

Activity

Episode 13
20th May 2014

Whaling

Key Learning

Students will develop a deeper understanding of the history of whaling and investigate some key questions relating to the issue.

The Australian Curriculum

Science / Science as a human endeavour / Use and influence of science

Science and technology contribute to finding solutions to a range of contemporary issues; these solutions may impact on other areas of society and involve ethical considerations
([ACSHE120](#)) Year 7

Science understanding influences the development of practices in areas of human activity such as industry, agriculture and marine and terrestrial resource management ([ACSHE121](#)) Year 7

Discussion Questions

1. Which type of whale is the biggest creature on Earth?
2. Australia has never hunted whales. True or false?
3. What is the name of the fatty substance under a whale's skin?
4. In the past, what things were made from blubber? List three items.
5. What impact did whaling have on some species of whales?
6. In 1986, a number of countries signed an agreement to ban commercial whaling. Why did whaling continue after that?
7. Earlier this year, the International Court of Justice ruled that Japan couldn't hunt whales in the _____.
8. Why is the issue back in the news?
9. Why does Japan believe they should be allowed to continue to hunt whales?
10. Do you think that whaling should be allowed for cultural reasons? Explain your answer.

Activities

Pre-Viewing activity

Ask students to make some predictions about what the BtN *Whaling* story might be about before they watch the story. They can compare their predictions after viewing the story. Discuss the similarities and differences. Watch the BtN *Whaling* story again and ask students to record as many key words as they can. Students then clarify their understanding of the key words by writing down what they think the word means. Swap definitions with a partner and ask them to add to or change the definition. Check them using a dictionary or other source.

| Keyword | Definition |
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Classroom Discussion

What do you know about whaling?

Hold a class brainstorm to find out what students know about whaling. Using sticky notes, students write down a piece of information they know about whales or whaling. Collect and place all the notes on a wall in the classroom. The following questions may help generate discussion:

- Why are whales important?
- What do you know about the practices of whaling today?
- What do supporters of pro-whaling believe?
- Why do some people want to ban whaling?
- Do you think the people's attitudes to whaling have changed over the years? Why?

Student research

Students will investigate key questions relating to whaling. The class can be divided into research groups with each group focussing on one key question. The following structure may help guide students' research.

Define: What do I want to know?

Key questions for inquiry

Students can choose one of the following questions or come up with their own:

- Investigate the history of how people around the world have used whales. How is this different today? Why do you think it changed?
- Investigate Australia's whaling history. How were whales used in the past? How is this different to today? Why did it change?
- Why conserve and protect whales? What is being done? Who is making the decisions to conserve and protect?
- What is the Australian government's position on whaling? How does Australia's view on controversial issues affect our relationship with other countries (for example, Japan)?
- Investigate the reasons why Japan hunts whales for scientific and commercial purposes. What are the cultural reasons?

Locate: Where do I find the information?

What resources will help answer my questions? (Internet, people, resource centre, organisations, print)
Discuss with students what a reliable source is.

Select: What information is important for the investigation?

Students may need support to sort through and select relevant information.

Organise: How do I make sense of the information?

Students can organise their research by creating main headings from their questions. Write each heading on a separate piece of paper. Record the information found for each question.

Present: How do we let others know about this information?

Each group needs to discuss then decide on the best way to present the information. Possibilities could include:

- A 'Did You Know' Facts sheet
- Infographic
- Oral presentation
- Prezi <http://prezi.com/index/>

Evaluate: What have we learnt?

Each group reflects on what they have learned about the aspect of whaling they investigated.
Students will reflect on their learning

- What I learned...
- What I found surprising...
- How has this investigation changed my thinking about whaling...

Which whale is which?

Cetacean is the scientific name which refers to whales, dolphins and porpoises. Students will find out more about species' of whales by completing the *Which Whale is Which?* activity.

<http://www.abc.net.au/btn/story/extracontent/2013/whaling/whales.pdf>

If students are having trouble guessing which whale is which, take a look at this image for hints.

http://www.reposter.net/images/content/hires/Cetacea_whales.png

Students can then create a profile on one particular type of whale.

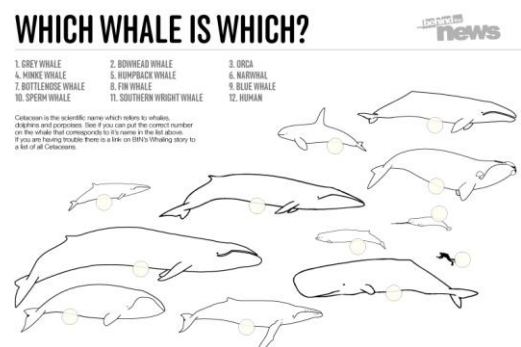
🔗 Related Research Links

ABC News – Japan restarts whaling program in north-west Pacific

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-05-09/japan-continues-whaling-in-north-west-pacific/5441426>

ABC News – Japan ordered to immediately stop whaling in Antarctic as International Court of Justice rules program was not carried out for scientific purposes

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-03-31/ijc-japan-whaling-southern-ocean-scientific-research/5357416>



Department of Environment – History of Whaling in Australia
<http://www.environment.gov.au/node/18367>

Scholastic – Good news for whales
<http://magazines.scholastic.com/news/2014/04/Good-News-for-Whales>

ABC Factcheck – Recent whale kills
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-04-08/whales-killed-in-2012-or-2011/5375856>