

TEACHER NOTES



How big is a whale?

(If you can, take your class outside to help them understand the sizes of the creatures.)

Use the pictures and labels below and photocopy them as large as you can. Add the labels and use ribbon to demonstrate the length of each whale. Get volunteers to lie down and count the number of 'people lengths' for each whale.

| | | |
|-----------------|-------|-----------|
| Sperm Whale | 18 | approx 11 |
| Hump Back Whale | 13.25 | approx 8 |
| Killer Whale | 7.6 | approx 5 |

The Blue whale is so big ... 17 people.



Blue whale



Sperm whale

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National Curriculum

Science

Unit 7D Variation and classification (year 7)

1. How do individuals of the same species differ from each other?
2. What are the causes of variation?
3. How can we describe living things?
4. How can we sort things into groups?
5. How do scientists classify living things?

For more information on UK whales and dolphins go to:
www.seawatchfoundation.org.uk

How big is a whale?



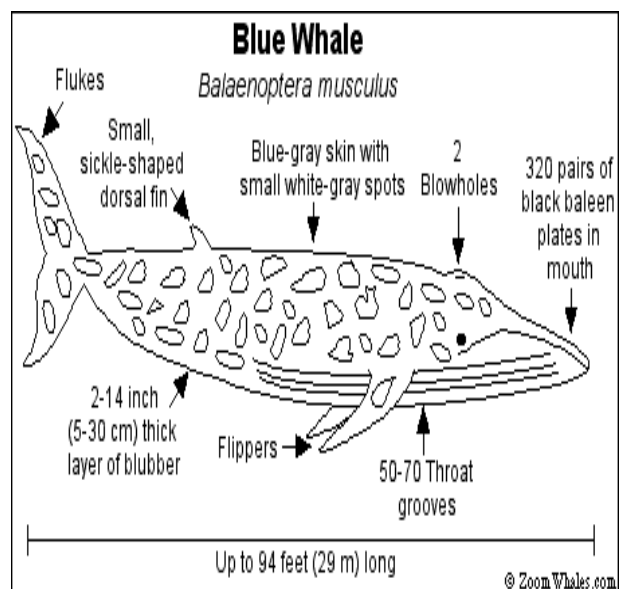
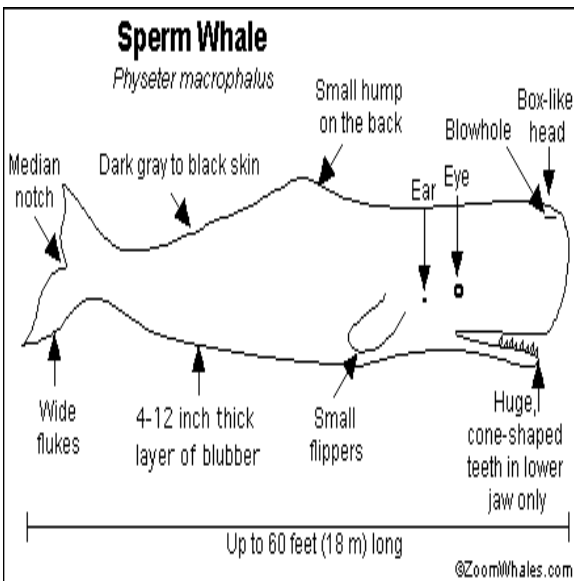
Whales, the order Cetacea (from the Greek word "cetus" which means whale) are grouped into two suborders:

The **baleen** whales are generally much larger and have two blow holes, they also do not have teeth but baleen plates that are used to sieve and filter krill, plankton and small fish. An example of a baleen whale is a blue whale.

The **toothed** whales have teeth and a single blowhole. The number of teeth varies by species; it ranges from 2 to 250 (some dolphins). They are smaller than baleen whales. Many species live in pods. Toothed whales have well-developed echolocation that they use to locate food. An example of a toothed whale is a sperm whale.

The Sperm Whale holds some natural world records:

1. Largest known toothed mammal ever.
2. Largest brain of any living creature on Earth. The brain of a mature sperm whale weighs 7 kg.
3. Largest living carnivore on Earth.
4. Deepest diving mammal, found at depths of 2,200m and can hold its breath for up to 2 hours.



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