



Teacher Resource

Whale Songs

Focus Questions

Discuss the BTN story as a class and record the main points of the discussion. Students will then respond to the following:

1. What did scientists recently discover about whales?
2. Which part of the whale's body did they study?
3. Why do whales make sounds?
4. What is a baleen whale?
 - a. A whale with teeth
 - b. A whale without teeth
 - c. A whale found only in Antarctica.
5. What impact can underwater noise have on whales?

Activity: See, Think and Wonder

After watching the BTN Whale Songs story, students will respond to the following questions:

- What did you SEE in this video?
- What did you LEARN from this story?
- What do you WONDER about this story?
- What QUESTIONS do you have about this story?

Activity: Class Discussion

After watching the BTN story, hold a class discussion using the following discussion starters.

- What do you know about whales? Make a list.
- What did scientists recently discover about whales?
- What are baleen whales?
- How do they communicate?
- Why is sound important to whales?



EPISODE 5

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KEY LEARNING

Students will learn more about a species of whale and create a profile of them. They will also investigate how whales communicate.

CURRICULUM

Science – Year 4

Living things depend on each other and the environment to survive.

Science knowledge helps people to understand the effect of their actions.

Science – Year 5

Living things have structural features and adaptations that help them to survive in their environment.

Science – Year 6

The growth and survival of living things are affected by physical conditions of their environment.

Activity: Glossary

Students will brainstorm a list of key words that relate to the BTN Whale Songs story. Below are some words to get students started.

MAMMAL	VOICE BOX	NOISE POLLUTION
SPECIES	BALEEN	MARINE

Ask students to write what they think is the meaning of each word (including unfamiliar words). They will swap definitions with a partner and ask them to add to or change the definition. Check these against the dictionary definition.

Activity: Whale profile

Students will research and write a profile featuring a species of whale. Students can use the animal profile worksheet at the end of this activity to record their findings. Encourage students to use a range of sources to find their information. Whale species to choose from include:

- Humpback whale
- Blue whale
- Sperm whale
- Southern Right whale
- Sei whale

Research

Students will research the following and then share their research findings with the class or create a display in the classroom. Students can use the Animal Profile at the end of this activity.

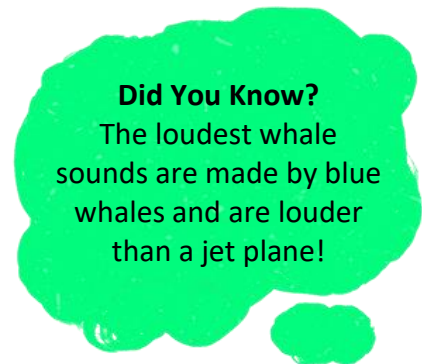
- Illustration or photo
- Name (common and scientific name)
- Conservation status – What is being done to protect the species?
- Appearance
- Adaptations
- Habitat
- Threats
- Unique features



Further Investigation – Why do whales sing?

Whale songs are one of the most sophisticated communication systems in the animal kingdom. [Watch this Ted Ed video](#) and answer the following questions:

- Which species of whale are known to sing?
- What do toothed whales use to communicate?
- How do whales generate sound? Give a brief explanation.
- How long can whales sing for?
- Why do they sing?
- What do scientists use to record underwater sounds?
- What impact can noise pollution have on the whales?
- Name three interesting facts you learnt watching the video



To learn more about why whales sound different, watch [this Australian Museum video](#).

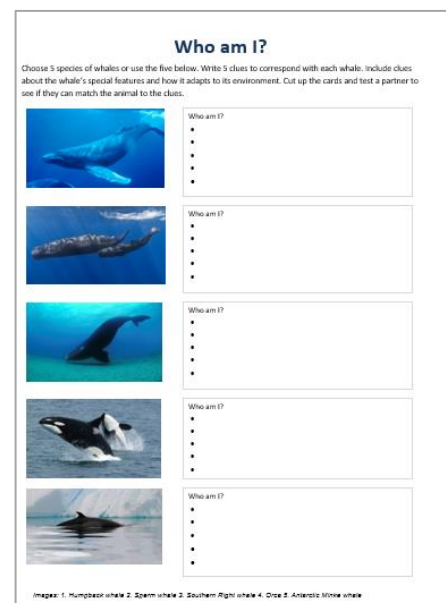
Listen to whale songs...

- [Blue whale song](#)
- [Fin whale song](#)
- [Humpback whale song](#)
- [Dwarf minke whale song](#)

Activity: Who am I?

Students will make their own *Who am I?* game to learn more about whale species.

- Students will research and write 5 clues to correspond with each species of whale in the Who am I? worksheet at the end of this activity, with the first clue being the hardest and the last clue being the easiest.
- Include clues about special features, appearance, adaptations and any threats.
- Students will test their game on a partner.



Useful Websites

- [How do whales sing? Scientists point to a specialised voice box that other animals don't have](#) – ABC News
- [Why do whales sing?](#) – TedEd
- [Why do whales make sounds?](#) – National Ocean Service
- [How do whales communicate?](#) – Newsround

Who am I?

Choose 5 species of whales or use the five below. Write 5 clues to correspond with each whale. Include clues about the whale's special features and how it adapts to its environment. Cut up the cards and test a partner to see if they can match the animal to the clues.



Who am I?

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Who am I?

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Who am I?

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Who am I?

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Who am I?

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Images: 1. Humpback whale 2. Sperm whale 3. Southern Right whale 4. Orca 5. Antarctic Minke whale

ANIMAL PROFILE

Scientific Name

APPEARANCE

Common Name

ADAPTATIONS

Unique Features or Interesting Facts

HABITAT

THREATS