



SeaWorld/Busch Gardens Whales

4-8 Classroom Activities

A World of Whales

OBJECTIVE

The student will construct, read, and interpret a bar graph to compare mysticete population estimates.

ACTION

1. Copy and distribute *A World of Whales* funsheet on the next page.
2. Students complete the bar graph by doing one of two things: if a population estimate is given, the student must draw a bar to represent that number. If a bar is given, the student must write the number represented by the bar.
3. Students answer questions.

ANSWERS

bar graph:

humpback whale — 10,000

fin whale — 120,000

sei whale — 50,000

1. right whale
2. fin whale
3. The right whale's population is small because of hunting. Its gentle nature, approachability, and buoyancy when dead made it the "right" whale to hunt. Right whales have been legally protected since 1937.
4. People can protect whales by wisely managing whale populations, reducing the number of whales taken incidentally in fishing operations, and conserving whale habitats. Whale habitats are in danger from many forms of destruction including coastal development, boat traffic, plastic debris, and toxins.

DEEPER DEPTHS

Students use books and Internet sites listed below to find population estimates for other whale species. Compare mysticete population estimates before and after commercial whaling. Construct a mathematical representation of the information. How are population estimates obtained? How accurate do you think they are? How are they used? Why are these estimates important for whale conservation?

Leatherwood, Stephen and Randall R. Reeves. *The Sierra Club Handbook of Whales and Dolphins*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1983.

Martin, Anthony R. *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Whales and Dolphins*. New York: Portland House, 1990.

Minasian, Stanley M., Kenneth C. Balcomb, and Larry Foster. *The World's Whales*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 1984.

Ridgway, Sam and Richard Harrison, eds. *Handbook of Marine Mammals. Volumes 3-6*. San Diego: Academic Press, 1985.

Watson, Lyall. *Sea Guide to Whales of the World*. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1981.

Cetacea Web site

<http://www.cetacea.org/whales.htm>

WhaleNet at

<http://whale.wheelock.edu/Welcome.html>

World Wildlife Fund Web site at

<http://www.panda.org/kids/wildlife/mnwhale.htm>

MATERIALS

For each student:

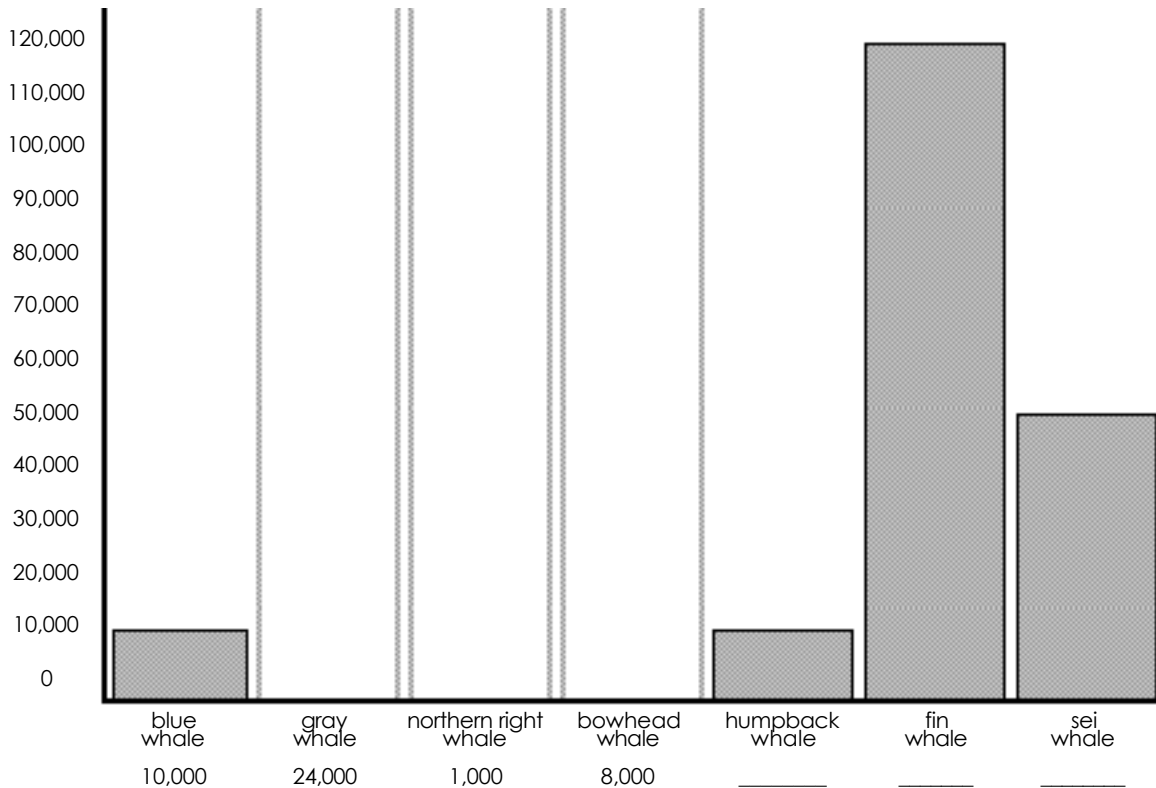
- copy of the *A World of Whales* Funsheet
- colored pencils



Humpback whales in the eastern Pacific Ocean migrate between Alaska (winter) and Hawaii (summer). Whale watchers in Hawaii often see the spectacular breach behaviors of these whales.

A World of Whales

The bar graph below gives population estimates for seven types of mysticetes. Complete the graph. If a population estimate is given, draw a bar to represent that number. If a bar is given, write the number represented by the bar. Then answer the questions below.



whale species and population estimates

1. Which population is the smallest?
2. Which population is the largest?
3. Why do you think the population is so small for the right whale?
4. What can people do to help protect whales?