



Gigantic Doesn't Always Have to Mean Scary

By: Jenna Malgieri

Sharks are often thought to be scary animals that LURK (remain hidden) in the dark waters of the ocean waiting to CHOMP on whoever crosses their path. But this PARTICULAR shark shouldn't give you a reason to be nervous when swimming in the ocean. WHALE SHARKS are considered the biggest fish in the ocean and surprisingly isn't even a whale at all. Although, like whales, these fish are huge and are about the size of a school bus, weighing more than 40,000 POUNDS!

Spell LURK CHOMP PARTICULAR

What does lurk mean? REMAIN HIDDEN

This particular shark shouldn't give you a reason to be ___? NERVOUS What is considered the biggest fish in the ocean? WHALE SHARK

Whale sharks are about the size of a ___? BUS

What is another word for chomp.

How much does a whale shark weigh? 40,000 POUNDS

If you weighed 100 pounds, how many more pounds would a whale shark weigh than you? $40,000 - 100 = 39,900$ POUNDS

Give me one word that comes to mind when you think of a shark.

Many people might ASSUME that sharks and fish are different animals, but did you know that a shark is just another type of fish? You might not think of a shark as a fish because they are different than the ones you see swimming in a tank or even the kind you might see on your dinner plate. Fish like SALMON or GOLDFISH are called BONY fish and are a part of a different group than sharks. This is because a shark's SKELETON is not made out of bone and is instead made out of CARTILAGE. You can touch the bones in one of your fingers and then the top of your ear to feel the difference between bone and cartilage.

Spell ASSUME SKELETON FINGERS BONE

Sharks are just another type of ___? FISH

___ fish are part of a different group than sharks. BONY

Question Type Key

KNOWN – SEMI-OPEN – PRIOR KNOWLEDGE – MATH – OPEN - VAKT

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What is a shark's skeleton made out of? CARTILAGE

Name a type of bony fish that was mentioned above. SALMON, GOLDFISH

Name another type of body part that you would find cartilage? Name a part of your body that is made out of bone.

Like any other fish, sharks are able to BREATHE underwater. This is one of the main reasons why a whale shark is not actually a whale because true whales need to come up to the SURFACE (top) to get air. Whales breathe air through BLOWHOLES in the top of their bodies, where sharks are able to breathe under water through their GILLS. Gills allow fish to breathe by taking oxygen out of the water and PROVIDING them with air to live.

Spell BREATHE GILLS PROVIDING LIVE

Sharks are able to breathe under ___? WATER

Where do whales need to go to get air? THE SURFACE

What is the other word for surface that was used above? TOP Where do whales breathe air through? BLOWHOLES

Name something that gills do. TAKE OXYGEN OUT OF WATER, PROVIDE AIR TO LIVE

Name another animal that has gills.

Would you like to be able to breathe under water?

We have already talked about whale sharks being the size of a school bus but that means that they can be up to 40 feet long. They can be brown, grey or BLUISH in color. Their tails and fins look similar to many other sharks that you see swimming in the ocean. However, it's their MARKINGS that make them stand out from other fish swimming in the sea. Whale sharks are covered in HORIZONTAL and VERTICAL lines which make them look like they have a giant CHECKBOARD on them. There are also rows of white spots all over their bodies that makes them look like someone use a white PAINTBRUSH to put little dots in each square. The patterns stop once you get to their bellies which are completely white. The coolest part about a whale sharks markings is that each set is completely different and they can help to tell one whale shark from another.

Spell SIZE SPOTS COOLEST PAINTBRUSH

What makes whale sharks stand out from other fish swimming in the sea?

Question Type Key

KNOWN – SEMI-OPEN – PRIOR KNOWLEDGE – MATH – OPEN - VAKT

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MARKINGS

The horizontal and vertical lines on a whale shark make them look like they have a giant ___ on them. CHECKBOARD

What color spots do whale sharks have on them? WHITE

Name a color that whale sharks can be. BROWN, BLUE, GREY

What is one part of a whale shark that is similar to other sharks you see swimming in the ocean? TAILS, FINS

What is one type of line that whale sharks are covered in? HORIZONTAL, VERTICAL

What is another game that has horizontal and vertical lines?

How many feet long is a whale shark? 40 FEET

Have you ever played checkers?

Touch the horizontal lines in the picture of the whale shark below.



While the size of a whale shark might be initially SHOCKING (surprising) if you meet one while swimming in the ocean, you do not need to be afraid that this giant CREATURE might want to make you their next snack. These sharks do not

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hunt and eat other large ocean animals and instead prefer to eat some of the SMALLEST things found in the ocean. Whale sharks enjoy eating tiny animals and plants known as PLANKTON. They are able to eat them through a process called FILTER feeding. A whale shark will open their huge, flat mouths and take in a GULP of water and plankton and then push the water out of their gills and back into the ocean, keeping their dinner trapped inside for them to swallow.

Spell SHOCKING CREATURE SMALLEST GULP

Whale sharks are not looking to make you their next ___? SNACK

Whale sharks prefer to eat one of the smallest things in the ___? OCEAN What are tiny animals and plants called? PLANKTON

What process do whale sharks use to eat plankton? FILTER FEEDING

A whale shark's dinner stays trapped inside for them to ____. SWALLOW

Name something that whale sharks don't do to other large ocean animals.

HUNT, EAT

Name one of the descriptor words used to talk about a whale shark's mouth.

HUGE, FLAT

Would you prefer to eat through filter feeding or through standard chewing?

Touch the whale sharks, wide, flat mouth below.

Use the following link to watch a short video of a whale shark feeding:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7mnsB39oplo>

Whale sharks enjoy living in the world's tropical and warm seas in places such as CHILE, AUSTRALIA, BRAZIL and JAPAN. They prefer water that is between 68 and 86 DEGREES which might be just a little cooler than your bath or shower at home. They are also known to GATHER in about 12 main feeding LOCATIONS all around the world. This remains puzzling to scientists as traveling the DISTANCE of the ocean is quite a long way to travel to find food. Additionally, these many locations around the world make whale sharks difficult to track.



Spell GATHER LOCATIONS DISTANCE

Whale sharks prefer water that is between 68 and 86 _____. DEGREES Scientists are puzzled about whale sharks feeding locations because the distance of the ocean is a long way to travel to find _____. FOOD

Many feeding locations around the world make whale sharks difficult to _____.

TRACK

Whale sharks prefer water that might be a little cooler than your bath or _____ at home. SHOWER



Name a place where whale sharks live. CHILE, AUSTRALIA, BRAZIL, JAPAN

What is the range of degrees between 68 and 86? $86-68=18$

How many feeding locations are whale sharks known to gather in? 12

Some other cool things to know about whale sharks is that they swim very SLOWLY at about 3 miles per hour. They usually travel alone but they have been seen before in SCHOOLS (or groups) of up to 100! You would typically EXPECT to find whale sharks in the deep sea, but they sometimes swim closer to the COAST (land). A baby whale shark is approximately 22 inches long when they're born and a mother has about 16 babies at one time, even though it's a fact that a scientist has never been able to WITNESS (see) the process. Interestingly, from the

Question Type Key

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KNOWN – SEMI-OPEN – PRIOR KNOWLEDGE – MATH – OPEN - VAKT



moment they're born, whale sharks are able to take care of THEMSELVES. Also, typical whale sharks live between 60 and 100 years old with some reaching as old as 150. Sadly enough, only 10% of whale sharks make it to ADULTHOOD.

Spell SLOWLY SCHOOLS EXPECT COAST WITNESS

What is another name for schools mentioned above? GROUPS

A baby whale shark is approximately 22 ___ long. INCHES

A scientist has never been able to see a baby whale shark be ____. BORN What do 10% of whale sharks make it to? ADULTHOOD

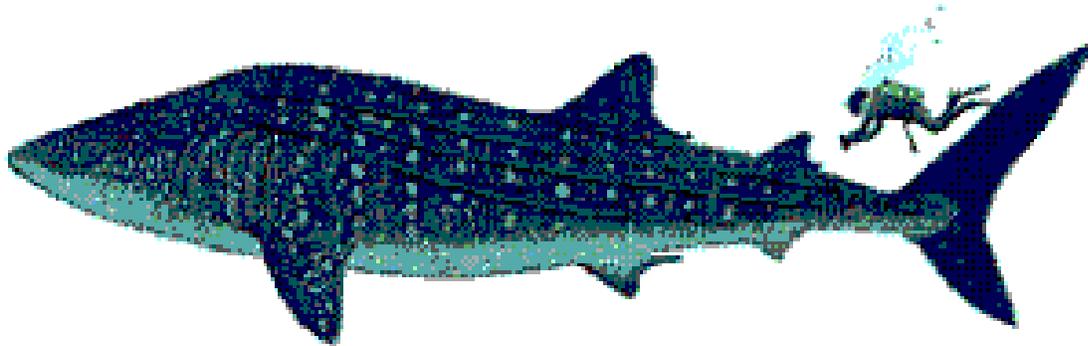
Where might you find a whale shark swimming? DEEP SEA, CLOSER TO THE COAST

What type of diving is the person in the picture above doing?

How many miles per hour do whale sharks swim? 3

A whale shark can live up to ___ years old. 150

Touch the diver next to the whale shark in the picture above.



Other things we know about whale sharks is that they are sometimes hunted by other MARINE (water) animals such as blue sharks and ORCAS. They are assumed to be GENTLE and private creatures, however there is not much else that is known about their HABITS or ways of doing things. Scientists still have so much that they want to learn about these GIGANTIC animals. They do know that the species is ENDANGERED which means there is a risk that they might not be on this earth at some point in the future. Other than that, we still have so much more to DISCOVER about a whale shark's travel patterns, whether they live alone or in groups, or even how they communicate with each other.

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KNOWN – SEMI-OPEN – PRIOR KNOWLEDGE – MATH – OPEN - VAKT

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Spell MARINE GENTLE HABITS GIGANTIC DISCOVER

What does marine mean? WATER

Whale sharks are assumed to be gentle and ___ creatures. PRIVATE

___ means there is a risk that they might not be on this earth at some point in the future. ENDANGERED

Name a marine animal that hunts whale sharks. BLUE SHARKS, ORCAS What is something else that we can discover about whale sharks. TRAVEL PATTERNS,

WHETHER THEY LIVE ALONE OR IN GROUPS, HOW THEY COMMUNICATE

Name another animal that is endangered.

CREATIVE WRITING:

Whale sharks are endangered because humans are fishing them too often. Write up a statement that might convince others to hunt whale sharks less frequently.

What kinds of things would you do if you were able to breathe underwater?

Name at least 2 things you would do and explain why you chose them.

Some animals live alone and others travel in groups. Discuss some of the benefits of living alone and some of the benefits of traveling in groups.



Jenna Malgieri is a PIT living in Sacramento, California and working as a pediatric speech-language pathologist. She loves traveling the world and eating her way through every city she visits. Her fascination and love for animals is often highlighted in the lessons she creates.

RESOURCES:

<https://study.com/academy/lesson/whale-shark-facts-lesson-for-kids.html>

<https://www.twinkl.com/homework-help/science-homework-help/fish-facts-for-kids/whale-shark-facts-for-kids>

<https://kids.britannica.com/kids/article/whale-shark/602319>

https://kids.kiddle.co/Whale_shark

Question Type Key

KNOWN – SEMI-OPEN – PRIOR KNOWLEDGE – MATH – OPEN - VAKT

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https://kids.kiddle.co/Filter_feeder

Question Type Key

KNOWN – SEMI-OPEN – PRIOR KNOWLEDGE – MATH – OPEN – VAKT

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