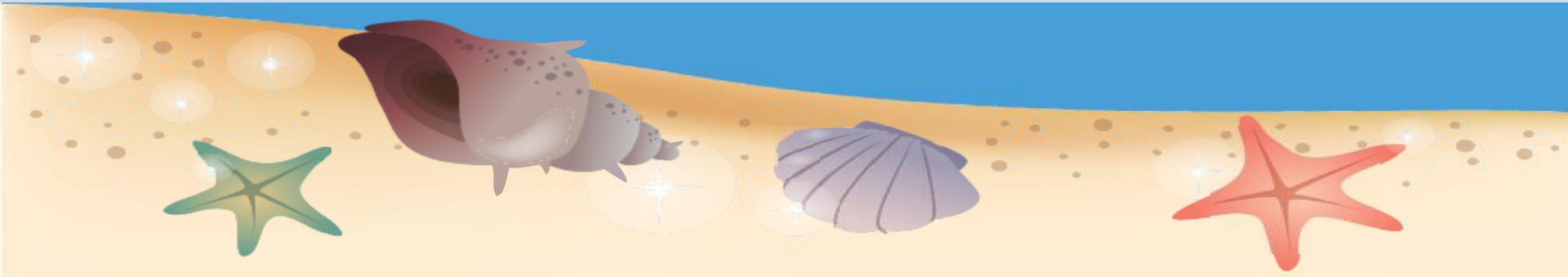


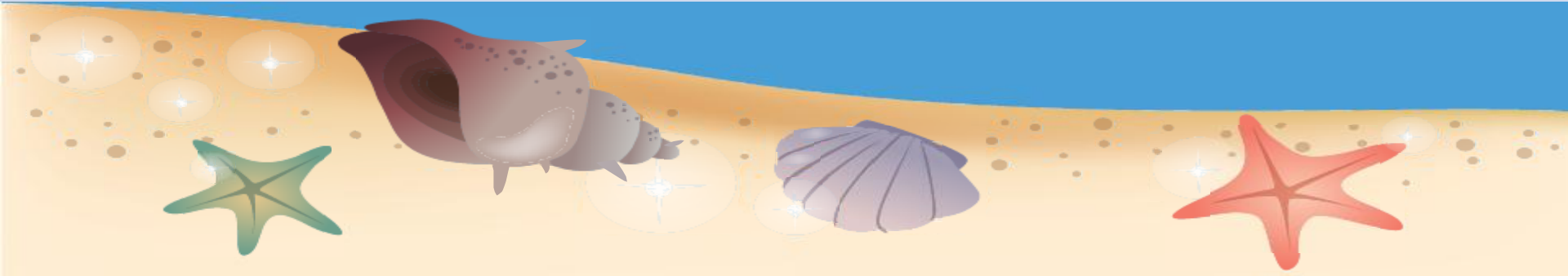
# Managing Stress and Anxiety

Fitchburg State College  
Expanding Horizons Program



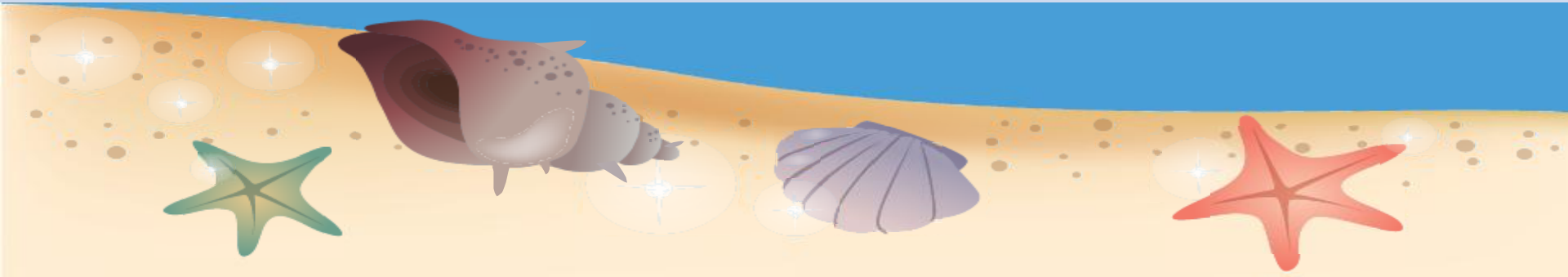
# What is Anxiety?

Anxiety is a feeling of dread about something unpleasant or threatening that might happen – even when there is no apparent reason to worry.



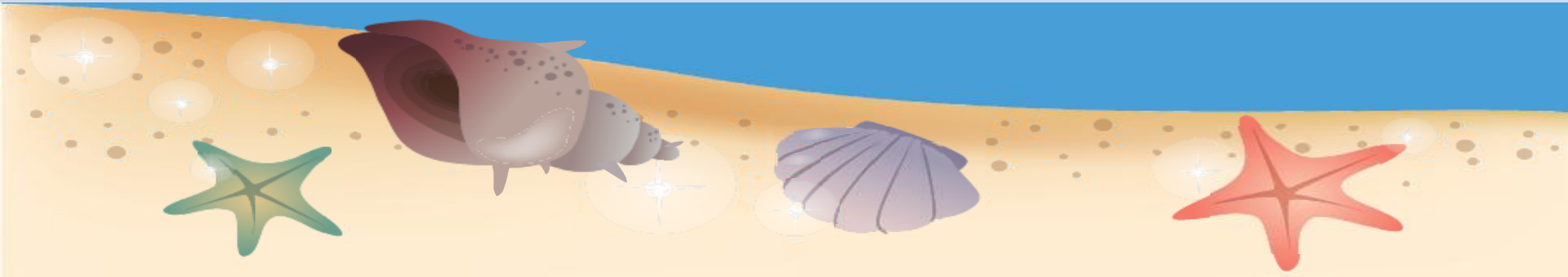
# Signs of Anxiety

- a racing heart or an irregular heartbeat
- feelings of dizziness and becoming light-headed
- panic sensations of sweating or being shaky and weak
- scary thoughts of losing control, passing out, or getting sick
- feelings of "unreality" or being disoriented
- a sense of being "on edge" all the time without being able to relax



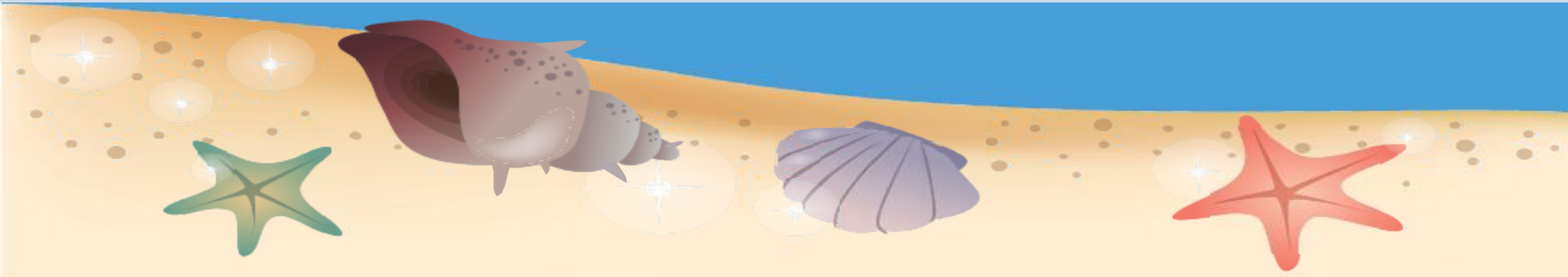
# Different Types of Anxiety

- [Panic Disorder](#) - Unpredictable attacks of anxiety that are accompanied by physiological manifestations. Attacks may last from minutes to hours. Panic attacks can occur at any time, even during sleep.
- [Agoraphobia](#) - An abnormal fear of being helpless in an embarrassing or inescapable situation that is characterized especially by the avoidance of open or public places. People with this disorder may become house bound for years, with resulting impairment of social and interpersonal relationships.



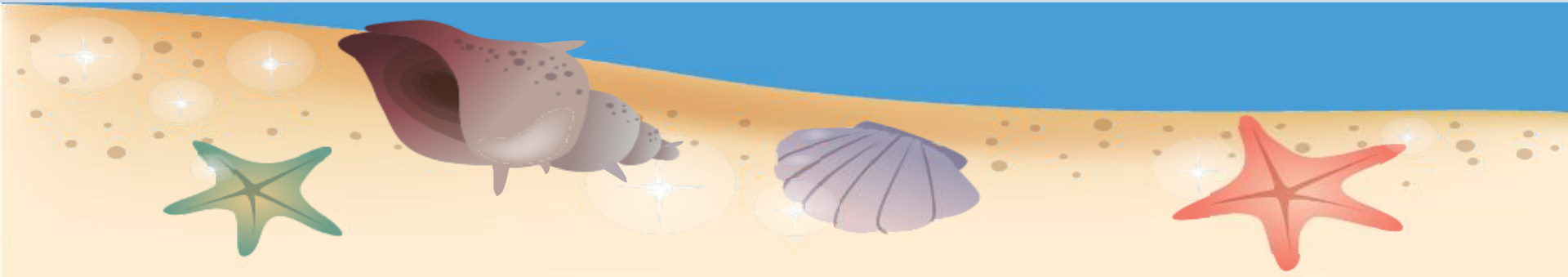
# Different Types of Anxiety

- [Specific Phobias](#) - Persistent fear of objects or situations. When these situations or objects appear, they can produce immediate and severe symptoms of anxiety.
- [Social Anxiety Disorder](#) - A persistent irrational fear of situations in which the person may be closely watched and judged by others, as in public speaking, eating, or using public facilities. A person then becomes fearful of social or performance situations in which they may be subject to the scrutiny of others.



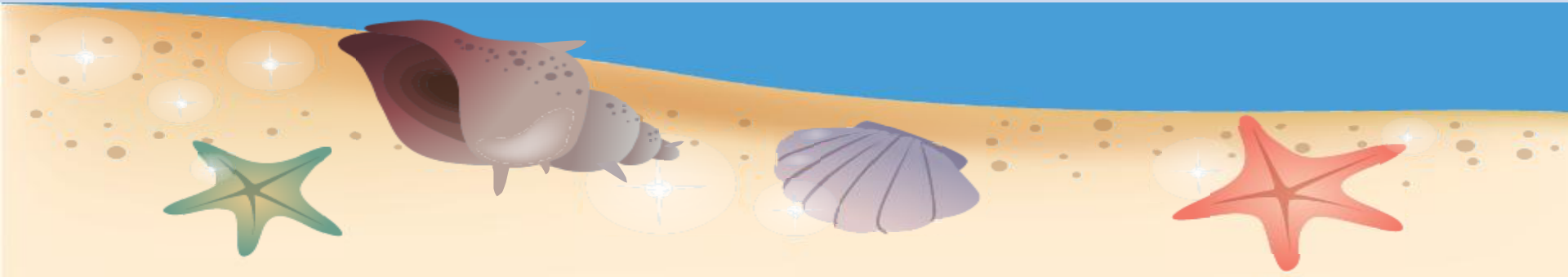
# Different Types of Anxiety

- [Post Traumatic Stress Disorder \(PTSD\)](#) - Post-traumatic stress disorder is a psychiatric illness that can occur following a traumatic event, in which there is the threat of injury or death to you or someone else.
- [Obsessive Compulsive Disorder \(OCD\)](#) - The person suffering from OCD uses ritualistic and repeated behaviors to rid themselves of obsessive thoughts and anxieties.



# Different Types of Anxiety

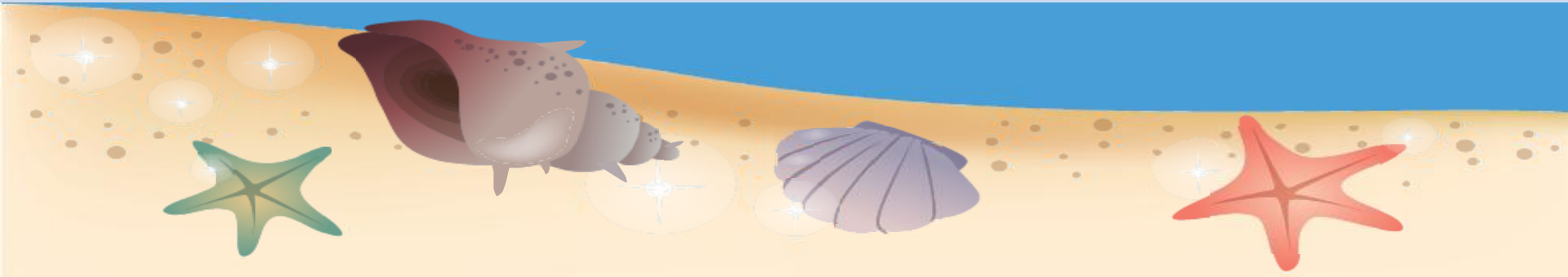
- [Generalized Anxiety Disorder \(GAD\)](#) - This a common condition. The disorder is characterized by excessive anxiety and worry that is out of proportion to the impact of the event or circumstance that is the focus of the worry. Persons with GAD may eventually experience other mental disorders, such as panic disorder or major depressive disorder.



# Test Anxiety

What causes test anxiety?

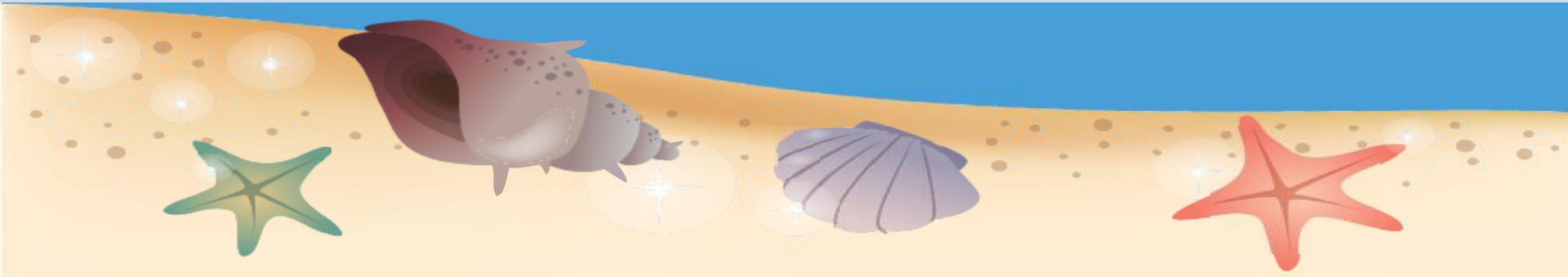
- Lack of preparation
- Cramming the night before the exam
- Poor time management
- Failure to organize text information
- Poor study habits
- Worrying about past performance on exams





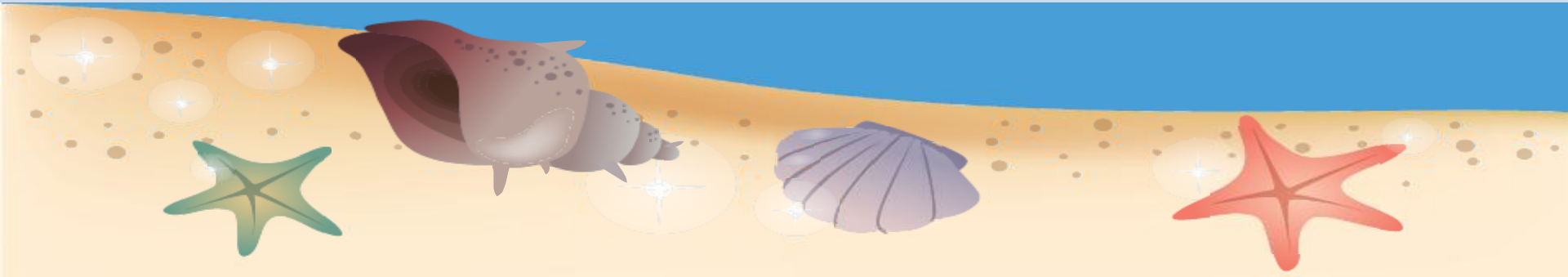
# Conquering Test Anxiety

- Study and know the material well enough so that you can recall it even if you are under stress
- Learn and practice good time management
- Banish negative thoughts, and think positively
- Take slow, deep breaths
- Practice Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- Remember that you are in competition with NO ONE but YOURSELF



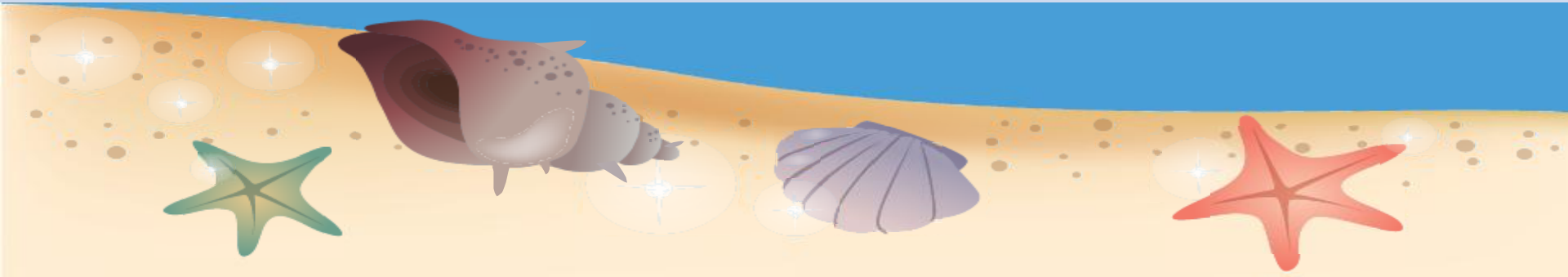
# Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Progressive Muscle Relaxation is a relaxation technique used to release stress. It can relax the muscles and lower blood pressure, heart rate, and respiration. Progressive Muscle Relaxation is the tensing and then relaxing each muscle group of the body, one group at a time. It can be done sitting or lying down. **Tense** up a group of muscles - tense hard but don't strain - and hold for about 5 to 10 seconds. **Release** the tension from the muscles all at once. **Relax** for 10 to 20 seconds.



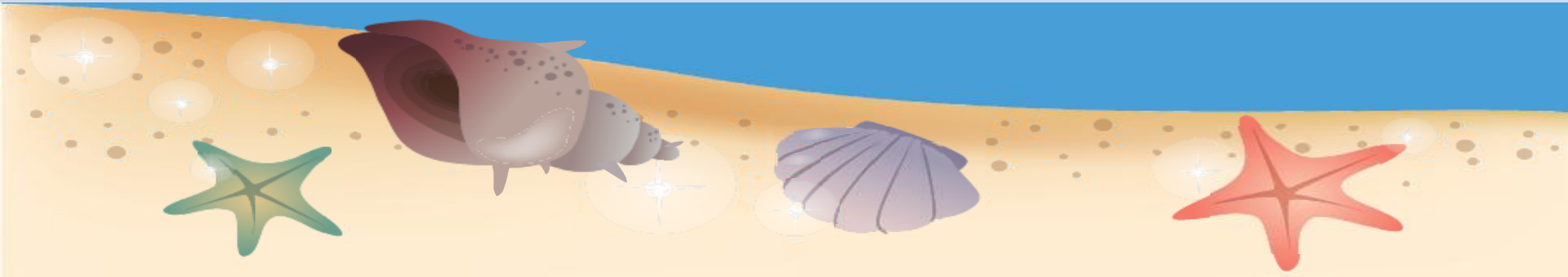
# The Exercise

- Hands - Clench fists *tense for 5, release, rest for 10*
- Forearms and hands - Extend arm, elbow locked, and bend hand back at the wrist *tense for 5, release, rest for 10*
- Upper arm - Bend arms at elbows and flex biceps *tense for 5, release, rest for 10*
- Forehead - wrinkle forehead into frown, tense, release, rest, and/or raise eyebrows *tense for 5, release, rest for 10*
- Eyes - close eyes tightly, hold and release *tense for 5, release, rest for 10*
- Mouth - press lips tightly together *tense for 5, release, rest for 10*



# The Exercise

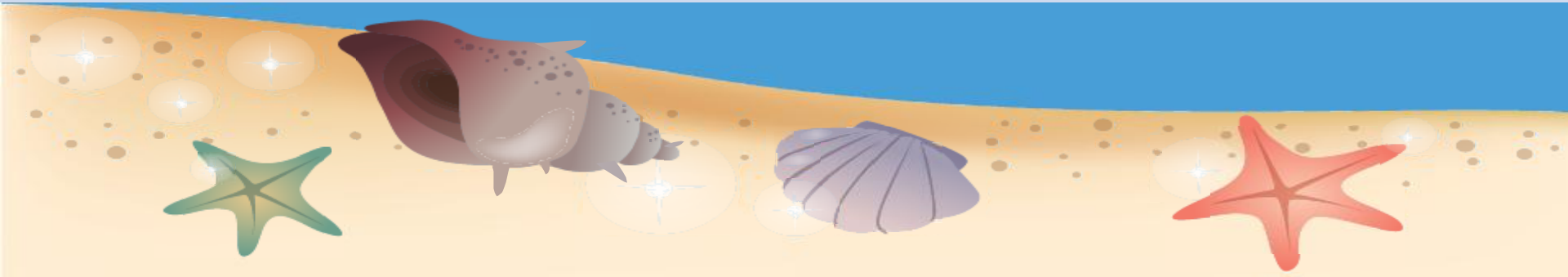
- *Jaw - open mouth wide and stick out tongue tense for 5, release, rest for 10*
- *Buttocks – tense for 5, release, rest for 10*
- *Abdomen - tense for 5, release, rest for 10*
- *Chest - tense for 5, release, rest for 10*
- *Back - arch back and tense for 5, release, rest for 10*
- *Neck and shoulders - tense for 5, release, rest for 10*
- *Thighs - tense for 5, release, rest for 10*



# The Exercise

- Lower legs and feet - point toes toward shin tense for 5, release, rest for 10
- Feet - Point toes and curl them under tense for 5, release, rest for 10

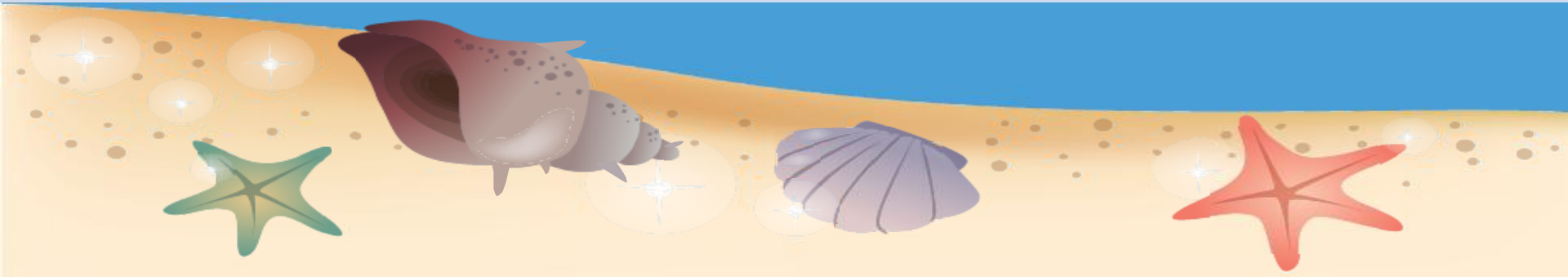
**You may repeat relaxing and tensing muscle groups that have you have already done to relax them further.**



# Diet and Exercise

What you eat and how you move are important factors in combating stress and anxiety. The following are lists of foods and exercises can help anxiety.

- Sardines, tuna, salmon
  - Olive or canola oil, nuts
  - Green, leafy vegetables
  - Carrots, onions, avocado, garlic
  - Vitamin B, magnesium
  - WATER!
- Walking
  - Yoga
  - Pilates
  - Swimming



# More Resources

- FSC Counseling Services Relaxation Exercise  
<http://www.fsc.edu/counseling/RelaxationExercisePage.cfm>
- 101 Strategies for Coping with Stress  
<http://www.uccs.umn.edu/oldsite/lasc/handouts/lascpdf/copingstress.pdf>
- UT-Austin Mind Body Lab (Cruise Imagery)  
[http://cmhc.utexas.edu/mbl\\_audio7.html](http://cmhc.utexas.edu/mbl_audio7.html)
- The Unabridged Student Counseling Virtual Pamphlet Collection  
<http://www.dr-bob.org/vpc/virtulets.html>

