Cetaceans 4 Grade Curriculum—Lesson 1: Starting to Learn about Whales[1]

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Description

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.

Objectives

By the conclusion of the activities, students will:

- Be able to explain the differences between toothed whales and baleen whales
- Be able to describe at least three different whale behaviors
- Be able to define at least three new vocabulary words related to the book *The Wild Whale Watch*
- Demonstrate reading comprehension and writing skills by completing 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 (This could also be used as a review activity later in the curriculum—e.g., after Lesson 10.)
- Sticky notes
- Optional: A word wall to keep sticky notes on

Standards

Florida Sunshine State Standards

English Language Arts

- **ELA.4.C.1.2** Write personal or fictional narratives using a logical sequence of events and demonstrating an effective use of techniques such as descriptions and transitional words and phrases.
- **ELA.4.C.1.3** Write to make a claim supporting a perspective with logical reasons, using evidence from multiple sources, elaboration, and an organizational structure with transitions.
- **ELA.4.C.1.5** Improve writing by planning, revising, and editing, with guidance and support from adults and feedback from peers.

Visual Art

- **VA.4.C.1.1** Integrate ideas during the art-making process to convey meaning in personal works of art.
- **VA.4.S.3.2** Plan and produce art through ongoing practice of skills and techniques.
- **VA.4.C.2.3** Develop and support ideas from various resources to create unique artworks.

Common Core Standards

ELA/Literacy

- **LAFS.4.W.1.1** Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
- **LAFS.4.W.1.2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- **LAFS.4.W.1.3** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
- **LAFS.4.RL.1.3** Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).
- **LAFS.4.RL.2.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean).
- **LAFS.4.RL.2.6** Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations.

Strategy

1. Explain that the students will be completing parts of a journal as they read *The Wild Whale Watch.* There will be parts of the journal that they have to finish once they are done reading the book. At this point, pass out

the journals to the students. Review the journal and explain the expectations and grading rubric.
- Students will stop reading at the end of Chapter 1 and complete the first writing assignment (prediction). Direct students to the journal and review expectations.
- While reading the book, have students select words that are important to the story and write those words on sticky notes. From those sticky notes, students will choose three of the words to complete the second writing assignment. Direct students to the second entry in the reading journal to have them finish this part of the lesson.
- Have students 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. Direct students to the third entry in the reading journal and have them do the guided activity about the setting of the book.
- Students will draw a scene from the book, showing the main setting and labeling important characters and landmarks in their illustration.
- After finishing the book, students will complete a fourth writing assignment. Direct students in the final activity. Go over the activities and expectations for the final assignment.

2. Explain that you will read the book's introduction to the class and ask students to help you select a word or words from the introduction to write on sticky notes to help build vocabulary. Explain that the word(s) they select should be important words for the story. Read the two-page introduction. Ask the students if there is a word that they heard you read that 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* individually or as a class. The following list is a suggested way to break the book into sections for daily reading.
- Chapter 1 (9 pages)
- Complete first writing assignment in the journal (could be done as homework or in class)
- Chapter 2 (11 pages)
- Chapters 3 and 4 (10 pages)
- Chapters 5 and 6 (14 pages)
- Do the second activity
- Chapter 7 (8 pages)
- Chapter 8 (11 pages)
- Do the third activity
- Chapter 9 (12 pages)

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, or select one of the options for all of the students to write about.
- Have students create a prewriting plan for their assignment in the space provided in the journal.
- 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.).

Reference

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

The Wild Whale Watch Word Search

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

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

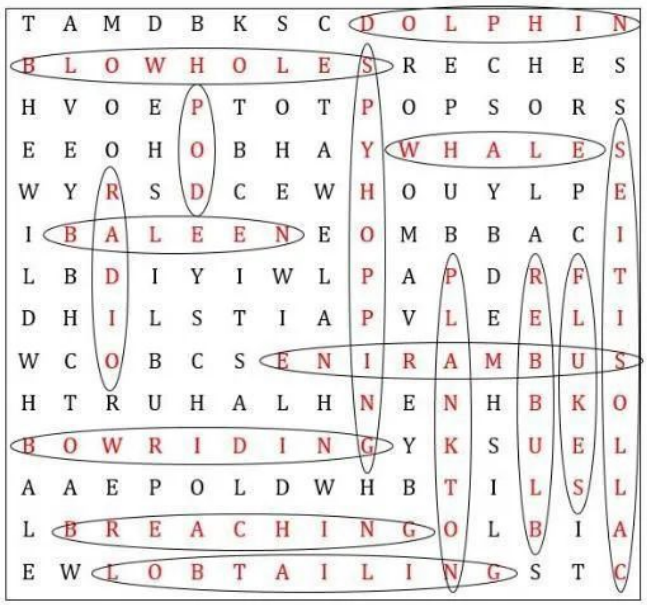
Words may be forwards, backwards, up, or down (there are no diagonal words in this puzzle). When you find a word, either circle it or put a line through it.

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

Answer Key

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

1. A humpback whale is a BALEEN whale—it feeds on plankton and does not have teeth.
2. Whales breathe through one or two BLOWHOLES on the top of their heads.
3. BLUBBER helps keep a whale warm in cold water.
4. Dolphins like to play in the water that is churned up by the front of a boat. This behavior is called BOW-RIDING.
5. BREACHING is the name used to describe the behavior when whales leap headfirst out of the water. They usually make quite a splash!
6. Right whales have thickened patches of skin that look white on their heads. Scientists can identify individual right whales by looking at their CALLOSITIES.
7. Bottlenose DOLPHINS are toothed whales that are often seen performing in marine parks.
8. A whale's tail is made up of a pair of FLUKES.
9. LOBTAILING is the name given to the behavior where whales slap their tails on the surface of the water.
10. PLANKTON is a mixture of tiny plants and animals; it is eaten by baleen whales.
11. People in different submarines can talk to each other using a RADIO.
12. Whales sometimes stick their heads up out of the water and look around. We call this behavior SPY HOPPING (2 words).
13. Students in *The Wild Whale Watch* used a SUBMARINE to dive under the water like whales do.
14. The largest animal in the world is a blue WHALE.
15. A group of whales is called a POD.



My Reading Journal—The Wild Whale Watch

Name: _____

Welcome to your reading journal! You will use this journal throughout your reading of *The Wild Whale Watch* to keep track of important themes, explore new ideas, and more.

In this journal, you will:

- Make a prediction at the end of the first chapter.
- List three words that are important to the book you are reading.
- Describe the setting of the book.
- Perform an after-reading activity.

These activities are fully explained at the end of your packet. Please **read the entire packet** as well as the rubrics before starting the book so you can become familiar with the questions.

To keep your journal, you may:

- Use pen or pencil.
- Use print or cursive writing.
- Print from the computer and attach your responses.

You can use the space below to draw a picture about *The Wild Whale Watch*.

During Reading

Directions: While reading *The Wild Whale Watch*, answer the questions on the next three pages. You may use additional paper if needed.

Question 1: At the end of the first chapter, stop and make a prediction. What do you think will happen next? Use details from the story to explain your prediction. Use additional paper if the space below is not enough.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Question 2: While you read, write down words that are important to *The Wild Whale Watch* on sticky notes. When you have finished *The Wild Whale Watch*, choose three of the words from the sticky notes and write them in the boxes below. Next, use a dictionary to look up the definition of these words, then copy the definition in the appropriate box. Explain why the words are important to the book using both your own conclusions and clues from the book**.**

Word	Definition	Why is it important to the book?

Question 3: Describe the setting of the book. Include information about when (time period) and where (location) the book took place.

Choose a scene from the book that shows the main setting. If there is more than one, choose your favorite. Make a labeled illustration of the setting below. Identify all of the important characters and landmarks.

After Reading

After you have finished reading the book, complete **one** of the following essays.

1. **Write a journal entry from the point of view of one of the main characters describing an important event in the story. Use details from the story to support your response.**
2. **Write a letter to a friend. Persuade your friend to read your book. Make sure you include the title, the author, and two or three good reasons to read it.**
3. **People often like books because they connect to them. Write a personal response describing how you connected with the character(s) and/or events in the story. Remember the various forms of connection:**

- **Text to Self** (you compared the main character to yourself)
- **Text to Text** (this book reminded you of another book you read)
- **Text to World** (this book made you think of something that you learned or heard about)

4. **Write another chapter or a continuation of the book.**

Prewriting

Use the space below to organize your ideas. You might want to use a web, an outline, or another graphic organizer to help you get started.

Text-Based Response

WRITE THE FINAL DRAFT OF YOUR ESSAY HERE:

Scoring Rubrics

DURING READING RESPONSES:

At the end of the first chapter, stop and make a prediction. What do you think will happen next? Use details from the story to explain your prediction.

Score Point	Description
4	The response is an appropriate and logical prediction supported by sufficient and relevant details from the text.
3	The response is an adequate prediction supported by some details from the text.
2	The response is a limited prediction supported by few, if any, relevant details from the text.
1	The response is an attempted prediction.
0	The response is totally irrelevant.

List three words that are important to the book you are reading. Explain why the words are important to your book.

Score Point	Description
4	The response is a complete list and accurate explanation of words or phrases supported by sufficient and relevant details from the text.
3	The response is an incomplete list but accurate explanation of words supported by details from the text, OR the response is a complete list with adequate explanation of words.
2	The response is a limited list with incomplete explanations, OR the response is a complete list with no explanations.
1	The response is an attempted list and explanation.
0	The response is totally irrelevant.

Describe the setting of the book. Make sure you include information about when (time period) and where (place).

Score Point	Description
2	The response is a complete and thorough description of the book's main setting.
1	The response is an adequate description of the book's main setting.
0	The response is totally irrelevant.

After Reading Responses

1. Write a journal entry from the point of view of one of the main characters describing an important event in the story. Use details from the story to support your response.

OR

2. Write a letter to a friend. Persuade your friend to read your book. Make sure you include the title, the author, and several good reasons to read the book.

OR

3. People often like books because they connect to them. Write a personal response addressing how you connected with the character(s) and/or events in the book.

OR

4. Write another chapter or a continuation of the book.

Rubric for options 1–3.

Score Point	Description
4	The response shows a thorough understanding of the text and the question. Specific and relevant details support the answer.
3	The response shows an adequate understanding of the text and the question. Some specific details are provided to support the answer.
2	The response shows some understanding of the text or question. Details are either sparse or irrelevant.
1	Very little understanding of the text is revealed, OR the question was answered incorrectly. The answer is sketchy. Key details are missing.
0	There is no connection between the question and the response.

Rubric for option 4.

Score Point	Description
4	The response shows an understanding of the text and the author's tone. The chapter contains all of the story elements and is a logical, believable continuation of the text.
3	The response shows an understanding of the text. The new chapter contains some of the story elements and is almost believable as a continuation of the text.
2	The response shows an understanding of some of the text. The new chapter is missing elements that would make it believable as a continuation of the text.
1	The response shows very little understanding of the text. The new chapter is hard to follow and is not cohesive with the rest of the book.
0	The response is totally irrelevant or incorrect.

Score Page

Congratulations on finishing *The Wild Whale Watch*. Hopefully you enjoyed reading it.

Here is what you earned:

During Reading (Total Possible = 10):

After Reading (Total Possible = 8):

TOTAL: _____

Teacher's Comments:

_____

_____

_____

_____

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