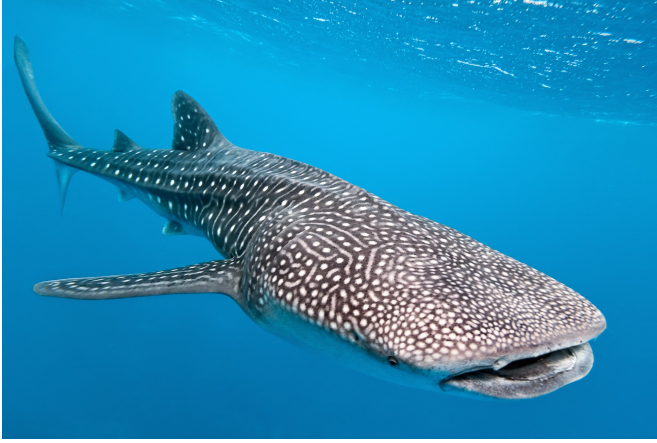


Name: _____

The World's Largest Fish

By Guy Belleranti



Did you know the largest fish in the world is a gentle shark with teeth so small it cannot use them to eat? This fish is the whale shark.

An adult whale shark averages 25 feet in length. Some reach 40 feet or more. That's as big as a full-sized school bus and twice as big as a great white shark!

How can a shark grow so large if it doesn't use its teeth to eat? It filter feeds! This means it strains food from the water through a kind of filter in its mouth. Another giant filter-feeder is the blue whale, but the

whale

doesn't

have

micro

A graphic featuring a cartoon superhero character with a red cape and a blue mask, flying through a blue sky with white clouds. The character has a shield on his chest with the letters 'MIS'. To the right of the character, the word 'Preview' is written in large, bold, red letters. Below it, in smaller black text, it says 'Please log in to download the printable version of this worksheet.'

its mouth, the water passes over its gills and back into the sea. However, the gill rakers catch and filter out the plankton. The shark swallows this plankton. The shark's huge mouth also catches and swallows other small animals, including fish, shrimp, and squid.

The whale shark's gills do more than catch plankton. Like the gills of other fish, whale shark gills absorb dissolved oxygen from the water. This oxygen passes into the gills' blood vessels. The heart then pumps this oxygen-rich blood to other parts of the body.

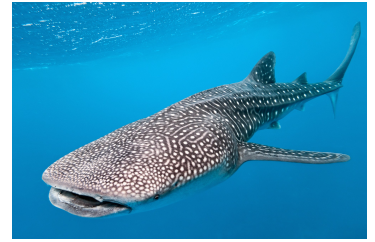
Another cool thing about the whale shark is the spots on its body. Each whale shark has a unique spot pattern. Scientists studying whale sharks have used this to help tell one whale shark from another.

Did you know? Some people go diving with whale sharks because of their gentle nature. Would YOU go diving with a whale shark?

Name: _____

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1. Based on the information in the article, which fact about whale sharks is **not** true?
 - a. Whale sharks have a unique pattern of spots on their bodies.
 - b. Whale sharks filter plankton through their gill rakers.
 - c. Whale sharks are mammals, like the blue whale.
 - d. Whale sharks are about twice as big as great white sharks.

2. According to the article, a whale shark is a filter feeder just like which other large ocean animal? _____

3.  **Preview**
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4. _____

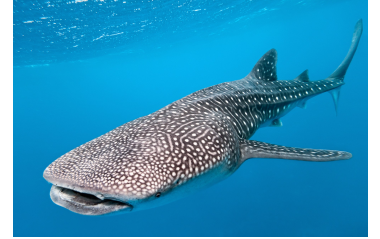
great white shark whale shark plankton shrimp

5. Based on your understanding of what you read in the article, what do all the following traits have in common?
 - human fingerprints
 - leopard spots
 - whale shark markings

Name: _____

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Match each vocabulary word from the reading passage with the correct definition.

_____ 1. gentle

a. take in or soak up something

_____ 2. filter

b. microscopic organisms that float in the sea, which many larger animals depend on for food



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

_____ 6. absorb

f. causes food to move down the throat

_____ 7. oxygen

g. mild-mannered, kind, or tender

_____ 8. blood vessels

h. having a rough and prickly texture

_____ 9. swallows

i. a chemical element humans and animals need to breathe in order to survive

_____ 10. adult

j. strain out unwanted material

ANSWER KEY

The World's Largest Fish

By Guy Belleranti

1. Based on the information in the article, which fact about whale sharks is **not** true?
 - a. Whale sharks have a unique pattern of spots on their bodies.
 - b. Whale sharks filter plankton through their gill rakers.

2.

Preview

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3.

4.

5.

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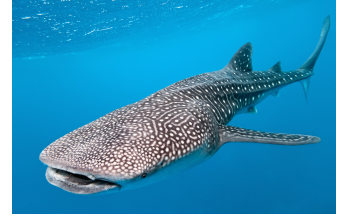
- human fingerprints
- leopard spots
- whale shark markings

They are all unique; no two humans, leopards, or whale sharks have these same traits.

ANSWER KEY

The World's Largest Fish

By Guy Belleranti



Match each vocabulary word from the reading passage with the correct definition.

g 1. gentle

a. take in or soak up something



f 9. swallows

i. a chemical element humans and animals need to breathe in order to survive

d 10. adult

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