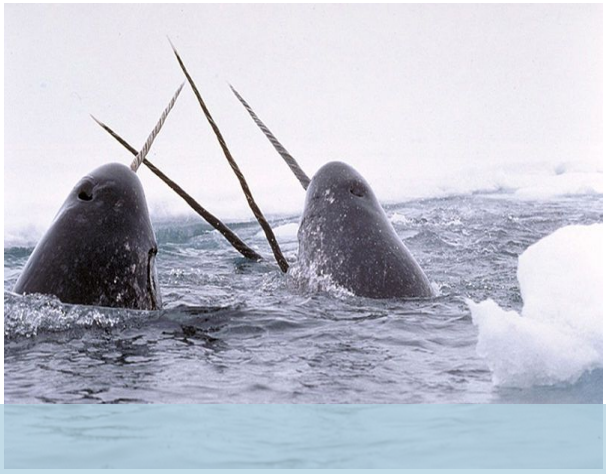
Name: _____

Unicorn of the Sea

By Guy Belleranti



When people think of tusked animals, elephants and walruses often come to mind. But did you know that there is a whale with a long tusk? Some people call this species of whale the "unicorn of the sea," but its actual name is the narwhal.

The narwhal is a toothed whale that lives in the cold waters of the Arctic Ocean. They only have two teeth [illegible] upper jaw. In males, one of [illegible] grow such long tusks? Scientists aren't sure, but it might be to attract females and to battle rival males. A male may also use its tusk to defend against predators like orcas, polar bears and walruses.

Super Teacher Worksheets

Preview

Please log in to download
the printable version of this worksheet.

Narwhals are the only whales that remain in the arctic during winter. They are social animals and live in groups called pods. Mothers give birth to a single five-foot long baby about every three years. Full grown narwhals average 13 to 20 feet in length, with males being larger than females.

unicorn. For this reason the narwhal is sometimes called "the unicorn of the sea."

Native Inuit people traditionally hunt the narwhal for the ivory in their tusks and as a source of food and vitamins.

Most narwhals have one tusk, but a few have been found that have two!

Narwhals have a compact body with short flippers and no dorsal (back) fin. If necessary, they can dive over half a mile beneath the winter ice in search of food. They sometimes stay under water 20 to 25 minutes on these dives. A carnivore (or meat-eater), narwhals eat shrimp, fish and squid. Since they don't have a mouth full of teeth they must swallow their food whole.

The picture above shows a narwhal's body shape. Notice the narwhal's size compared to the human diver.

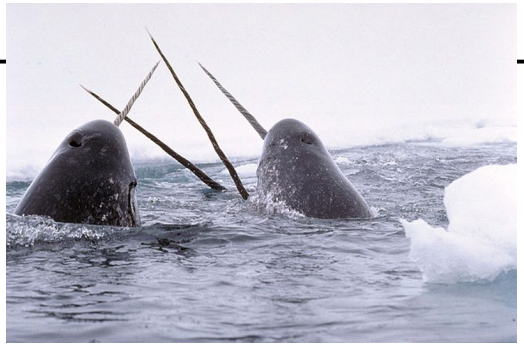
(Credit: Chris Huh)

About the Author

Guy Belleranti works as a docent at Reid Park Zoo in Tucson, Arizona. The

Preview
Please log in to download
the printable version of this worksheet.

Name: _____



Unicorn of the Sea

By Guy Belleranti

1. A tusk is...

- **a.** a long, pointed tooth
- **b.** a long, pointed bone
- **c.** a long, pointed tail
- **d.** a long, pointed mouth

2. Which might you travel to if you wanted to see a Narwhal: Canada, Antarctica, or Australia? Explain your answer.

Super Teacher Worksheets
Preview
Please log in to download
the printable version of this worksheet.

4. Tell whether each sentence is true or false.

_____ All narwhals have only one tusk.

_____ Narwhals stay in the Arctic during the winter.

_____ Narwhals eat both plants and animals.

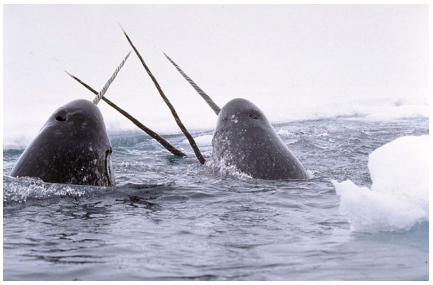
_____ Narwhals have over one hundred teeth.

_____ A male narwal's tusk can grow over eight feet long.

Name: _____

Unicorn of the Sea

By Guy Belleranti



The scrambled words below are vocabulary words from the article. Unscramble each word and write it on the line. Please be sure each word is spelled correctly.

1. _____ d p o

hint: group of whales

2. _____ s t k u

Preview
Please log in to download
the printable version of this worksheet.

4. _____ r i y v o

hint: teeth and tusks are made out of this

5. _____ r s p f l p e i

hint: body parts used to help a whale swim

6. _____ a s d l o r

hint: having to do with the back of an animal such as a fish or whale

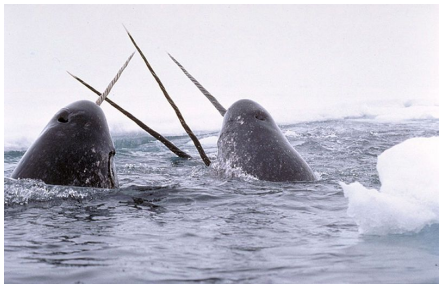
7. _____ v o r r n i e c a

hint: animal that does not eat plants

ANSWER KEY

Unicorn of the Sea

By Guy Belleranti



1. A tusk is... a

- **a.** a long, pointed tooth
- **b.** a long, pointed bone
- **c.** a long, pointed tail
- **d.** a log, pointed mouth

2. Which might you travel to if you wanted to see a Narwhal: Canada, Antarctica, or Australia? Explain your answer.

Canada, because Canada borders the Arctic Ocean where Narwhals live

Preview
Please log in to download
the printable version of this worksheet.

false All narwhals have only one tusk.

true Narwhals stay in the Arctic during the winter.

false Narwhals eat both plants and animals.

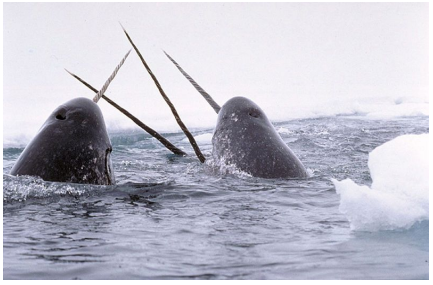
false Narwhals have over one hundred teeth.

true A male narwal's tusk can grow over eight feet long.

ANSWER KEY

Unicorn of the Sea

By Guy Belleranti



The scrambled words below are vocabulary words from the article. Unscramble each word and write it on the line. Please be sure each word is spelled correctly.

1. pod — d p o

hint: group of whales

2. tusk — s t k u

Preview
Please log in to download
the printable version of this worksheet.

4. ivory — r i y v o

hint: teeth and tusks are made out of this

5. flippers — r s p f l p e i

hint: body parts used to help a whale swim

6. dorsal — a s d l o r

hint: having to do with the back of an animal such as a fish or whale

7. carnivore — v o r r n i e c a

hint: animal that does not eat plants