Learning

Live from Behind the Scenes FAQ

What happens during Live from Behind the Scenes?
We'll send your class a direct link to join a live, 50-minute videoconference with Shedd Aquarium and up to two other classrooms. During the program, a Shedd presenter interacts with the classes as they take part in activities, live animal observations and a question-and-answer session with aquarium professionals. Shedd will email you a kit of curriculum materials to use during the program. One week prior to your scheduled program, you'll join a test session with Shedd staff to learn how to use the videoconferencing platform and to learn more about what your role will be during the program.

What is the cost?
Live from Behind the Scenes programs are $125 for the first 50-minute program and $95 each for up to two additional programs. Take multiple programs over the course of a unit or get reduced pricing for multiple classes within a school.

Who can participate?
Programs are for grades K-2, 3-5 and 6-8, and are suitable for groups of up to 35 students a program.

What is the role of the teacher on the day of the program?
Teachers take an active role during Live from Behind the Scenes. You will assist aquarium educators with distributing materials, facilitating activities and moderating discussions. We will cover everything you need to know during the test conference the week before your scheduled program.

When is the test session? What does it involve?
The test session of the program is required the week prior to your program. Make sure you’re available for 30 minutes of testing when you register for the program. If your school has a staffer who specializes in Information Technology (IT) or Audio-Visual (AV) equipment, his or her presence along with you might help us troubleshoot any network security or connection obstacles that we encounter during the test. Email us with questions.

What kinds of programs are offered?
See the program descriptions for more details about the topics covered. Our programs are offered on a rotating basis, so check the registration form calendar for program availability.

When is the best time of year to schedule a Live from Behind the Scenes program?
This program is offered on a first-come, first-served basis, so schedule your program as soon as possible! Registration is required at least 21 days before the program date.

Are live animals seen during Live from Behind the Scenes?
Yes. During the program, your class will observe live animals from one or more of the aquarium’s exhibits.

How do I register for a Live from Behind the Scenes program?
Use the online registration form to schedule your program(s). You can specify date preferences for your desired program(s). Please note that attendance of the test session of the program is required the week prior.
to your program date. Make sure you’re available for a test session when you register. Shedd staff will contact you after registering to set up the test session.

**What happens after I register?**
Within 10 days, you’ll receive an email confirming the program reservation and payment options. In the 2 weeks prior to your program, a Shedd Aquarium Learning Programs staff member will contact you with details and to set-up the required test session.

**In case of last-minute changes, will I be able to change the start time of the program?**
Because of the close interaction with Shedd staff, animals and other classrooms, we are unable to accommodate schedule changes. If you need to reschedule a program, you can let us know by e-mailing learning@sheddaquarium.org.

**What kind of technology is required?**
Your classroom will need the following:
- A computer with an Internet connection (a wired connection is recommended for more reliable connectivity)
- Equipment to project the computer’s desktop image onto a screen large enough for your whole class to view together (projector, SMARTboard, large TV, etc.)
- Webcam
- Microphone (most webcams have a built-in microphone)
- Speakers

Shedd staff will set up a test session with you the week before your program. If you would like to do a quick test of your computer’s compatibility with the website we will be using, you can go to https://www.webex.com/test-meeting.html.

**What kinds of supplies are needed for the activities?**
We will email you a curriculum materials packet that includes one copy of the activity sheet and any other activity materials you may need during the program. We have tried to minimize the amount of paper resources that you will need to use. Count on making enough copies of the activity sheet for each student to have one and at least a few copies of the other activity materials. All you will need is a printer or copy machine and pencils and erasers for your students.

**Will other classrooms participate in the program with us?**
Up to three classrooms can participate in each Live from Behind the Scenes program. Classrooms will be able to see and hear one another, and Shedd Aquarium staff will spend equal time interacting with each participating classroom.

**Can a Live from Behind the Scenes program take place during my family night/science fair/career day/etc.?**
Due to the high volume of requests we receive, Shedd cannot offer customized programming for special events at schools. We do have multiple resources available for students on our website.