

4/21/24

How Much Do You Know About...

Estimated play time: Approximately 15 minutes

Number of players: Unlimited

Supplies needed: Tokens (for scorekeeping); Prizes (small) for winner(s)

Suitable for visually impaired players.

Overview:

In this game, we look at one subject in depth – it could be a person, place, event, or thing. This week, let's see how much you know about ... **WHALES**.

Instructions:

1. This game can be played by individuals or teams.
2. Read the first question. Discussion is permitted among teammates. Prior to the start of the game, a method to signal when a team is ready to answer must be determined. Ringing bells and New Year's blowers are just two inexpensive noisemakers. Raised hands work, but the host must be vigilant to watch for whose hand went up first. The host always has the final say in any disputes.
3. After a team is recognized as the first to signal, they may give one answer. If the first answer is incorrect, the other teams may 'buzz' in and answer.
4. Keep score (10 points for each answer) after each question is answered correctly. Play until all questions have been asked and answered.

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INSTRUCTIONS: Just answer the questions to find out how much you know about this week's subject ... **WHALES.**

1. Whales are mammals that belong to the scientific order *Cetacea* (set-TAY-she-a). Can you name the other two smaller marine mammals that also belong to the same order and are therefore close cousins of the whale?
2. Whale species are separated into two groups: those with teeth, and those with comb-like plates in their upper jaw that filter small tasty organisms out of the seawater. What are these comb-like plates called?
3. Many whales live in icy cold water. How do they stay warm?
4. Describe what you would see if you observed a whale breaching.
5. There are roughly a dozen species of commonly known whales, and an equal number of more obscure species. Can you name five whale species?
6. What is the largest whale?
7. What do we call the nasal openings on the top of a whale's head?
8. The United States became the pre-eminent whaling nation in the world by the 1830s. While many parts of the whale were used for a variety of purposes, which whale product was the primary impetus for the whaling industry boom?
9. Whalers hunted baleen whales because the long, stiff strips of baleen were used in many consumer goods. Can you think of two uses for baleen, which was formerly erroneously known as "whalebone"?
10. After killing a sperm whale, whalers would extract a solid, waxy substance from the whale's intestines called ambergris. What was ambergris primarily used for?
11. With the exception of subsistence hunting permitted to indigenous groups such as the Inuit (Eskimos), commercial whaling was banned in 1986 by the International Whaling Commission. In spite of this, three countries continue to hunt whales. Can you name two of them?
12. Humans have five senses (hearing, taste, smell, touch, and sight). Most whales have only four. What sense do whales NOT possess?

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ANSWERS

1. Dolphins and porpoises
2. Baleen (which is made of keratin, like our fingernails). As the whale swims through the water, he takes in large mouthfuls of seawater filled with small tasty organisms. His baleen then filters out the seawater, leaving his dinner in his mouth.
3. Whales have a layer of blubber beneath their skin that stores energy and insulates the body. This layer of blubber can be up to twenty inches thick.
4. Breaching is the act of a whale leaping out of the water – and often belly flopping right back in again!
5. Beluga Whale, Blue Whale, Bowhead, Fin Whale, Gray Whale, Humpback Whale, Minke Whale (with several subspecies), Narwhal, Orca (Killer) Whale, Pilot Whale, Right Whale (with several subspecies), Sperm Whale (with several subspecies). *(Note: Other correct answers are possible.)*
6. The Blue Whale. With an average length of roughly 100 feet and weight of more than 400,000 pounds, the Blue Whale is the largest animal that has ever existed on earth.
7. Blowholes
8. Oil. Whale oil, made from the whale's blubber, was a critical fuel until it was replaced by petroleum in the 19th century.
9. Collar stiffeners, corset stays, buggy whips, parasol ribs, etc. *(Note: Other correct answers are possible.)*
10. Perfume. While ambergris can still be found in some perfumes, its use was banned completely by many countries by the 1970s, and it has largely been replaced by synthetic substances.
11. Iceland, Japan, and Norway
12. Most whales do not have a sense of smell.