

DOLPHIN RESEARCH CENTER

Legends & Myths & More!

Grade Level: 3rd-5th

Objectives: Students will construct their own meaning from a variety of legends and myths about dolphins and then create their own dolphin legend or myth.

Florida Sunshine State Standards:

Language Arts

LA.A.2.2.5 The student reads and organizes information for a variety of purposes, including making a report, conducting interviews, taking a test, and performing an authentic task.

LA.B.1.2 The student uses the writing processes effectively.

Social Studies

SS.A.1.2.1: The student understands how individuals, ideas, decisions, and events can influence history.

SS.B.2.2.4: The student understands how factors such as population growth, human migration, improved methods of transportation and communication, and economic development affect the use and conservation of natural resources.

Science

SC.G.1.2.2 The student knows that living things compete in a climatic region with other living things and that structural adaptations make them fit for an environment.

National Science Education Standards:

Content Standard C (K-4) - Characteristics of Organisms: Each plant or animal has different structures that serve different functions in growth, survival, and reproduction. For example, humans have distinct body structures for walking, holding, seeing, and talking.

Content Standard C (5-8) - Diversity and adaptations of Organisms: Biological evolution accounts for the diversity of species developed through gradual processes over many generations. Species acquire many of their unique characteristics through biological adaptation, which involves the selection of naturally occurring variations in populations. Biological adaptations include changes in structures, behaviors, or physiology that enhance survival and reproductive success in a particular environment.

Background: The ancient Greeks were among the first nations who depended upon the sea for wealth and civilizations. Their expeditions at sea fostered the creation of myths and legends. It is through the writings of the Greek poets that most of the myths about dolphins are known to us today.

Visit websites:

1. <http://www.cosmopolis.com/star-myths/delphinus.html>
2. <http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1983/2/83.02.12.x.html>
3. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/whales/man/myth.html>



DOLPHIN RESEARCH CENTER, 58901 Overseas Hwy, Grassy Key, FL 33050
(305) 289-1121 www.dolphins.org

DOLPHIN RESEARCH CENTER

Legends & Myths & More!

4. www.dolphins.org for information files

Materials:

- The book, *A Symphony Of Whales* by Steve Schuch
- Handout of Information files - choose from information files to copy and use.
- Paper
- Pens/pencils

Teacher Prep Notes: Be familiar with the websites and information files. If you have access to a computer/s, enable students to access websites. Make copies of **Natural History/ Physiology** information files for class

Procedures:

1. Read *A Symphony Of Whales*
2. Discuss different myths-EXAMPLES:
 - Narwhals = unicorns of the sea
Why was this? What about them would cause people to think this? (Their elongated tooth looks like the horn of a unicorn.)
 - Manatees = mermaids (shape, tail, grace, breathe air)
 - Sea Lions = angels of the sea (front flippers / wings)
3. What else?
4. Discuss what myths and legends are.
5. Discuss familiar ones.
6. Introduce dolphins as animals depicted in myths and legends.
7. Why dolphins? What have we heard about them?
8. Research websites. Maybe assign groups to different websites and then share findings.
9. Write new myths or legends about whales or dolphins.

Using information files, choose one characteristic about whales/dolphins that you have learned to write a legend or myth. Explain how they came to be, why they have a blowhole, why belugas are white, why some whales have baleen, why some dolphins are spotted, black and white, etc. You can even research individual dolphins at DRC and write a myth about how Pandora got her pink tummy, or how Tursi lost her eye. You can even choose to increase people's awareness by writing a futuristic myth from the perspective of what we don't want to happen. This could be a legend of long ago- there was once a creature called a dolphin who... but people and trash and debris....

10. Legends should have a title and be at least five paragraphs.

Key Terms

Adaptations: Changes in structures, behaviors, or physiology that enhance survival and reproductive success in a particular environment.

Myth: A traditional, typically ancient story dealing with supernatural beings, ancestors, or heroes that serves as a fundamental type in the worldview of a people, as by explaining aspects of the natural world or delineating the psychology, customs, or ideals of society: *the myth of Eros and Psyche; a creation myth.*

Legend: An unverified story handed down from earlier times, especially one popularly believed to be historical.



DOLPHIN RESEARCH CENTER

Legends & Myths & More!

3

WRAP UP: Share myths and legends and compile into class book.

Taking it Further:

- Research other subjects of myths and legends

