



Lesson 1: Let's Start to Learn About Whales

Objectives: Students will start to learn about whales by reading a chapter book. Students will practice reading comprehension and writing skills by keeping a reading journal

What you will need:

- Class set of *The Wild Whale Watch* (Magic School Bus series; ISBN 0-439-10990-6)
- Copies of “My Reading Journal—*The Wild Whale Watch*” (one per student)
- Optional: Copies of *The Wild Whale Watch* Word Search (Page 1-3 and 1-4. This could also be used as a review activity later in the curriculum—e.g. after lesson #10.)

Standards: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.2; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.3; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.3; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.4; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.6

Sunshine State Standards: VA.4.C.1.1; VA.4.S.3.2

Strategy:

1. Give students copies of the reading journal. Explain that they will be completing parts of the journal as they read *The Wild Whale Watch*, and parts when they have finished reading the book. Review the journal and explain the expectations and grading rubric.
 - a. Students will stop reading at the end of chapter 1 and will complete the first writing assignment (prediction).
 - b. While reading the book, students will select words that are important to the story and will write those words on sticky notes. They will choose three of the words and complete the second writing assignment using these words.
 - c. The students will pay attention to the setting of the book—where is it taking place? Is the story occurring in the past (history), present or future? They will describe these in the third writing assignment.
 - d. Students will draw a scene from the book, showing the main setting and labeling important characters and landmarks in their illustration.
 - e. After finishing the book, students will complete a fourth writing assignment.
2. Explain that you will read the introduction to the book to the class, and ask them to help you select a word or words from the introduction to write on sticky notes. Explain that the word(s) they select should be important words for the story.
 - a. Read the two-page introduction. Ask the students if there is a word that they heard you read that they think might be important to the book [e.g. whale]. Tell them that they can make this their first sticky note word.
3. Have students read *The Wild Whale Watch* either individually, or as a class. The following list is a suggested way to break the book into sections for daily reading.
 - a. Chapter 1 = 9 pages
 - i. Complete first writing assignment in the journal (could be done as homework or in class)
 - b. Chapter 2 = 11 pages



- c. Chapter 3 + 4 = 10 pages
- d. Chapter 5 + 6 = 14 pages
- e. Chapter 7 = 8 pages
- f. Chapter 8 = 11 pages
- g. Chapter 9 = 12 pages
 - i. Complete the second and third writing assignments in the journal.
4. **Optional:** Review the words that students selected in the second writing assignment. Select words to add to your word wall (if you are using one in the classroom). Words might include the following:

Baleen, Blowhole, Blubber, Bow-riding, Breaching, Callosities, Dolphin, Flukes, Lobtailing, Plankton, Radio, Spy hopping, Submarine, Whale
5. **Optional:** Give students the word search worksheet to complete. Alternately, this could be saved for closer to the end of the curriculum and used as a review.
6. Explain the four choices for the final writing assignment. Ask the students to select which of the choices they would like to write about. (Alternately, select one of the options for all of the students to write about.)
 - a. Have students create a pre-writing plan for their assignment in the space provided in the journal.
 - b. Have students write and revise a draft for their assignment. The suggested grading rubric is based on creative writing; however, teachers may wish to create additional grading rubrics to address correct use of standard language conventions (spelling, punctuation, grammar etc.).

References: The reading journal was modified from “My Summer Reading Journal: A Summer Reading Program of the Appoquinimink School District Incoming 4th & 5th Graders” accessed from: http://www.sleschool.org/ourpages/auto/2008/6/19/1213897707521/LM_Full_4-5_Packet.pdf



Student name: _____

The Wild Whale Watch Word Search

Solve the clues below to figure out what words are hidden in the word search puzzle, and then find the words in the puzzle!

- A humpback whale is a A whale—it feeds on plankton and does not have teeth.
- Whales breathe through one or two H S on the top of their heads.
- B helps keep a whale warm in cold water.
- Dolphins like to play in the water that is churned up by the front of a boat. This behavior is called W .
- C is the name used to describe the behavior when whales leap head-first out of the water. They usually make quite a splash!
- Right whales have thickened patches of skin that look white on their heads. Scientists can identify individual right whales by looking at their L T .
- Bottlenose P are toothed whales that are often seen performing in marine parks.
- A whale's tail is made up of a pair of U .
- T is the name given to the behavior where whales slap their tails on the surface of the water.
- K is a mixture of tiny plants and animals; it is eaten by baleen whales.
- People in different submarines can talk to each other using a R .
- Whales sometimes stick their heads up out of the water and look around. We call this behavior S I (2 words).
- Students in *The Wild Whale Watch* used a M to dive under the water like whales do.
- The largest animal in the world is a blue A .
- A group of whales is called a D .



Words may be forwards, backwards, up or down (there are no diagonal words in this puzzle.) When you find a word, either circle it or put a line through it.

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



The Wild Whale Watch Word Search **ANSWER KEY**

Solve the clues below to figure out what words are hidden in the word search puzzle. Then find the words in the puzzle! Words may be forwards, backwards, up or down (no diagonal words in this puzzle.)

- A humpback whale is a B A L E E N whale—it feeds on plankton and does not have teeth.
- Whales breathe through one or two B L O W H O L E S on the top of their heads.
- B L U B B E R helps keep a whale warm in cold water.
- Dolphins may ride in the water that is churned up by the front of a boat. This behavior is called B O W - R I D I N G.
- B R E A C H I N G is the name used to describe the behavior when whales leap head-first out of the water. They usually make quite a splash!
- Right whales have thickened patches of skin that look white on their heads. Scientists can identify individual right whales by looking at the pattern of their C A L L O S I T I E S.
- Bottlenose D O L P H I N S are toothed whales that are often seen performing in marine parks.
- A whale's tail is made up of a pair of F L U K E S.
- L O B T A I L I N G is the name given to the behavior where whales slap their tails on the surface of the water.
- P L A N K T O N is a mixture of tiny plants and animals; it is eaten by baleen whales.
- People in different submarines can talk to each other using a R A D I O.
- Whales sometimes stick their heads up out of the water and look around. We call this behavior S P Y H O P P I N G (2 words).
- Students in *The Wild Whale Watch* used a S U B M A R I N E to dive under the water like whales do.
- The largest animal in the world is a blue W H A L E.
- A group of whales is called a P O D.



Answer Key:

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