



## 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Whale Watching Adventure Packet



Grade that is addressed: 3rd

NGSS performance expectation:

Students who demonstrate understanding can:

3-LS2-1 Construct an argument that some animals form groups that help

members survive

**Purpose of this pre trip packet:** This packet is designed for third grade students based on the content standards adopted by the California State Board of Education. Students will construct and defend an argument that whales and dolphins have social structures and groups to increase survival. They will also be able to critique counter arguments and provide data for justification of their arguments.

**Time: 20-25 minutes Overview of activities:**

Students will participate in group discussions and hands-on activities to understand the purpose of the pre-trip packet. With one activity being a team building exercise for students to practice their communication skills and work towards a common goal. Students will fill out a worksheet to provide reasoning as to why whales or dolphins can increase their survival by forming a pod.

**Procedures:**

**Engage in discussion:** Share with students that teamwork is seen in more animals than just humans and can be present in many ways. A colony of ants will work together to build their home and collect food. A herd of elephants will work together to protect the young and play with one another. A pod of dolphins will travel everywhere together to provide protection from larger predators and help each other find food. Whales also travel in groups but because some species are so



large, for example blue whales, they will travel in groups to help each other find food or teach the young rather than for protection from larger predators. Some whales have some predators, such as killer whales may attack gray whale babies, but it is not common since whales are some of the largest animals on earth. Ask \_\_\_\_\_ students if they have had to be a part of a team before? Such as a sports team or working on a class project with others? What was the goal of the team? And how did you work together to achieve that goal? Similar to how we work in teams and have social structures like friends, family, neighbors and teachers, whales and dolphins also have these social structures.

Whales will form nursery pods made up of just mothers and their young so they can travel together slowly, safely and learn from each other. Ask students if they have any older siblings or cousins, and if they have ever learned something from them? (does not have to be academic, even learning how to play a video game is a skill that is gained by communication and socialization.) The nursery pods give the older babies a chance to teach the younger ones how to find food, play and communicate. Some pods of whales or dolphins are called “Megapods” because they have hundreds or thousands of dolphins and whales of all ages. These Megapods have a lot of communication going on and just like us humans, there is vocal communication and body language. A dolphin may slap its tail against the water to signal to its pod there is danger, or a Humpback whale may breach (bring its entire body out of the water then slam back down) to show they are having fun and happy. Rather than speaking English to talk to each other, whales and dolphins can echolocate to use their “voices” when communicating. Their blow hole allows clicks, squeaks and whistles to escape (since they do not have vocal cords) and mean different things just like our language has different words with different meanings.



## Activities: Human Knot and Activity page

This activity requires no set-up or special materials. All you need is your students!

To start a human knot, have small groups of 5 to 10 students stand closely together in a circle. Instruct them to reach their hands into the middle of the circle and randomly grab another student's hand. Once every hand is grabbed students will untangle themselves without letting go. Communication is key for students to be able to unravel themselves, and this activity is a great way to practice problem-solving skills. When whales and dolphins encounter a problem, they will work together to help each other and learn from the experience in case they encounter the issue again in the future.

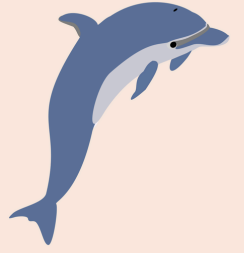


## Procedures for activity page:

- Print a copy of the worksheet for each student to complete.
- Share answers as a class or put papers up in the classroom so each student can see one another's arguments and reasoning.



Why is it helpful  
for whales and  
dolphins to  
travel in groups?



1.

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2.

Blank white rectangular area for writing answer 2.

3.

Blank white rectangular area for writing answer 3.

4.

Blank white rectangular area for writing answer 4.

5.

Blank white rectangular area for writing answer 5.

6.

Blank white rectangular area for writing answer 6.

