

# Equitable Access to Challenging Texts

ARC Core Units include all recommended texts to ensure equitable opportunities for all students to learn. Each unit provides a coherent collection of connected texts that build content and vocabulary knowledge through reading, writing, listening, speaking, and language. Text collections are designed to give all students—multilingual learners, striving readers, and advanced readers—daily practice with grade-appropriate texts. Engagement with a wide variety of texts prepares students to complete a final writing project connected to both the unit and the students’ interests.

## Grade 3 Unit 4: Marine Life

From tiny crawfish scurrying along the ocean floor to whales that are 100 feet long, marine life comes in many shapes and sizes. However, all creatures share certain acts of surviving and adapting to their habitats. As the class explores Marine Life, students will participate in an academic community as they read, write, research, and debate knowledge together. Each student will become an expert on one marine animal. By the end of the Unit, they will be able to say to you, “Ask me ANYTHING about my marine animal.”

All students access at or above grade-level texts on Marine Life that are exemplary in terms of both content and craft. Teachers use the core texts to help students learn the key science concepts (e.g., physical characteristics) through a combination of shared reading, writing activities, and direct instruction in preparation for their independent research. Students will then read deeply, working to learn everything they can about their individual topics. Across the unit, the research questions connect the foundational academic activities of writing, reading, speaking, and research as students analyze evidence from multiple sources.

### Classroom Sets of Core Texts: Save the Ocean, Chapter 2




Additional Core Texts




## Chapter 2 Designed for Success?

Surviving in the ocean isn't easy. Each marine species has **physical characteristics** that help it survive in this challenging world of water. Physical characteristics are the shape, size, and structures of the body. For each marine animal, these physical characteristics are important to how it gets food, stays safe, and survives underwater.




Great White Shark




Yellow Spotted Burrfish



Polar Bear



King Penguin



Blue Land Crab

### Getting Food

#### Trapping Food

Ocean animals have many amazing physical characteristics that help them catch enough food to eat. Octopuses use physical characteristics like long arms and suction cups to catch their prey. Their long arms let them reach between rocks to get crabs and fish hiding there. Once octopuses have grabbed their prey, the suction cups on their arms hold it tight so it can't get away.


Blue whales have giant mouths and special teeth called **balen** that help them catch their prey. These huge whales need about 8,000 pounds of food every day. They eat small crustaceans called krill. Krill are only about 2 inches long. Blue whales couldn't get enough krill to eat if they had to catch them one at a time. Instead, they open their mouths to let water rush in. The water is filled with krill. The whales use their tongues to push out the water. The krill get trapped in their balen. Blue whales can catch millions of krill very quickly with their huge mouths and balen.

**How much is 8,000 pounds?**

Two cars weigh 8,000 pounds.

**LIFE SIZE**

Krill, though small in size, are a mighty part of the ocean ecosystem. Some species, like the blue whale, would starve if krill went extinct.



Teacher Guide: Grade 3, Unit 4



Intermediate Research Card

# Marine Life

Reader: \_\_\_\_\_ Room: \_\_\_\_\_

Select a marine animal to research.

Research Questions:

1. Describe the marine animal's physical characteristics. Explain how these adaptations help the animal survive.
2. Describe the marine animal's behavior and explain how these adaptations help it survive.
3. Classify the marine animal. Identify the group it belongs to and describe the characteristics they have in common.
4. Identify and explain the stages of the marine animal's life cycle.
5. Describe the marine animal's habitat.
6. Describe the marine animal's food web.
7. Explain why this marine animal is endangered. Identify and describe threats to its survival.



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## Day 1 Lesson Focus: Become Experts on RQ #1

Grade-Level Instruction	Differentiated Support	
Read/Write/Discuss Complex Text 20–40 min.	Reading Lab 20–40 min.	Writing 20–40 min.

### Research Launch

#### Read/Write/Discuss Complex Text

##### 1. Introduce Final Project Organizer

Distribute a complete (stapled) packet of all Final Project Organizer (FPO) pages to each student. Introduce the packet as students' primary data-collection tool. Explain that although the class will work through one organizer at a time, students can (and should) add to any and all organizers.

##### 2. Establish Today's Learning Goal: RQ #1

Today, we start researching our individual research topics. We will spend the next four weeks working to learn everything we can about *Marine Life* and each of our individual topics. We will start with Research Question (RQ) #1. By the end of today, each of you will be an expert on RQ #1 for your topic.

##### 3. Pre-Reading: RQ #1

###### Capture/Inspire/Make It Real

Engage students in learning about this RQ by activating prior knowledge, asking an urgent question, and/or asking students to apply these concepts to their own worlds.

###### Introduce Key Concepts Using RQ #1 FPO Pages

The pages in the FPO lay out the key concepts related to each RQ. Have a large version of the FPO page for RQ #1 up on the board. Use the FPO pages to introduce students to the key concepts at the heart of this Research Question. Pre-teach these concepts ONLY when they will not be taught through the text your class will read today.

### Best Practices in Teaching Content Through Inquiry

Research Labs asks teachers to shift from "coverage" and "lecture mode" to a student-centered approach in which students learn mostly through reading, research, and discussion, as opposed to through teacher instruction.

#### Suggested Moves

- Start engaging students by activating prior knowledge, connecting the content to students' lives, sparking debate, etc.
- Ask *Why?* and *Why does this matter to us?*
- Whenever possible, act as the coach while students work to read and learn the content themselves. Try to avoid "stand and deliver."
- Don't worry about "covering" all the content in whole-group instruction—much of the learning students will remember will come from their independent research. Give them just enough in order to ensure success in their research. Then watch and coach as they work.
- Use students to teach each other. Everyone learns more.
- Use peer reviews, student-friendly rubrics, Accountable Talk, etc., so that students are working to impress the audience that matters most to them: their peers.
- Instead of memorization, ask students to explain things in relationship to each other. For example, instead of asking them to identify matrix caravans, ask them to arrange different marine animals in food webs and to explain why they must be organized this way.

Week 2: Day 1 65

## Marine Life Lab Notebook

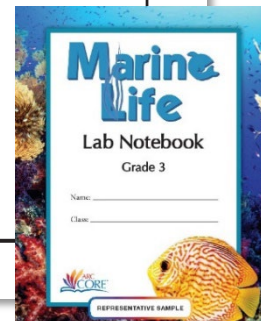
Final Project Organizer - Intermediate

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Room: \_\_\_\_\_



# RQ #1: Physical Characteristics of \_\_\_\_\_

	Physical Characteristics What does the marine animal look like?	Adaptations How do these characteristics help the marine animal survive?
Size/ Weight		
Color		
Skin Covering		
Special Body Parts		



Teacher Guide: Grade 3, Unit 4

**3. Close Reading of Complex Text**

**Goal: Determine What the Author Is Saying/Learn RQ**  
**Key Concepts**

Select a rich passage from the Core Text or another text that will build students' knowledge of the key Science concepts at the heart of today's Research Question. The class will read and reread this selection over the course of the next two days, so select a text (or set of texts) that is worth the time and attention. Read the text in appropriate chunks (1–2 pages at most).

**Text-Dependent Questions, Academic Vocabulary Work, Repeated Close Reading**

Students read a passage from the text and engage in intellectual discourse around this passage.

**Decide:** What will count as evidence of student learning? Have students use/create graphic organizers to chart the key concepts presented, answer good questions through Quick-Writes/Quick-Draws, or be ready for colds calls with their partners. After each question, use student responses to determine your next move.

**Key Science Concepts for This RQ**

**Pair/Share:** Have students work in pairs to answer the questions below based on the text.

*What is the author saying about RQ #2? How do you know? Why does it matter to our study of Marine Life?*

**Key Concepts**

- Define.
- Explain.
- Give an example.
- Cite the BEST piece of text evidence.

**Formative Assessment:** Listen in as students work to determine what (if anything) you need to clarify.

- What else do students need to learn from this text in order to master this concept?
- Is there a common misunderstanding to address?
- Are there other vocabulary words or concepts students need to know in order to be successful with their independent research?

**Suggested Text**

Chapter 3: "Fighting for Survival" (pp. 26–31) in *Save the Ocean* by Sara Murphy and Traci Dibble



Students will be reading and rereading this text over the next two days. Decide how much of the section to read today, based on student engagement and understanding of the Science concepts.

Actual titles included in your collections may vary.

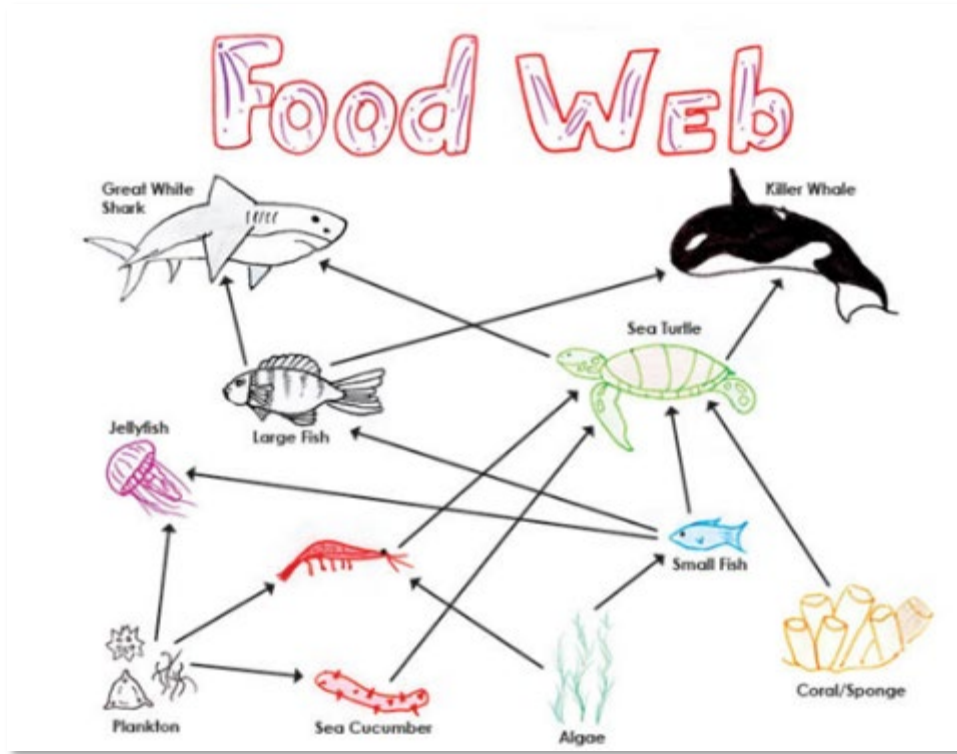
**Content Learning FIRST**

Be sure to use the standards work in service of learning about the Research Question. Keep the focus on the content.

Marine Life Research Library

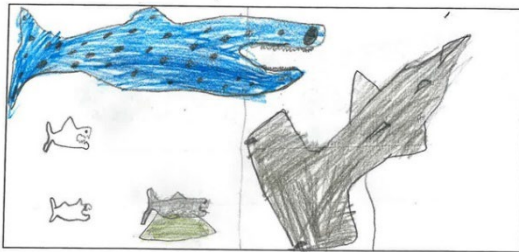


Student Graphic Organizer



Student Writing Sample

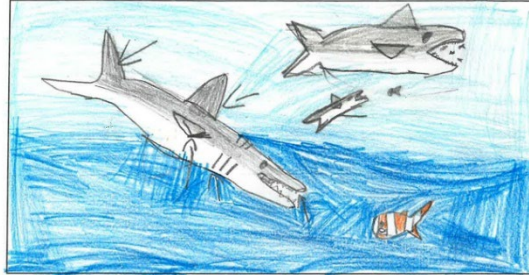
Introduction



Did you know that there are more than 400 different types of sharks. These are some things you might learn in this book. Blue sharks can give birth to 125 sharks at one time. The make sharks can swim up to

Chapter 1 - Characteristics

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 2-10-2021



Have you ever wondered how sharks survive? Well this is the book for you. Sharks have many characteristics to help them survive, like its teeth. A shark's teeth help