

Shamu Hat



Objective

The students will identify parts of a killer whale's body and their functions.

Materials

- For each student:
 - one set of tracing shapes made from figures on page 3
 - one small, white, oval paper plate with a hole punched along each edge of two long sides
 - one 24 in. string of black yarn
 - one sheet of black construction paper
- glue or gluesticks
- one stick white chalk
- For class:
 - hole punch
 - crayons
 - stapler
 - scissors
 - nontoxic black and white face paint (optional)
 - cotton swabs (optional)

Background

Killer whales are among the fastest swimming marine mammals, propelled by powerful tail flukes. They use their large pectoral flippers to steer and to stop. A killer whale breathes through a single blowhole on the top of its head. Killer whales live in oceans around the world.

Craft Preparation

Use the patterns on page 3 to precut shapes for younger children. For older students, direct them in tracing with white chalk and cutting their own craft pieces.

Deeper Depths

Using nontoxic face paint and cotton swabs, place black paint on students' noses and white paint on each cheek (to represent white eye spots).



Action

1. Give each student a paper plate and explain that this will be their whale's body. Have them use a crayon to write their name on the inside of the plate. Thread yarn through holes and staple to plate to secure. (Yarn ends will tie under the student's chin to hold the hat on when it's completed.)
2. Hold up the tail fluke shape and ask students to find the one they cut out. Have them repeat the word "flukes." Ask students how a whale uses its flukes. Invite students to move their fluke pieces up and down to simulate the way killer whales swim. Direct students to put a small amount of glue on the straight edge of the flukes. Have them choose one of the oval ends of the plate, and glue the tail to the edge.
3. Hold up the two flipper shapes, and have students find similar pieces. Have students repeat the word "flipper." Explain that a whale uses its flippers for steering and stopping as it swims. Role-play steering with your students. Ask students to put a small amount of glue on the straight edge of each flipper and glue one on each side of the plate near the yarn.
4. Have the students turn their plates over.
5. Hold up a dorsal fin. Have students find their dorsal fin piece and repeat its name.
6. Point out the small notch at the straight edge of the fin. Have students fold one flap one direction and the other flap the opposite direction. (This will allow the fin to sit upright when glued onto the plate.) Have students put a small amount of glue on the bottom of each flap and attach the fin to the middle of the plate bottom. The dorsal fin should curve back toward the tail.
7. A killer whale breathes air through a blowhole on top of its head. Students draw a blowhole and decorate their hats. (Remind them that their own eyes are the whale's eyes, too.)
8. Ask students to wear their hats as they join you in learning the song below.

