

# Sea Watch Investigator Task

## Magnificent Marine Migrations - Voyage of the Gray Whale



**Objective - To use geographical mapping skills to locate and map cetaceans in the US.**



**Resources** - Atlases with US maps, US maps (can be downloaded from <http://www.eduplace.com/ss/maps/pdf/americas.pdf>) enlarged to A3, sightings and passport worksheets, website links.



### **National Curriculum Targets and Key Skills**

#### **Geography KS2**

##### **Knowledge, Skills and Understanding**

Geographical enquiry and skills

- 1a. ask geographical questions
- 2c. to use atlases and globes, and maps and plans at a range of scales
- 2d. to use secondary sources of information, (for example, information texts)

Knowledge and understanding of places -

- 3a. identify and describe what places are like (for example, weather)
- 3b. the location of environments and other places they study

#### **Mathematics (Framework)**

##### **Understanding shape**

Year 3 - read and record the vocabulary of position, direction and movement, using the four compass points to describe movement about a grid

Year 4 - use the eight compass points to describe direction

#### **PSHE**

##### **Knowledge, Skills and Understanding**

Preparing to play an active role as citizens -

- 2e. to realise that people and other living things have needs, and that they have responsibilities to meet them.

**[Linked to Geography QCA Unit 24 - Passport to the World.](#)**

*There is also an excellent book that could be used with this unit about the migration of the Gray Whale, which could be easily linked to Literacy and Art activities - **Whale Journey***

*Author-Vivian French Illustrated by Lisa Flather*

*ISBN - 1-84089-137-8.*

*This could also be a great opportunity for some creative writing, by asking children to write about one*

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### What to do -

1. Discuss the term migration with the children and reasons why they think whales migrate. Share their ideas and scribe down for reference later.  
*(The Gray Whale is a baleen whale. Most of these species spend part of the year feeding in cold Northern waters of The Arctic Ocean and the rest in warmer waters, such as the shores of Baja California for the Grey Whale in this study, to breed and have their young. Other species of Whale and Dolphin also migrate on a seasonal basis searching for food.) Children may want to find out more about what a Baleen Whale is and the differences between them and Toothed Whales at another time. <http://www.cetacea.org/>*
2. Ask children to look at their maps of the western coast of the U.S. and find the appropriate page in their atlas.
3. Locate and label seas and oceans surrounding the west coast and Alaska.
4. Using sightings notes annotate the map with crosses or an alternative to map the migration of the Gray Whale. Use a key to explain annotation. Dates and distances may also be annotated. Join the point up to show the migration route clearly.
5. The children have now mapped the migration route of the Pacific Gray Whale.
6. Complete the Gray Whale passport, including noting places of sightings, distances travelled and dates.
7. Discuss the children's findings and their thoughts on the epic journey that these whales make each year.
8. If possible, share read *Whale Migrations*, it supports this activity very well.

*As an extension activity or for homework, children could find out migratory journeys of other whales and dolphins in the world.*

*Another informative website is <http://www.whaleroute.com/migrate/>*