

How Big is a Blue?



Objective

Given pictures of whales, the student will sort the whales by size. Given a rope marked with several whale lengths, the student will compare the lengths of these whales.

Materials

- One 30-m (about 100-ft) rope
- Measuring tape
- Ten different colors of tape or felt pens
- Whale pictures and lengths on pages 3-5 (may be enlarged on photocopier)

Action

ACTION

1. Photocopy and enlarge pages 5-7 showing 10 different whales. (Whale sizes are not to scale.) Cut apart the whale images. If you plan this as an individual activity, each student needs a copy of 10 whales.

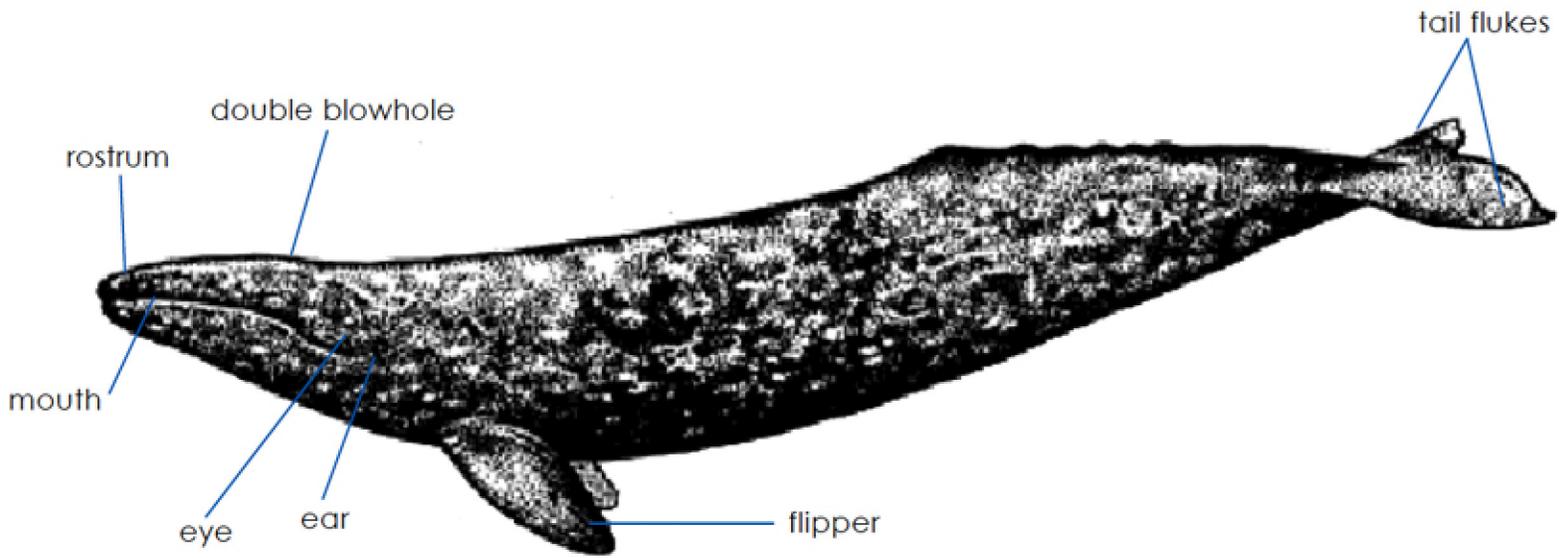
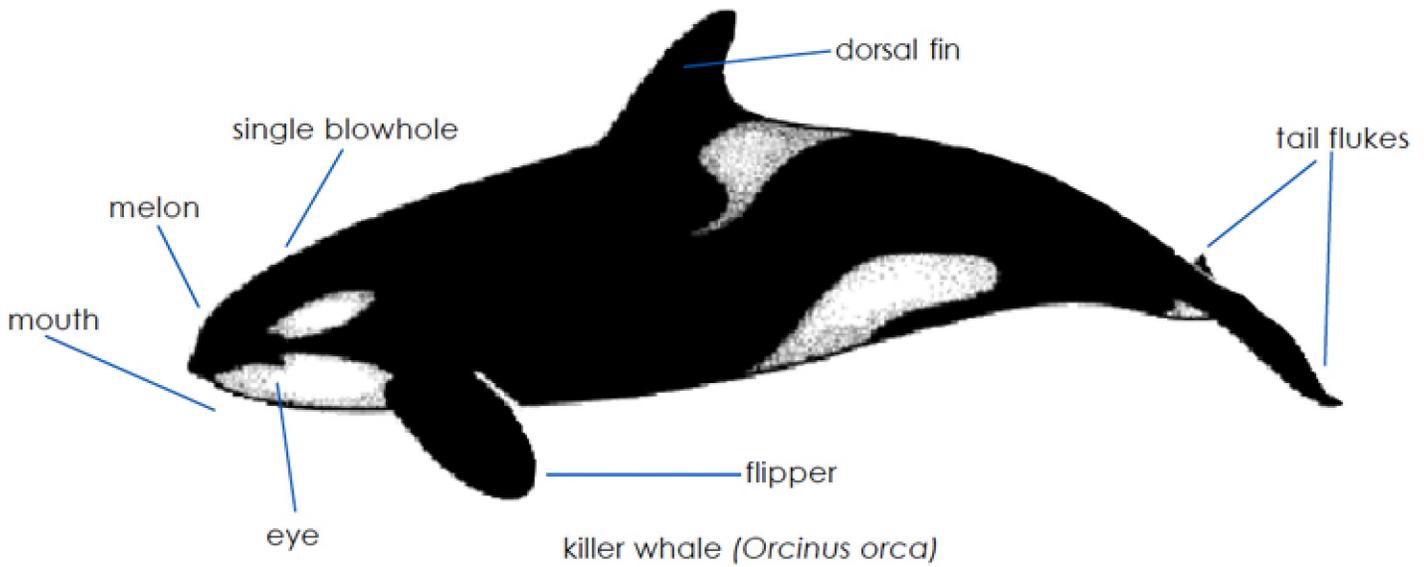
PART ONE: Sorting

2. If you are doing this activity as a group, divide the class into small groups and distribute one copy of each whale to each group. If this activity is an individual activity, each student receives a copy of each whale. Before distributing, shuffle whales so they're in random order.
3. Students put the whales in order of smallest to largest. Review the name of each whale from smallest to largest. Students check their work.

PART TWO: Measuring

4. Make a "whale rope" to enhance the sorting activity. Using a different color of tape or a different color felt pen for each whale you've chosen, mark the lengths of the whales on the rope. On a piece of paper or cardboard, make a color key to go along with the rope.
5. Do this activity outside or in the school auditorium. (If you do the activity inside, ask the students to predict what kind of whale would fill the room.)
6. Select two student volunteers to slowly unroll the whale rope. Have them stop unrolling each time they reach a colored marker. At each marker, ask students to guess which whale is as long as the unrolled rope. Tell the name of the correct whale and continue to unroll the rope until you've named all the whales.
7. Compare students' height to whale lengths. For example, have students lay head-to-toe to see how many students it would take to equal the length of a blue whale.

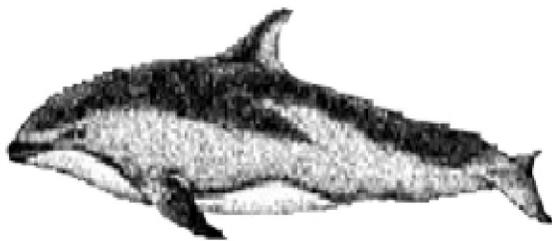
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false killer whale
Pseudorca crassidens
16 ft. (5 m)

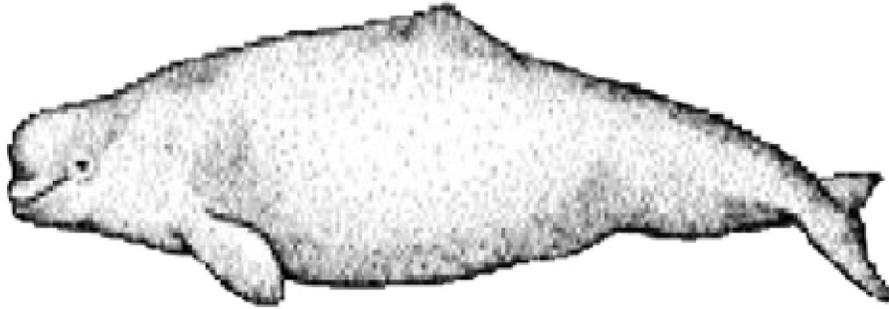


Pacific white-sided dolphin
Lagenorhynchus obliquidens
7.5 ft. (2.3 m)



northern right whale
Eubalaena glacialis
55 ft. (17 m)

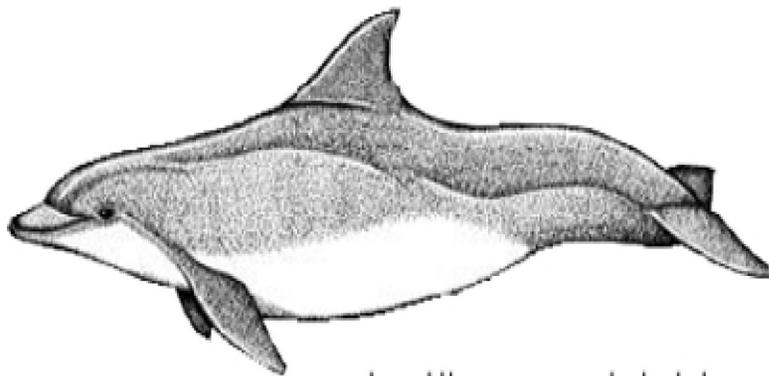
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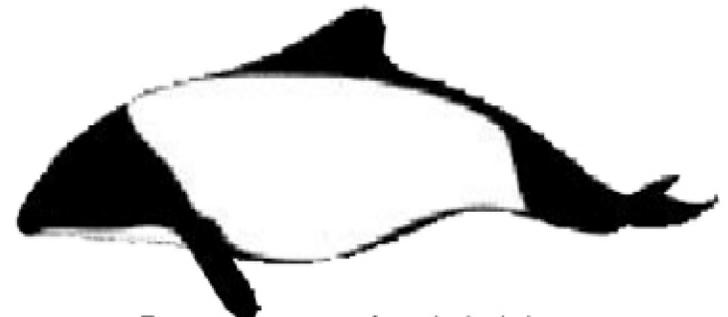
beluga whale
Delphinapterus leucas
15 ft. (4.5 m)



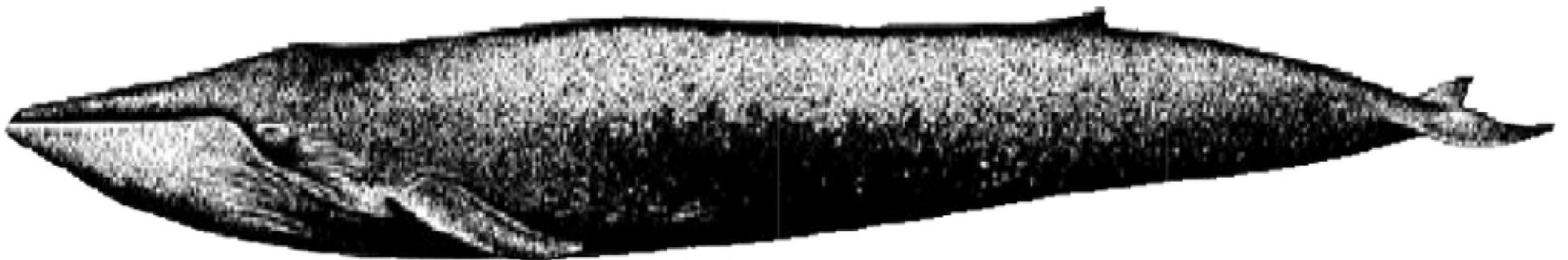
killer whale
Orcinus orca
19 ft. (5.8 m)



bottlenose dolphin
Tursiops truncatus
10 ft. (3 m)



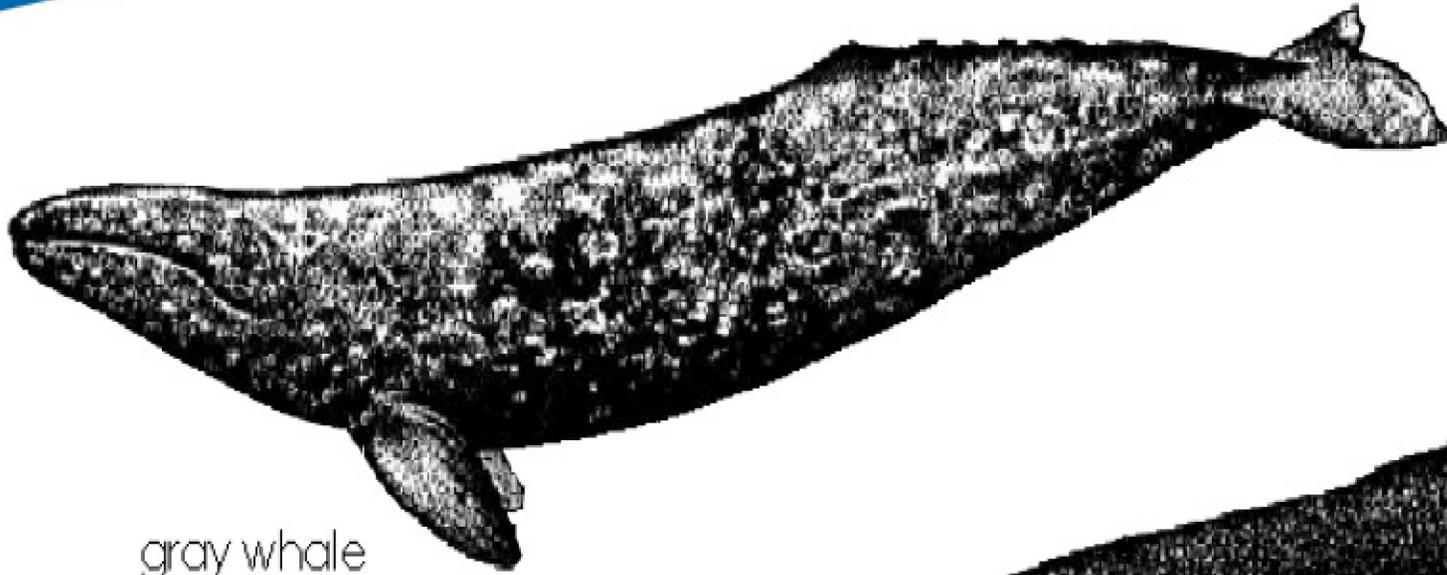
Commerson's dolphin
Cephalorhynchus commersonii
5 ft. (1.5 m)



blue whale
Balaenoptera musculus
90 ft. (27.5 m)



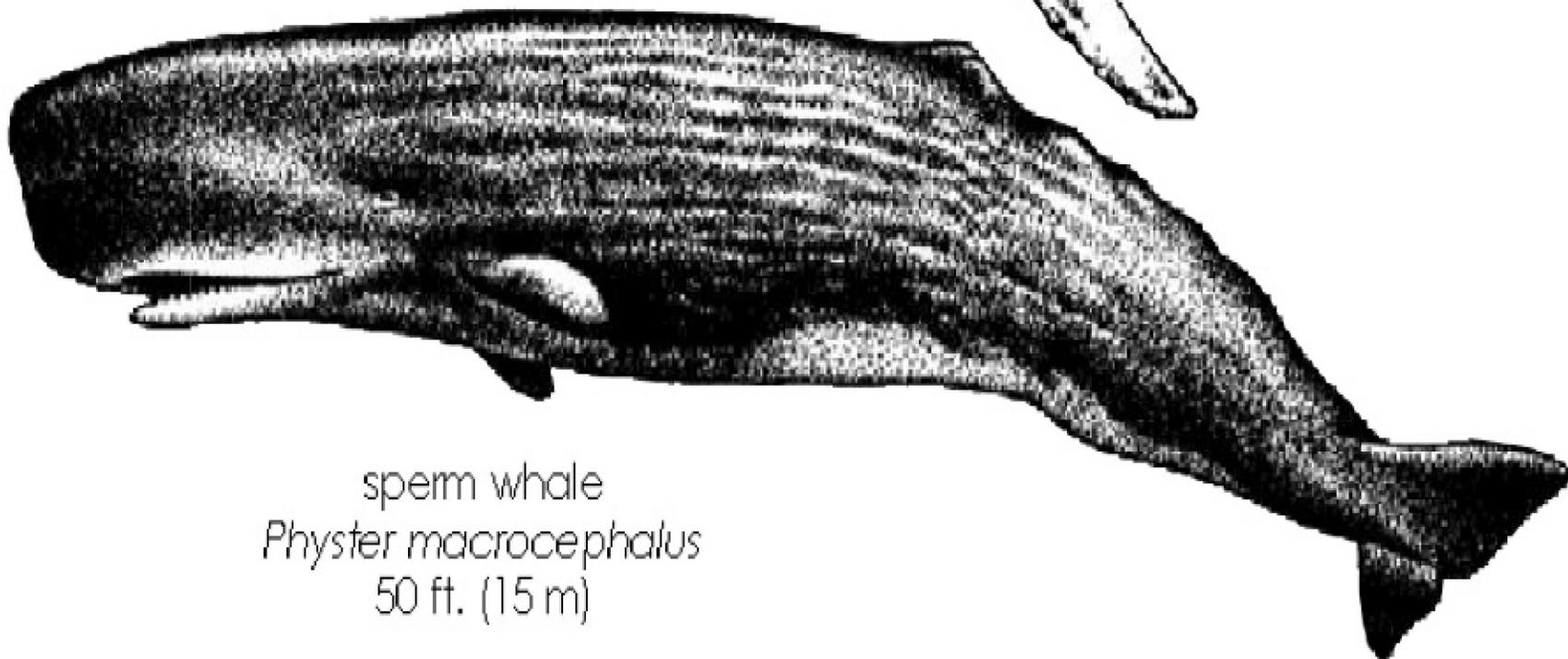
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gray whale
Eschrichtius robustus
45 ft. (14 m)



humpback whale
Megaptera novaeangliae
40 ft. (12 m)



sperm whale
Physeter macrocephalus
50 ft. (15 m)