

## The Colors and Shapes of Language 2

### Unit 15

#### Whales

#### Activity 1 – Naming

- a. The teacher says, “**Let’s different kinds of fish.**” [Students name.]
- b. The teacher says, “**Let’s name different kinds of whales.**” [Students name.]
- c. The teacher says, “**Let’s name different kinds of mammals.**” [Students name.]
- d. The teacher says, “**Let’s name characteristics of mammals.**” [Students name.]
- e. The teacher says, “**Let’s name other kinds of animals you find in the ocean.**” [Students name.]

[The teacher needs a picture of a shark, humpback whale, dolphin (fish) and dolphin (mammal).]

#### Activity 2 – Describing

- a. The teacher shows a shark and says, “**I want you to describe this animal. Tell me the name of this animal.**” [Students respond.]  
 “**Tell me some categories or groups that a shark would fit in.**” [Students respond.]  
 “**Tell me the function of a shark.**” [Students respond]  
 “**Tell me the color of the shark.**” [Students respond.]  
 “**Tell me its shape.**” [Students respond.]  
 The teacher shows a humpback whale and says, “**Compare this to this. Let’s compare the colors, sizes, shapes, and functions of these two animals.**” [Students respond.]
- b. The teacher shows a dolphin (fish) and says, “**I want you to describe this animal. Tell me the name of this animal.**” [Students respond.]  
 “**Tell me some categories or groups that a dolphin (fish) would belong in.**” [Students respond.]  
 “**Tell me the function of a dolphin (fish)**” [Students respond.] “**Tell me the color of the dolphin (fish).**” [Students respond.]  
 “**Tell me its shape.**” [Students respond.]  
 The teacher shows a dolphin (mammal) and says, “**Compare this dolphin (fish) to the dolphin (mammal). Let’s compare the colors, sizes, shapes, and functions of these two objects.**” [Students respond.]

#### Activity 3 – Listening to an Expository passage

- a. The teacher reads the passage.



## Whales

Whales are the largest species of aquatic mammals and include dolphins and porpoises. Whales are descendants of land-living mammals and can be divided into two suborders: baleen and toothed whales. Baleen whales have baleen, a sieve-like structure of the upper jaw which they use to filter plankton from the water. They are the largest type of whale. Toothed whales have teeth and prey on fish and squid. Toothed whales use echolocation to sense their surroundings.

Whales are mammals because they breathe air, are warm-blooded, breast-feed their young and have hair. Beneath their skin is a layer of blubber that serves as an energy source and insulation. Whales breathe through blowholes on the top of their heads so that they can remain submerged. Some whales can stay submerged for up to two hours. They are conscious breathers; they must be conscious to breathe. It is thought that only one half of their brain sleeps at a time.

Male whales are called bulls and females are called cows. The young are calves. Their food varies from plankton to very large fish. Whales communicate using a singing type sound that can be heard for miles. A female gives birth to one calf and nurses it for up to a year.

It is thought by some that whales are highly intelligent animals and this belief was a central argument against whaling. Many species of whales are endangered due to large scale whaling during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Whales were sought after for oil, meat, baleen and ambergris (a perfume ingredient).

### Activity 4 – Card Pyramid

- a. The teacher gives each student nine index cards.
  - Students decide the main idea of the passage read by the teacher.
  - Students write “Whales” on one index card. They place this card at the top of their desks.
  - Students brainstorm supporting ideas – characteristics, breathing, food/communication, and whaling.
  - Students write each supporting idea on a separate card. They place these cards in a row under the card marked “Whales.”
  - Students brainstorm details about the supporting ideas. They write the details about each supporting idea on separate cards.
  - Students place these cards in a row under the row of supporting ideas.
  - Students name the main idea. They name the supporting ideas. They name the details.
  - Students number the cards. Main idea – 1; Supporting idea – 2; Details about that supporting idea – 3; Supporting idea – 4; Details about that supporting idea – 5; Supporting idea – 6; Details about that supporting idea – 7; Supporting idea – 8; Details about that supporting idea – 9.
  - Students collect the cards in numerical order and place a rubber band around them.



**Activity 5 – Summarizing the Passage**

Students take their pack of cards.

Students work in pairs.

Using their cards, each student in a pair takes a turn summarizing the passage on whales.

Students place their cards in numerical order and place a rubber band around them.

**Activity 6 – Writing**

Students lay out their cards in a pyramid.

Using the cards as an outline, students write a summary paragraph about whales.

The summary paragraph should have 1/3 the number of words as the original paragraph (253 words).

**Activity 7 – Editing**

- a. Students edit their summary paragraphs. If they have more than 76 words, they need to decide which words can be eliminated.

