology, and finally mix in our lack of tolerance for bears and you have the ingredients for considerable conflict, with the bear coming out on the short end of the stick, so to speak.

The British Columbia Conservation Foundation 2000 reports that Professor Steven Herrero of the University of Calgary in Alberta, and a respected expert in the field of bear behavior, conservation and management, believes bears which regularly encounter lots of people, but without getting food, simply get used to people. These bears become **habituated** and will tolerate people at closer distances than most bears

But add food to the story and you have a habituated bear that associates people with food. It has been food-conditioned. And the danger? Such bears often become a “problem.” They are judged to be a “nuisance” and there is a great risk they will be removed and eventually killed. These bears also have increased vulnerability to hunters, **poachers** and to becoming roadkill.

Food-conditioned bears are among the most dangerous bears. They become very bold in their attempts to get food

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

from people and this is potentially dangerous to both the bears and to people. Also, people mistake such behavior as indicating that the bear is tame and act inappropriately around these animals.

Who was in more danger yesterday? Londoners or the black bear. The answer may be the bear, seeing that it's the bear that is dead.

Fatal Attacks on People by the North American Black Bear Shows Lone Males Are Most Dangerous and Attack Rates Are Rising

Adapted from an article by MedicalNewsToday.com, 12 May 2011

Fatal encounters with black bears have been exceedingly rare during the last century, but appear to be mainly the result of predatory male bears targeting humans in their wilderness home ranges, according to a new study led by the world's leading expert on bear attacks.

In an article published in the *Journal of*

Wildlife Management, University of Calgary professor Dr. Stephen Herrero, University of Calgary graduate Andrew Higgins, and colleagues from the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife and Brigham Young University studied the circumstances of all deaths by non-captive black bears in North America between 1900 and 2009. The study found that 63 people were killed in 59 incidents in Canada, Alaska and the lower 48 states. The researchers determined that the majority (88%) of fatal attacks involved a bear exhibiting **predatory** behavior, and 92% of the predatory bears were males. The authors suggest male black bears have evolved some different behaviors than females.

"Each year there are millions of interactions between people and black bears with no injuries to people. So while the risk is low, it does exist," said Herrero, an expert in bear behavior and ecology. "Our findings raise some important new insights that can be used to better understand the cause of attacks and how they can be avoided in both the front and backcountry."

In particular, the common belief that surprising a mother bear with cubs is the most dangerous kind of black bear encounter is inaccurate. Instead, lone male black bears who are hunting

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

people as a potential source of food are a greater cause of deadly maulings and predatory attempts. The study also found that fatal attacks do not typically involve bears that are familiar with humans, although some fatal attacks did.

"Most fatal black bear attacks were predatory and all fatal attacks were carried out by a single bear," Herrero said. "With training, people can learn to recognize when a bear considers them prey and stop an attack by taking aggressive action such as fighting back."

The paper confirms other current perceptions and bear management practices. It found that bears that have previously killed people are more likely to attack again; parties of more than two people are much less likely to be attacked; and human food and garbage tends to attract bears and may increase the likelihood of serious bear attacks.

Examining 110 years of data also allowed the researchers to identify historical and geographic trends of black bear attacks. They found that 86% of fatal attacks occurred since 1960; that **fatalities** are more common in Canada and Alaska (despite lower human populations and less contact between humans and bears than in the lower 48 states); and that human population

growth is accompanied by rising fatal bear attacks.

"We didn't demonstrate why population growth is correlated with more bear attacks but we suspect it is because there are more people pursuing recreational and commercial activities in black bear habitat," Herrero said. "Similarly, we don't know exactly why there have been more attacks in Canada and Alaska. We speculate that it could be because bears in those areas are living in less productive habitat with periodic food stress, which may cause some bears to consider people as prey."

The article "Fatal Attacks by American Black Bear on People: 1900-2009" by Stephen Herrero, Andrew Higgins, James E. Cardoza, Laura I. Hajduk & Tom S. Smith is published in the April, 2011 issue of the *Journal of Wildlife Management*.

Source:
Grady Semmens
University of Calgary

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

Schools May Ban Chocolate Milk Over Added Sugar



Chocolate milk cartons are seen at the Belmont Senior High cafeteria in Los Angeles in this photo taken Tuesday, May 3, 2011. (Damian Dovarganes/AP Photo)

Adapted from an article by CHRISTINA HOAG Associated Press
LOS ANGELES May 9, 2011 (AP)

What Makes Some Chocolate Milk So Sweet? Sugar!

Chocolate milk is often called “the spoonful of sugar that makes the medicine go down,” but with American kids more overweight than ever before, many are wondering if this is smart.

Schools are under a lot of pressure to offer healthier food. Many people are attacking schools for serving chocolate milk because of the ingredient that has made it so popular — sugar.

Some school districts have prohibited, or said that no schools cannot have, flavored milk. Florida considered a ban in all its schools. Other places have decided to replace flavored milks that contain high-fructose corn syrup with versions containing sugar, which some see as a more natural sweetener.

Los Angeles Unified, one of the country’s largest school districts, is tackling the issue. Superintendent John Deasy recently announced he would ask schools to remove chocolate and strawberry milk from school menus.

Is Chocolate Milk Bad?

Nutritionists and parents are split over whether it makes sense to say that schools cannot serve chocolate milk. 70 percent of milk in schools is flavored, mostly chocolate, according to the Milk Processors Education Program.

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

Many, including the School Nutrition Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Dietetic Association, American Heart Association, and National Medical Association, argue that there are many vitamins and nutrients in flavored low-fat or skim milk. Milk contains nine essential nutrients including calcium, vitamin D and protein. Many doctors and health organizations feel that it is important for kids to get these vitamins and nutrients, even if it means they are also having sugar. These groups have even done studies, or experiments, that show kids who drink fat-free, flavored milk meet more of their nutrient needs and are not heavier than non-milk drinkers.

"Chocolate milk has been unfairly pegged as one of the causes of obesity," said Julie Buric, vice president of marketing for the Milk Processors Education Program.

Others say that America has a real obesity problem and flavored milk needs to go.

Eight ounces of white milk has about 14 grams of natural sugar or lactose; fat-free chocolate milk has an extra six grams of sugar for a total of 20 grams. Fat-free strawberry milk has a total of 27 grams of sugar — the same as eight ounces of Coca-Cola.

"Chocolate milk is soda [dressed up]," said Ann Cooper, the head of nutrition services for the Boulder Valley School District in Louisville, Colorado. They do not allow flavored milk in their schools. "It works as a treat in homes, but it doesn't belong in schools."

British TV chef Jamie Oliver also thinks that chocolate milk is a bad idea. He is trying to make sure that schools serve healthier food and drink choices to kids. On his show, "Food Revolution," Oliver recently filled a school bus with white sand to show the amount of sugar Los Angeles Unified school children take in every week when they drink flavored milk.

"If you have flavored milk, that's candy," he told The Associated Press. Oliver thinks that Deasy's idea to remove flavored milk from schools is a great idea.

But other schools who have tried to get rid of chocolate milk found that kids drank less milk. Kids drink 35 percent less milk when flavored milks are removed, according to the Milk Processors Education Program.

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

Do Athletes Deserve Millions?

By Sarah Rodriguez for *Sports Illustrated for Kids*



As the United States goes through a recession, many professional athletes are still being paid gigantic contracts. Do they really deserve these outrageous paychecks? The simple answer is NO, however there are a few positives involved with giving out this amount of money.

Life is hard for so many ordinary Americans. As they are struggling financially, people are expected to ask: Why do athletes continue to receive higher and higher salaries? I believe, like many, it is crazy to pay a single person \$100 million (in Michael Vick's case) within a span of a few years. In 2011 alone, Alex Rodriguez is projected to make a whopping \$32 million!

With this type of money comes a large amount of responsibility, and many athletes today have failed to invest their money wisely. Countless professional athletes have wasted the gifts they have been given. According to an article in Bloomberg Businessweek, numerous athletes have had to file for bankruptcy due to poor choices with their money. Some of these athletes include NBA Hall of Famer Scottie Pippen, who wasted his earnings of \$120 million, and boxer Evander Holyfield who squandered more than \$200 million. The National Basketball Players Association estimates that 6-to-8 percent of NBA players end up broke. These are just some of many who have shown that professional athletes really don't deserve multi-million dollar contracts.

Even though there are many negatives to giving athletes extremely large amounts of money, there still remain a few positives. The pricey contracts that teams give to their players, keep these elite players on their team. These highly paid superstars attract fans to the games and keep people interested. Without fans, we would not have the huge sporting events that attract so much attention and money. Although there are a lot of irresponsible athletes, there are some that use their money wisely to help benefit others. For example, Steve Nash has an international foundation that helps promote children's health in underprivileged countries. Also, in contrast to many highly paid superstars, Drew Brees founded a very successful foundation that is working on the fight against cancer and providing education and care for children who need it.

As professional athletes continue to receive larger and larger paychecks, the results have shown that teams should not give out so much money. So many ordinary people are struggling day in and day out. Athletes' salaries make the situations that ordinary people are in seem worse. The athletes in the news don't ever have to worry about their finances. Even though the situation most likely will not change anytime soon, it has become clear that a change needs to be made!

TEACHERS COLLEGE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT