



About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational Page Count: 26 Word Count: 1,106

Book Summary

Whales is about the many different kinds of whales and the locations in which they are found during various times of the year. It also delves into the characteristics of whales and their behavior. Finally, it explains how Earth's whale population is threatened.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Visualize

Objectives

- Visualize to better understand text
- Identify main idea and details in text
- Identify consonant *wh* digraph
- Understand and use prepositions
- Recognize and form compound words

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*Whales* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Main idea and details, consonant *wh* digraph, prepositions worksheets
- Discussion cards



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting book on interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if books are reused.)

Vocabulary

*Bold vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on VocabularyA-Z.com.

- Content words:

Story critical: ***baleen*** (n.), ***blowhole*** (n.), ***blubber*** (n.), ***buoyant*** (adj.), ***extinction*** (n.), ***pods*** (n.)

Enrichment: ***decibels*** (n.), ***narwhal*** (n.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Ask students what they know about whales. Ask if anyone has ever seen a whale and, if so, where? From a boat at sea? In a sea aquarium or at a zoo? In a book, television, or movie?
- Ask students to close their eyes and visualize, or picture, a whale in their minds. Ask them to share what they see.

Preview the Book

Introduce the Book

- Give students a copy of the book, and have them preview the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers and offer ideas as to what kind of book this is and what it might be about.

- Invite students to preview the rest of the book by looking at the photographs, illustrations, and section titles.
- Discuss what the pictures tell about the book. Ask students what they expect to learn from reading the book based on what they see in the pictures.
- Have students turn to the chart on page 17. Ask whether or not this visual makes them think the book will be a storybook (fiction) or a book of facts (nonfiction). Explain that this book looks like it will contain facts about whales rather than be a story about a particular whale.

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Visualize**

- Explain and model visualizing.
Think-aloud: When I am reading factual information, it sometimes helps me to stop and create a picture in my mind of what the author is describing. Because I think this book is going to contain facts about whales, I'm going to remember to stop and visualize what the author is describing if I come across something that's hard for me to understand.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Remind students of the strategies they can use to sound out words they don't know. For example, they can use what they know about letter and sound correspondence to figure out the word. They can look for words within words, prefixes and suffixes, or other word endings. They can also use the context to work out the meanings of unfamiliar words.
- Have students turn to the glossary on page 26, and explain that readers can find out what some words in a book mean by using the glossary. Review or explain that glossaries are often found in nonfiction books and are used to define difficult words or concepts from the book. Explain that the words in the glossary are listed in bold print and that the definition of the word and its location in the book follow.
- Read aloud the first word in the glossary (*baleen*) and then call on a student to read the definition of *baleen* (*special material in the mouth of certain whales that filters food from ocean water*). Ask: *What page can you find the word baleen on?*
- Explain that students can turn to the glossary while they're reading to find out what any of the bolded words mean. Preview other words in the glossary, such as *buoyant*, *extinction*, and *pods*, as necessary, before students begin reading.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read the book to learn more about whales. Remind students to stop and visualize new concepts as they read to help them remember and understand what they're reading.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read to the end of page 15. Ask students if they stopped to visualize, or paint a mental picture of, any of the points discussed in the book.
- **Think-aloud:** *When I read that a whale's blubber can be up to 20 inches thick, I paused to picture how big that is. Since I know that a ruler is 12 inches long and a whale can have a layer of fat that's almost the length of two rulers, I visualized two rulers end to end in my mind. That's a lot of blubber.*
- Have students share pictures that they visualized in their minds while reading.



Have students make a question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. Encourage them to use the strategies they have learned to read each word and figure out its meaning.

After Reading

- Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

Reflect on the Reading Strategy

- Have students share any other questions they had while they were reading. Ask how using the strategy of visualization helped them understand and remember what they read.

Teach the Comprehension Skill: **Main idea and details**

- **Discussion:** Ask students if picturing ideas in their minds helped them to understand and remember what they read about whales. Ask them to share any ideas and/or concepts that they found surprising.
- **Review or explain** that many books are about one topic. Tell students that it is easy to tell what a book like this one is about because the topic, or main idea, is the title of the book. Direct students to the table of contents. Explain that each section in this informational book contains details about whales. Have students look at the first section title. Explain that the main idea of this section is kinds of whales. The section tells details about different types of whales (there are 75 different kinds of whales, the orca is a toothed whale, the narwhal has a tusk up to 8 feet long, and so on). Explain that finding details and picturing them in your mind, are good ways to understand and remember what a book is about.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students turn to the beginning of section 3 on page 10 (Where Whales Live). Ask: *What is the main idea of this section (where whales live)? What are some examples of details in the section that tell more about where whales live?* (Most whales live in salt water, some whales migrate great distances, pink dolphins live in the Amazon River, and so on.)
- **Independent practice:** Have students practice identifying the main idea and details by completing the **main-ideas-and-details worksheet**. Allow students to share their work when completed.



Extend the discussion: On the inside back cover of their book, have students write three short paragraphs telling what interesting things they learned about whales; what they would like to know more about; and what they would do or where they would go to find more information.

Build Skills


Phonics: **Consonant wh digraph**

- Write the word *whale* on the board and say it aloud with students.
- Have students say the /wh/ sound aloud. Explain that when making the sound, you let out a little puff of air to make a weak /h/ sound. Run your finger under the letters in the word as students say the whole word aloud. Ask students which letters together stand for the /wh/ sound in the word *whale*.
- Circle the *wh* digraph. Explain to students that the letters *w* and *h* together stand for the /wh/ sound at the beginning of the word *whale*.
- Write the words *wine* and *whine* on the board. Demonstrate the difference in pronunciation. You can do the same with the words *weather* and *whether*.
- Explain to students that the consonant *wh* digraph also makes an /h/ sound, as in *who* and *whole*.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following words that begin with the /wh/ sound on the board, leaving off the initial *wh* digraph: *where*, *whisk*, *which*, *when*. Have students complete and write each word on a separate piece of paper. Then have students read each word aloud to a partner.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **consonant wh digraph worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their responses.

Grammar and Mechanics: **Prepositions**

- Explain that *prepositions* are words that show a relationship between things. They provide information about *where, when, how, why,* and *with what* something happens. For example, in the sentence *I'll go to the store after school*, the word *after* is a preposition that provides information about when something happens.
- Ask students to turn to page 12. Write the following sentence from the book on the board: *Freshwater whales can be found in certain rivers*. Point to the word *in*. Have a volunteer explain how the preposition is used in this sentence (it explains where they are found).
- Explain that *prepositions* are also defined as relationship indicators; they *explain the relationship of a subject to the rest of the sentence*. Have a volunteer draw a whale on the chalkboard. Have another volunteer draw a piece of coral in front of the whale. Write the following sentences on the board: *The whale goes _____ the reef. The whale is _____ the reef.*
- Next, draw a line from the whale *over, under, through, beside,* and *to* the reef, one at a time. Have a volunteer come to the board and write each preposition in the correct sentence.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students look through the text and circle examples of prepositions. Record on the board the prepositions students identify in the book. Discuss the type of information each preposition provides (how, when, why, and so on) and how each one links the words in the sentence.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [prepositions worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their responses.

Word Work: **Compound words**

- Review or explain that two short words can be combined to form a new word, called a *compound word*.
- Have students turn to page 10 in the book. Ask them to look at the second sentence, drawing attention to the word *freshwater*. Ask them to identify the two separate words that make up the compound word (*fresh* and *water*). Discuss the concept of compound words (combining two separate words that can stand alone to make one word). Explain that the definitions of the two separate words can help them figure out what the bigger word means (water that is fresh).
- Have students turn to page 11 and find a compound word (*saltwater*). Encourage them to circle the word and write the term "compound word" in the margin to help them remember the terminology. Remind or explain that compounds sometimes contain a hyphen as shown in the word *fan-shaped* on page 16.
- Repeat the exercise above on pages 13 for *blowhole* and 19 for *Humpback*.
 Have students use the inside front cover of their book to write *compound word* along with the definition of the term (combining two words that can each stand alone to make a new word). Ask that they write the four examples found in this book (*freshwater, saltwater, blowhole, Humpback*) after their definition.

Build Fluency

Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently. Additionally, allow partners to take turns reading parts of the book to each other.

Home Connection

- Give students their book to take home to read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends.

Extend the Reading

Science Connection

Have students choose one of the many different types of whales mentioned in this book (blue, baleen, orca, pink dolphin, porpoise, narwhal). Provide a variety of books and resources to help students research their whale's migrating patterns, feeding styles, and communication abilities. Have students create an oral presentation for the class. Encourage them to use notes, pictures, and diagrams from their research. Allow students to share their presentations with the class.

Social Studies Connection

Provide print and Internet resources for students to research the threat of whale extinction. Additionally, have them research what is being done to reduce the threat(s) to endangered whales. Have students share what they learned with the class.

Skill Review

Discussion cards covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided as an extension activity. The following is a list of some ways these cards can be used with students:

- Use as discussion starters for literature circles.
- Have students choose one or more cards and write a response, either as an essay or as a journal entry.
- Distribute before reading the book and have students use one of the questions as a purpose for reading.
- Cut apart and use the cards as game cards with a board game.
- Conduct a class discussion as a review before the book quiz.

Assessment

Monitor students to determine if they can:

- consistently use visualization to effectively remember concepts in text
- accurately identify the main idea and supporting details in sections
- accurately identify consonant *wh* digraph during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly identify and use prepositions during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly recognize and form compound words

Comprehension Checks

- **Book Quiz**
- **Retelling Rubric**