

ECHOLOCATION AND COMMUNICATION

10. Body language charades

Objective: Students will demonstrate an understanding of how bodies can be used to communicate.

Level: K-3

Background: Sound is not a whale's only mode of communication. Like all other animals, body language plays a role in general communication, dominance displays and signs of affection. Flippers and flukes are used for touching, signalling and play in courtship. Male Humpbacks compete to escort females in heat by combating one another with head butts and sweeps of their five-metre-long flippers. Breaching activity is also believed to be a form of communication.

Procedure:

- 1) Discuss how whales use their bodies to communicate feelings and ideas (stroking, hitting, etc.). Discuss body language in humans. A large part of human body language is communicated through facial expression. Whales do not have this ability.
- 2) Have the students communicate various feelings, emotions, or ideas without using speech or facial expressions. Some ideas are: "Come with me", "Go away", "I'm tired", etc.
- 3) Have other students try to guess what each student is saying.