

**SEA LIONS:
LESSONS ON THE BEACH**



CFE 3294V

OPEN CAPTIONED
ALTSCHUL GROUP
CORPORATION

1993

Grade Levels: 2-6

15 minutes

DESCRIPTION

A community of sea lions annually visits an island in the Gulf of California, where the babies are born and must be taught to swim. Compares seals and sea lions. Details physical characteristics, diet, behaviors, and enemies. The only enemy this “grizzly bear of the sea” cannot fight is fishing nets.

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

- To depict the habitat of sea lions.
- To present the physical characteristics and the activities of sea lions.
- To describe the social behaviors of sea lions.
- To differentiate between sea lions and seals.

BEFORE SHOWING

1. Read the **CAPTION SCRIPT** to determine unfamiliar vocabulary and language concepts.
2. Prepare a **K-W-L** chart about sea lions.
 - a. Divide the chart into three columns.
 - b. Write the headings “What I **K**now,” “What I **W**ant to Know,” and “What I **L**earned” at the top of the columns.
 - c. Fill in the first two columns of the chart.
3. On a world map, locate the habitat of sea lions.
4. Display pictures of sea lions and seals.

DURING SHOWING

1. View the video more than once, with one showing uninterrupted.
2. Pause to distinguish between sea lions and seals.
3. Pause as sea lions raise their flippers. Predict reasons they do this.
4. Pause when the scarred sea lion barks. Discuss.



AFTER SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions

1. Complete the third section, “What I Learned,” of the **K-W-L** chart about sea lions.
2. Differentiate between sea lions and seals.
3. Describe the social habit of sea lions. Include:
 - a. Physical characteristics
 - b. Habitat
 - c. Food
 - d. Ability to move on land and at sea
 - e. Reasons sea lions are often confused with seals
 - f. Ways to recognize the differences between sea lions and seals
4. Analyze the “maternity ward” located in the Gulf of California. Discuss reasons it is a good location for sea lions to have their young.
5. Describe ways in which sea lions protect their young.
6. List and discuss two important lessons young sea lions must learn to survive.
7. Discuss the process of a lion pup learning how to swim.
8. List and discuss dangers or enemies sea lions confront.
9. Differentiate between social behaviors of male and female sea lions.
10. Describe sea lions as typical beach tourists. Discuss reasons for comparing them to people.

Applications and Activities

1. List and illustrate foods in the diet of sea lions.
2. Explain that sea lions can be called “grizzly bears of the sea.” Discuss and generate reasons for the nickname.
3. Using a Venn diagram, compare sea lions to seals. Write a factual paragraph to report this comparison.
4. Prepare a bulletin board display about sea lions. Include:

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- a. The habitat
 - b. The social behavior
 - c. The physical characteristics
 - d. The differences between sea lions and seals
5. Research how the commercial fishing industry tries to protect sea lions from nets.
 6. Identify how sea lions keep themselves cool. Research and compare this with how other animals stay comfortable.
 7. Research and report on a marine animal. Compare this animal to the sea lion.
 8. Imagine being a marine animal activist. Write and present an educational lecture about sea lions and the dangers they face from the nets of the fishing boats.

WEBSITES

Explore the Internet to discover sites related to this topic. Check the CFV website for related information (<http://www.cfv.org>).

CAPTION SCRIPT

Following are the captions as they appear on the video. Teachers are encouraged to read the script prior to viewing the video for pertinent vocabulary, to discover language patterns within the captions, or to determine content for introduction or review. Enlarged copies may be given to students as a language exercise.

(female narrator)
Off the coast of Mexico
is the Gulf of California--

an area of hot,
dry islands.

Some are barren rocks.

Some are rich
with desert plant life.

But every spring, all the
islands have crowded beaches.

[animals barking]

These are California
sea lions.

They seem to act
like typical beach tourists,

soaking up the rays
and sleeping in the sun.

But this is not a tourist beach.
This is a maternity ward.

Within hours, these female
sea lions will be giving birth.

Sea lions are often confused
with their cousins, the seals.

Both are mammals
that live in coastal waters.

Many seals prefer the waters
of the Arctic and Antarctic,

while the California sea lion
likes the warmer waters

off of Mexico
and California.

Seals swim with their
propeller-like hind flippers,

while sea lions use
their strong front flippers

to push themselves.

On land, seals can't use
their hind flippers at all.

They push across the ground
on their stomachs.

Sea lions can turn their hind
flippers and walk on four legs.

The other noticeable difference
between the two are their ears.

Seals don't have outer ears.
Sea lions do.

Sea lions are the animals
we see performing in circuses.

Every summer, thousands
of California sea lions return

to these islands
to have their babies.

Although they like the heat,
sometimes it gets too hot,

even for the sea lions.

These animals aren't raising
their flippers to wave.

They're trying to keep cool,

for the midday temperature here
can reach 50 degrees Celsius.

Dogs pant to keep cool.

Sea lions swim
with a flipper up in the air.

Soon the pups are born.

Although the babies are
very developed at birth,

they cannot swim
or walk very far

or do much else but nurse.

The mothers start feeding
their young immediately,

for though the beach is very
safe for adult sea lions,

it can be very dangerous
for young, weak babies.

Like every beach where there
are bathers and food,

there are seagulls.

Just like people on the beach
chase away seagulls,

so do adult sea lions.

The food the seagulls want
is not leftover hot dogs.

It's baby sea lions.

A seagull would never attack
an adult sea lion,

but young, weak pups
are fair game.

If the pup can make it
to its mother

or into the water,
it will be safe,

but if it is too weak,
the gull will have a meal.

As cruel as it seems,

it is nature's way
of controlling the populations

and stopping the world
from having too many sea lions.

This pup made it.

[barking]

The pups have learned
their first lesson:

Watch out for attackers.

Now it's time for lesson
number two: swimming.

To see the adults frolic
in the waves,

you would think that swimming
for a sea lion was easy.

They can travel as fast
as a small boat

and stay underwater
for over ten minutes at a time.

But baby sea lions
are scared of water.

[barking softly]

This pup wants to stay
on land.

[barks]

Its mother has other ideas.

First, she calls
from the water,

hoping to coax
the youngster in.

The pup takes the hint.

If Mom orders him in,
he'd better try it.

But the fear is still there,

and the pup doesn't
instinctively know how to swim.

This is going to take
several lessons.

A sea lion *has to* learn
to swim.

Its body is adapted so much
to the water

that it cannot survive
as a land animal.

Its legs are flippers, perfect
for cutting through the water.

Although it's faster
than the seal,

a sea lion is awkward
and slow on land.

Its diet is seafood.

An adult sea lion eats about
five kilograms of food a day.

It eats all types of seafood,
including fish,

octopus, and squid;

but its favorite food
is anchovies.

The sea lion is an excellent
hunter in the water,

with powerful lower jaws and
canine teeth for tearing food.

It's known as
the "grizzly bear of the sea."

But on land, where it cannot
catch anything to eat,

it would starve.

If the pup wants to eat,
it has to learn to swim.

Its mother is going
to make sure it does.

Every time the pup tries
to crawl out of the water,

[adult barking]

Mother coaxes it back in.

This baby's going
to sink or swim!

[pup barking]

The pup is gradually
getting the hang of it.

In a few weeks, it will be
swimming like a sea lion.

While the females are nursing
the pups and training them,

the males are doing
their own training.

Male and female sea lions
never live together

except during mating season.

On the other side
of the rocks,

the males, or *bulls*,
live in bachelor groups.

The males arrive several weeks
before the females

and spend their time fighting.

The male sea lion is almost
twice as big as the female.

Adult bulls can weigh
up to 300 kilograms.

They use this extra weight
to fight other males

and claim their territories.

Each male claims an area where
the females will give birth

and he will mate.

The strongest bulls get
the largest area

and the most females.

Male sea lions don't stay
with one mate.

Instead, each bull tries
to collect

his own herd, or *harem*,
of females.

Once a bull has
his territory,

he must defend it
against other sea lions.

He constantly patrols
his area.

When the male stops to eat,

he can lose part of his
territory to other males.

So some males don't stop
to eat.

Male California sea lions
will sometimes fast

for as long as two weeks
to defend their territory.

Other sea lions will fast
longer.

As every male wants the best
spot for his own harem,

fights break out.

These can start with one bull
invading another's territory.

Sometimes the male sees
the invader.

Sometimes the females
bark out a warning.

[barking, roaring]

Each bull shows his teeth
and roars as loud as he can.

[roaring]

When an invader sees
how tough the owner is,

he usually swims away.

A serious fight is avoided.

A bull uses a lot of energy
patrolling,

fasting, yelling,
and fighting;

so only the largest bulls
collect the biggest harems.

Sea lions have an enemy
they can't fight: humans.

The nets of the trawlers
are used to catch fish--

but *can* catch sea lions.

The fishing boats follow
the fish,

and so do the sea lions.

Sometimes the sea lions
get caught.

The nets don't choke
the mammals,

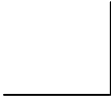
but they can leave
ugly scars.

[barking softly]

The sea lion pups do not learn
how to avoid fishing nets.

The future of this pup
could depend on our learning

how *not* to catch sea lions
when we catch fish.



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