

5th 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.

Whale Watching in Puget Sound

Emma and her little brother, Jake, had always dreamed of seeing a whale in real life. When their parents took them on a trip to Puget Sound in Washington, they were thrilled to learn they would be going on a whale-watching tour. The salty breeze tugged at Emma's jacket as she stepped onto the boat, gripping the cool metal railing. Around them, tree-covered islands dotted the water, and misty mountain peaks rose in the distance. As the boat drifted away from shore, the tour guide explained that the waters were home to different types of whales. "Keep your eyes open" he said. "They can appear when you least expect it"!

Minutes passed. Emma leaned forward, scanning the horizon. Then, out of no where, a tall mist of water shot into the air. "Look! Over there!" she shouted, pointing excitedly. A massive gray whale slowly broke the surface, its dark, spotted back shimmering under the sun. Jake gasped. "Whoa! It's huge"! The captain nodded. "That's a gray whale. They migrate thousands of miles along the coast, and some stop here in Puget Sound to rest and feed". The whale lingered for a moment, taking a deep breath through its blowhole before diving back down. Its wide tail rose above the surface, then disappeared with a gentle splash. Emma stood frozen, amazed by the sheer size of the creature.

Before she could say another word, something else caught her attention. A few yards away, a sleek black fin sliced through the waves. "Orcas," the captain called out, "A whole pod!"

Emma's heart pounded with excitement. The orcas swam together in perfect sync, their dorsal

fins rising and falling like dancers in a routine. Without warning, one launched itself into the air. "Whoa"! Jake yelled, gripping the railing tightly. Water exploded around the orca as it crashed back down. Emma laughed, "I think that one wants to be famous." The guide chuckled, "Orcas love to breach—it could be for fun, or maybe they're trying to communicate with each other."

For the next hour, Emma and Jake watched in awe as the whales moved gracefully through the water. Some orcas hunted for fish, while others played, rolling on their backs and slapping their tails. Emma's parents snapped pictures, but she knew no photo could capture how magical it felt to see the whales in person. As the sun dipped lower in the sky, the boat slowly turned back toward shore. Emma rested her chin on her hands, watching the water shimmer in the golden light.

Jake nodded. "Me to. I want to come back and see them again someday."

Their dad smiled. "Maybe next summer," he said.

Emma grinned. The thought of another adventure on the ocean filled her with excitement