



LEARNING LABS WHALE ADVENTURES

What does it take for a whale to survive? Students step into the shoes of a scientist and, by using tools and experimentation, uncover the many adaptations whales have to survive in diverse and sometimes surprising places.

GRADE LEVEL: 3-5 | **CAPACITY:** 35 students | **DURATION:** 50 minutes

KEY CONCEPTS

Adaptations, food web

SKILLS

Data collection, presentation, identification, experimentation, inquiry, graph interpretation

IL STATE LEARNING STANDARDS

- 11.A.2a, 11.A.2b, 11.A.2d, 11.A.2e
- 12.B.2a, 12.B.2b
- 13.B.2a

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

- Students work and collaborate in groups
- Teachers and chaperones may participate
- Multimedia resources encourage further exploration
- Students sit on mats in groups





on contact
sheddaquarium.org



FURTHER EXPLORATION

Shedd Educational Adventures Animal Behavior and Observing an Animal

<http://sea.sheddaquarium.org/sea/>

Encyclopedia of Life

<http://www.eol.org/>

Discovery Education

What's a Mammal?

<http://school.discoveryeducation.com/lessonplans/>

American Cetacean Society

<http://www.acsonline.org>

The Whale Center of New England

<http://www.acsonline.org/>



CONNECTIONS TO THE EXHIBITS

The Abbott Oceanarium is home to two species of toothed whales: belugas and Pacific white-sided dolphins. Below are suggestions for how to have more adventures with these amazing whales during your visit.

Abbott Oceanarium

Visit the Beluga Trail to observe a beautiful estuary and the home of Shedd's beluga whales. While here, observe the colors of the beluga whales and their behaviors. Have students guess the purpose behind these colors. Hint: The calves are gray and the adults are white or pale gray!

Underwater Viewing

In the underwater viewing areas, be sure to observe the Pacific white-sided dolphins and the beluga whales more closely. Compare the two species and their adaptations. Take note of their colors and their body shapes. Have students draw pictures of a beluga and a dolphin and label them.

Submarine

Across from the beluga underwater viewing area is a submarine. Have students explore the submarine and discuss what the purpose of a submersible is. What do humans use to survive in extreme environments? Humans are mammals too, but what do whales have to survive in the icy water they call home that humans do not?

CONNECTIONS TO THE CLASSROOM

- Before your visit, have students learn more about mammals. How do scientists classify mammals? What do all mammals have in common? Have students see if they can find all of these characteristics on a whale. Students can compare whales to humans and other mammals to see what mammals have in common and how different they can look.
- After your visit, students can have a whale adventure of their own right in the classroom! Have students go on a migration around the room, similar to a scavenger hunt. Students can decide on what kind of whale they want to be, either baleen or toothed. Place everything you would need around the room as students migrate. Remember, whales need blubber (coat) and food (either krill or small animals). Some students can also be predators that other students have to avoid!