

Who Am I?

OBJECTIVE

Students will be able to identify two differences between seals and sea lions.

MATERIALS

per student:

- copy of *Who Am I?* funsheet on page 9
- crayons, particularly red and blue

per class:

- enlarged copy of page 3 illustration "What's the difference between a seal and a sea lion/fur seal?"
- chalkboard or writing surface

BACKGROUND

Seals, sea lions, and walrus belong to the scientific order Pinnipedia. These animals have flippers; broad, flat limbs supported by bones. Sea lions are named "eared seals" because they have external ear flaps on the sides of their heads. Sea lions have large front flippers and can rotate the hind flippers forward to "walk" on land. Seals do not have ear flaps, only ear holes; they have short front flippers and cannot rotate their hind flippers. Walrus have no ear flaps but can rotate the hind flippers to "walk" on land.



ACTION

1. Ask students if they can describe a sea lion. What does it look like? Where does it live? How does it swim? Does it move on land? Ask students the same questions about a seal.
2. Draw an outline of a seal and a sea lion on the board. Pattern the outlines using the illustrations on page 3.
3. Ask students to name or describe some differences they see between these two animals. Emphasize the differences described on page 3.
4. Distribute the *Who Am I?* funsheet

copies and crayons to students. Ask students to write the name of the animal below each one. (Students may copy words from the board.) Now students can draw the missing parts of the matching pair. Color all four animals when finished.

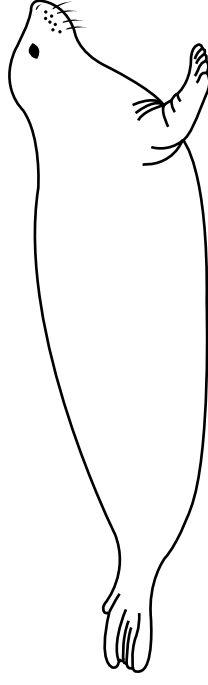
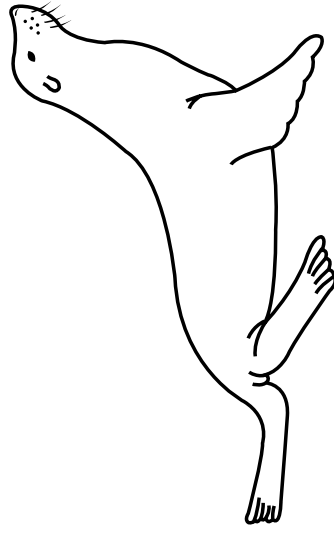
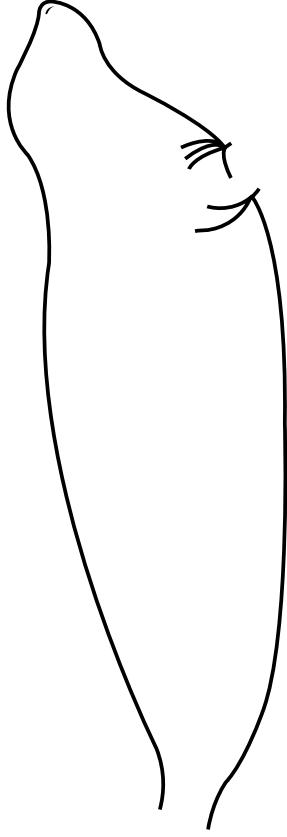
DEEPER DEPTHS

Show pictures of different seal and sea lion species. See if students can correctly identify each as a seal or sea lion.

Name _____

Who Am I?

Can you tell which is a seal and which is a sea lion? Write the names below the animal. Now help their friends by drawing flippers, ears, eyes, and whiskers.



What Are Seals, Seal Lions, and Walruses?

These animals are pinnipeds.

Scientists group seals, sea lions, fur seals, and walruses together in the scientific order called *Pinnipedia*. All pinnipeds have four *flippers*—one pair in front (foreflippers) and one pair in back (hind flippers), a thick layer of *blubber*, and sensitive whiskers called *vibrissae*.

Pinnipeds are divided into three families—the walruses, the true seals, and the eared seals. The eared seals, which include both sea lions and fur seals, have visible, external ear flaps.

Pinnipeds are mammals.

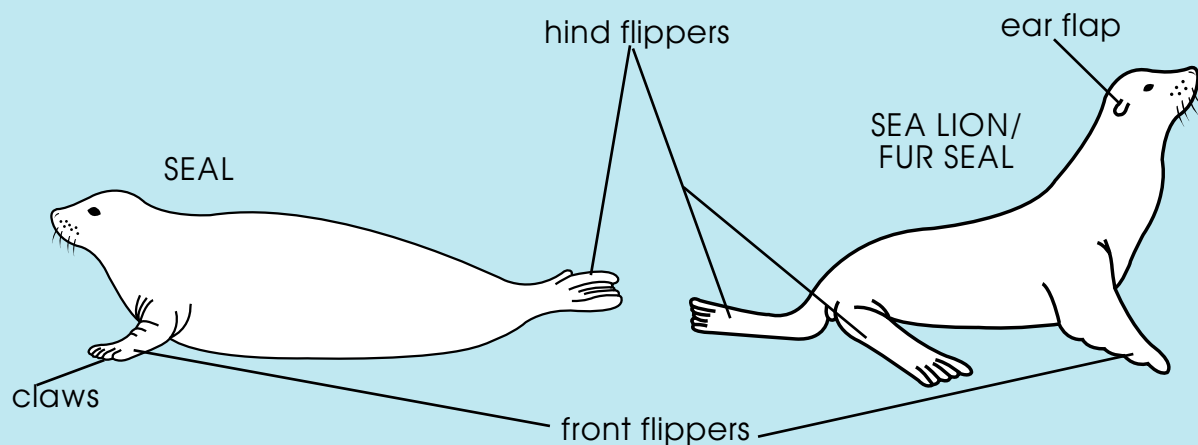
Pinnipeds share five characteristics with other mammals. They are warm blooded (maintain a high and constant body

temperature independent of the surroundings), give live birth, nurse their young, breathe air, and have hair.

Pinnipeds live on land and in the sea.

Because these animals live in the marine environment and they find their food at sea, pinnipeds are *marine mammals*. Other marine mammals include whales and sea otters. Although pinnipeds spend most of their lives in the water, they come ashore to rest, give birth, and *molt*. Once each year, usually in the spring, they gather on beaches or sea ice to give birth and breed. After the pupping season, adults often come ashore again to molt: they shed the outer skin layers with old fur and hair. They also *haul out* on shore to rest and bask in the sun throughout the year.

What's the difference between a seal and sea lion/fur seal?



Seals and sea lions/fur seals differ in a number of ways, but here are four that are easy to spot. Sea lions/fur seals show external ear flaps; seals show only ear holes. Sea lions/fur seals have long, hairless, front flippers with short nails; seals have short, fur-covered front flippers with long claws. Sea lions/fur seals can rotate their hind flippers forward to walk on land; seals hold their hind flippers straight and move on land in a forward rolling motion of their bellies. Sea lion/fur seal whiskers are smooth; most seal whiskers are beaded or crimped.