



THROUGH THE EYES OF WHALES
LINKING KIDS, ART, AND WHALES ACROSS THE NORTH PACIFIC OCEAN
A Special Project of Whale Trust
Sponsored by Whale Quest Kapalua

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."
Margaret Mead*

Outline/Overview: The purpose of this project is to facilitate communication and interaction between elementary school students in Hawaii and Alaska through whales, and to create a traveling art mural that will depict the student's learning and will be unveiled at Whale Quest Kapalua in February of 2009.

The final project is the creation of a traveling mural made by students in Alaska and Hawaii who have researched and learned from each other and Whale Trust about humpback whales in their regions.

A total of six fourth grade classrooms and approximately 140 students will be participating in this pilot project. Three classrooms from Harborview Elementary School in Juneau, Alaska and three from Pomaika'i in Maui, Hawaii will participate.

Learning Objectives: The students will be given three general topic areas to focus on and choose from for the final project.

- a) The cultural relationship between humpback whales and their community (what is the historical and/or current significance of whales to their area?)
- b) The biological and physical relationship with whales in their community (e.g., why do humpbacks visit Alaska or Hawaii? Why do they migrate? How is the physical landscape or environment important to their survival and/or life cycle?);
- c) Creating and fostering stewardship and appreciation for whales (e.g., what are some of the threats facing whales? What can we do about it? Why is that important?).

Final Product: After researching whales with their classrooms, talking to the other students in the program, learning from the speakers and background information provided, students will choose the area that interests them most about whales and interpret or illustrate it with acrylic paints on a 1' x 1' piece of canvas.

Each canvas will be collected, assembled, and displayed together as an integrative and traveling mural based on the student's artwork in Hawaii and Alaska. The entire mural will be unveiled and displayed at Whale Quest Kapalua in Maui (February 13-15th, 2009) at the Ritz-Carlton Resort.

For more information on Whale Quest, please visit www.whaletrust.org/education/education_whale_quest.html.

After the inaugural event, we plan to recruit different venues from around Maui (e.g., Earth Day, Ocean Arts Festival, Maui Arts and Cultural Center, the Hui No'eau Visual Arts Center) for the mural to be displayed around the island throughout the winter. When the whales' head back to Alaska in the summer, the mural will be shipped back to Juneau for display in that area over the summer and fall.

Timeframe: November 3, 2008 – January 28, 2009.

Whale Trust will need to have received all artwork no later than January 28, 2009 in order to build the frame and have it displayed at Whale Quest Kapalua in 2009. Entries submitted after this date will not be included in the mural unless prior arrangements have been made.

To Get Started: One of the primary objectives of this project is to use whales as a way to connect and link students in Hawaii and Alaska. We hope the communication will add another dimension to the project creating a deeper understanding and connection with the environment, the whales and each other.

Communication between the Students: It is our hope that the schools will link via internet/email and converse with questions, comments and observations of their own, so they can learn from each other not only about whales but also about what life is like in their respective communities, exploring some of the similarities and differences of these regions linked by the migration of humpback whales. In order to do this, we are in the process of creating a blog site for students and teachers involved in this project through the Whale Trust website.

Please send if you can a photo of your school or classrooms that are participating so we can post on our website.

The Blog and Classroom Communication: To help facilitate communication, we have created a blog on the Whale Trust website for the students and/or classrooms to use to ask questions of each other and of Whale Trust staff. We encourage teachers to begin using the blog on the Whale Trust website (http://whaletrust.org/blog/?page_id=27) to initiate communication between the two schools before Thanksgiving (see below for discussion ideas and themes).

Although it is up to the teachers, we suggest communicating as a classroom rather than individual students to streamline the communication. The communication piece can and hopefully will be ongoing throughout the project using the blog site. If there are any problems with the blog site, then regular email can take over.

Blogging Ideas to Get You Going

Phase I

Getting to Know Each Other

- Describe your school (e.g., school values, philosophy, background)
- Describe what it is like where you live
- Describe some of the things you like to do
- What are you studying in school?
- Compare what it's like to live in each location (weather, environment, Island life, life in Alaska)

Blogging Phase 2

Significance and Relevance of Whales in Your Area

- What do you know about whales? What do you want to learn about whales?
- Are whales important to you? Are they important to your community? How?
- What is the history of whales in your area?
- Have you seen whales in your area? What were they doing?
- Describe what whales do when they are in your area
- What are some of the reasons that whales come to your area each year?
- What are some of the threats to whales in your area?
- What are the solutions? What things can *we* do to help?
- Do you want to help whales? Why?
- What are important things for us *all* to do?
- What are ways we can get others to participate in helping?
- What have you learned about whales that you never knew?

Background Material and Resources: Whale Trust will provide teachers with a general packet of background information on whales, a signed copy of Flip Nicklin's newest book on whales aimed at the fourth or fifth grade level, and all materials related to the final art project including paints, brushes and canvas pieces. The background packet will be available to teachers by November 14th. Students and teachers will also be able to use the Whale Trust website and NOAA website in Juneau for additional information that is already online (see *about whales* or *gallery* for whale sounds and slideshows). Included in the packet is a list of resources for teachers. In addition, Whale Trust will post a new topic area each Monday on the Kids Korner section of the blog to keep up with weekly topics on whales.

Speakers: In addition, a presenter from Whale Trust will come to each school to talk to the students about whales to help facilitate the formal learning process. During the week of November 18th- 20th speakers will be available to come into your classroom and talk to your students about humpback whales, especially as they relate to your area. Heather Hardcastle, a Juneau resident and Whale Trust affiliate will be the speaker in Juneau, and Meagan Jones, Executive Director, Whale Trust will be the speaker in Maui. Please contact your local coordinator to make arrangements (see last page for contact information).

Local Coordinators and Contact Information:

Meagan Jones, Executive Director, Whale Trust, Whale Quest Kapalua Educational Coordinator

Email: mjones@whaletrust.org;

Phone: 808-572-5700

Marcy Lynn, Administrative Manager, Whale Trust

Email: mlynn@whaletrust.org;

Phone: 808-572-5700

Liz Stahl, Alaska Coordinator

Email: lovethesea99801@yahoo.com

Phone: 907-523-5958 (home) or 805-512-3074 (cell)

Heather Hardcastle, Whale Trust Educator

Email: salmongal@mac.com

Local School Contact Information

Pomaika'i Elementary School, Maui, Hawaii - Participating Teachers

Rae Takemoto, Hawaii Teacher Coordinator

Rae_Takemoto/POMAIKAI/HIDOE@notes.k12.hi.us

Donelle Bancaco, Fourth Grade Teacher

Krys Kawamura, Fourth Grade Teacher

Peggy Tobita, Fourth Grade Teacher

Harborview Elementary School, Juneau, Alaska - Participating Teachers

Tom McKenna

Email Tom_McKenna@breadnet.middlebury.edu

Phone 907-523-1868

Liz Miyasato-

email: elizabeth_miyasato@jsd.k12.ak.us

Phone: 907-523-1869

Lucy Potter

email: lucy_potter@jsd.k12.ak.us

Phone: 907-523-1871

Heather Ridgway, Art Teacher

Email: heather_ridgway@jsd.k12.ak.us

Phone: 907-321-4465