

## 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Personal Narrative: Whales

**Task Prompt:** Your class is studying about oceans and animals that live in these oceans. You are given three resources about whales. *Read the sources carefully so you can **write a story** about a family that goes on vacation to a place right by the ocean. They go out on a boat ride and spot a huge creature coming out of the water. It's a whale! Tell the story of what happens when the family sees the whale.* When writing your story, find ways to use information and details from the sources to improve your story.

### Lost in the Fog

Eli and his older sister, Sophia, stood on the deck of a small boat, watching the water. They were visiting Alaska, where their uncle worked as a marine biologist. As a special treat, he had taken them out on his research boat to look for whales. The morning had been bright and clear, but now, a thick layer of fog rolled in over the ocean. The boat's motor hummed softly as they moved through the misty water. "It's kind of creepy out here," Eli whispered. Sophia shrugged. "I think it's cool," she said. Their uncle smiled. "The whales don't mind the fog," he said. "We just have to listen carefully."

For a while, they saw nothing but gray waves stretching into the mist. Then, a deep, rumbling sound filled the air. PFFFFFF! "What was that?" Eli asked, his eyes wide. Their uncle pointed ahead. "That's a whale's breath!" Another loud PFFFFFF! echoed through the fog, followed by a misty spray shooting into the air. A huge, dark shape appeared, a humpback whale! Its giant body glided just beneath the surface before lifting its tail high and diving into the deep. "That was incredible!" Sophia said, gripping the railing.

Eli was still staring at the water when he noticed something strange. "Look! Over there!" he shouted. A circle of bubbles rose from below, growing larger by the second. Before anyone could speak, the water exploded with movement. Several humpback whales burst through the surface at once, their huge mouths wide open. Fish wriggled in the air before vanishing into the whales' throats. Their uncle grinned. "You just saw bubble-net feeding! The whales blow

bubbles to trap fish, then rise up and gulp them down.” Eli’s jaw dropped. “That’s the coolest thing I’ve ever seen.”

For the next hour, the boat drifted as Eli and Sophia watched the whales swim, feed, and dive. The fog made everything feel mysterious. The whales seemed to appear and disappear like ghosts. Sometimes, Eli and Sophia could hear a whale’s breath before they could see it. “It almost sounds like they’re talking,” Sophia whispered. Their uncle nodded. “That’s because they are. Humpback whales use sounds to communicate and find food.”

As the fog slowly began to lift, the boat turned back toward shore. The ocean stretched out before them, calm and peaceful. “That was amazing,” Eli said, leaning on the railing. “I never thought I’d see whales hunting together like that.” Sophia smiled. “Me neither. I’m so glad we didn’t turn back because of the fog.” Their uncle chuckled. “The ocean is full of surprises.” As they reached the dock, Eli and Sophia exchanged excited glances. They knew this was a trip they would never forget.