

Sirenian Speech

OBJECTIVE

Grades: K-1

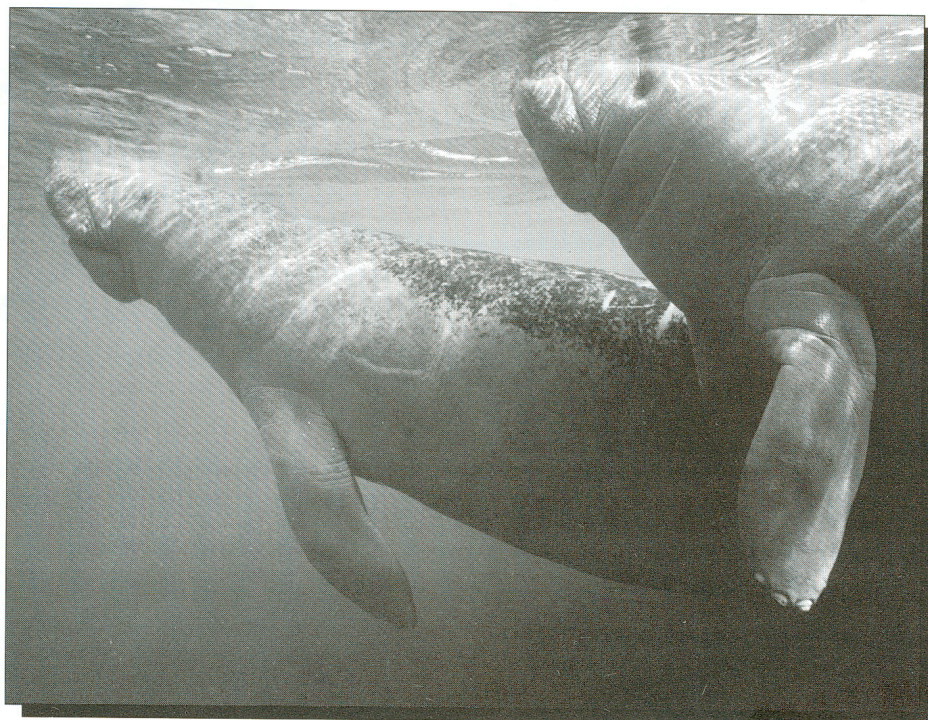
Students will develop a list of words that describes manatees and their environments.

MATERIALS

- manatee pictures
- butcher paper
- construction paper
- markers

ACTION

1. Show the class a picture of a manatee and the environment in which it lives. How many words can they use to describe this animal? How many words can they use to describe the manatee's environment? Using the marker and a piece of butcher paper, write all the words the students list.
2. After students run out of words, go over the list with them again. Point to the first word, read it out loud, and then have the students read it with you. Do this with each word on the list.
3. Give each student a piece of construction paper and crayons so they can draw a manatee in its environment. Then have them write the describing words on their picture.
4. Mount the butcher paper with the words on the classroom wall or on a bulletin board. Display the pictures the students drew around the butcher paper when students have completed them.



A manatee pokes its nostrils above the surface to breathe. The average interval between breaths is two to three minutes.

OBJECTIVE**Grades: 2-3**

Using a dictionary and thesaurus, students will make lists of synonyms for manatee words.

MATERIALS

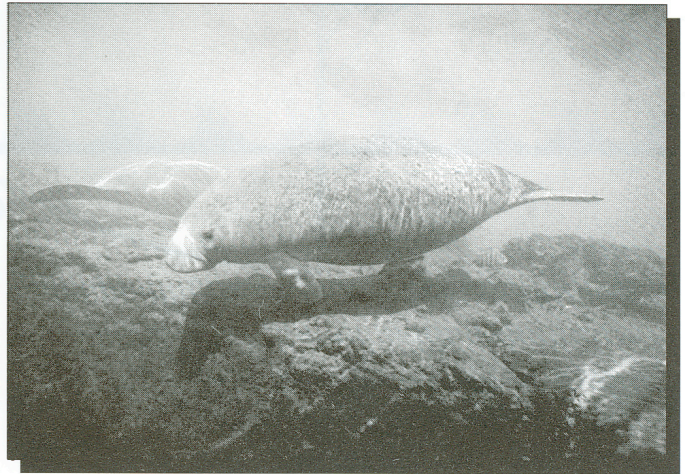
- dictionary
- thesaurus
- paper
- marker
- bulletin board tacks

ACTION

1. Set up a bulletin board and a table where the dictionary and thesaurus can be kept accessible for everyone. Keep the paper in a box and writing utensils in a container on the table.
2. As a class, define the term *synonym*. Synonyms are words that have the same meaning. Write a word from the list provided on the board. Use it as an example to show the students how to use the thesaurus. Find two synonyms and write them on the board next to the word you looked up.
3. Write another word from the list on the board. Have one of the students find two synonyms for it and write them on the board. Continue this process until all the words on the synonym list have matches.

Synonym List

food (edibles)
 lagoon (bay)
 endangered (threatened)
 grass (turf)
 migrate (move)
 extinct (gone)
 harbor (port)
 sun (star)
 flipper (limb)
 herbivore (plant eater)
 vegetation (plants)
 float (bob)
 home (house)
 water (fluid)



The deepest a manatee has been seen diving is 10 m (33 ft.). They normally dive no deeper than 3 m (10 ft.) below the surface of the water.

DEEPER DEPTHS

Lead students in a discussion about their own homes. What do they need for their environment to be healthy? Encourage answers such as food, water, shelter, and space. Ask students if manatees need these same things. Point out the similarities and differences in the two environments.

Students can draw a class mural of a healthy manatee environment. Using some of the words from the synonym list, label the pictures. This class project can be worked on throughout the month or in October, the month prior to Manatee Awareness Month. When it's completed, display the mural where the entire school can see it during November.