

Japanese whaling to increase (Wed 13 Apr, 2005)

WARM-UPS

CHAT: Talk in pairs or groups about: whales / endangered species / Antarctica / whaling / whale meat / Norway / Iceland / Greenpeace / dolphin meat factories. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

WHALE BRAINSTORM: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word “whale”. Share your words with your partner / group and talk about them.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW?: With paper and pen, walk around the class ask other students, “What do you know about whales?” Return to your partner / group and share your findings to build up a knowledge base about whales. Walk around the class again, this time telling classmates about whales: “Did you know (that) ...?”

MY WHALE LIFE: You are a whale. Talk to your partner (also a whale) about your daily life. Ask your partner questions about his/her whale life – hobbies, family, what they do in the evenings etc.

2-MINUTE WHALE DEBATES: Face each other in pairs and engage in the following fun 2-minute debates. Students A take the first argument, students B the second. Rotate pairs to ensure a lively pace and noise level is kept:

- a. Whales are best. vs. Sharks are best.
- b. Whale meat is delicious. vs. It’s unethical to eat whale meat.
- c. I want to go whale watching. vs. How boring.
- d. Whaling should be banned. vs. Whaling for research is OK.
- e. Whales should not be eaten. They are intelligent. vs. So are cows and pigs.
- f. Whale is an important part of many cultural diets. vs. Those cultures must change.
- g. Whaling is cruel. vs. So are boxing and blood sports.
- h. Whaling is the same as fishing. vs. Whales are not fish.
- i. Whales talk to each other. vs. Birds talk to each other too.
- j. Japan should be punished for whaling. vs. Whaling is part of Japan’s cultural heritage.

PRE-READING IDEAS

WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... of the words 'seek' and 'permission'.

TRUE FALSE: Guess whether the following statements about the article are true or false:

- a. Japan intends to quadruple its whaling programme. T / F
- b. Japan currently kills around 610 whales a year. T / F
- c. Japan says culling whales helps us understand the earth's environment. T / F
- d. Japan's plan will be accepted worldwide. T / F
- e. Commercial whaling was made illegal in 1986. T / F
- f. About 2,000 kg of whale meat ends up in Japanese supermarkets. T / F
- g. Norway is the only country that has commercialized whaling. T / F
- h. South Korea is building a whale and dolphin meat processing factory. T / F

SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| (a) intends | contentious |
| (b) supposedly | maintains |
| (c) kills | technicality |
| (d) abundant | mandatory |
| (e) spark | reputedly |
| (f) controversial | proposes |
| (g) legally binding | plentiful |
| (h) loophole | laughingstock |
| (i) mockery | culls |
| (j) alleges | provoke |

PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| (a) it intends to double | picture |
| (b) seek | binding |
| (c) feeding and | mockery of |
| (d) look at a broader | worldwide anger |
| (e) sure to spark | its whaling programme |
| (f) it is not legally | basis |
| (g) it has no scientific | migration habits |
| (h) makes a | whaling |
| (i) commercialized | whales for scientific purposes |
| (j) culls | permission from |

ODD WORD OUT: Circle the word in the groups of italics that does not fit in the sentence.

Japanese whaling to increase

BNE: The Japanese Government has announced it intends to *twofold / double / increase* its whaling programme in the Antarctic. Japan will *give / obtain / seek* permission from the International Whaling Commission at its annual meeting in June to hunt the supposedly endangered humpback and fin whales for research purposes. Japan currently *kills / culls / executes* about 500 minke whales, 50 Bryde's whales, 50 sei whales and 10 sperm whales for its research on feeding and migration habits. Fisheries Agency spokesman Takanori Nagatomo said: "We plan to look at a broader picture of the ecological system [of the Antarctic]... We will *conduct / study / carry out* research that can examine the overall picture of the earth's environment." Japanese scientists say no endangered whales are killed and that *abundant / plentiful / maximum* and growing whale populations are a threat to other marine life. Regardless, the plan is sure to spark worldwide anger.

Japan's whaling programme has always been controversial. Although the IWC banned commercial whaling in 1986, it is not legally *enforceable / binding / traded*. Japan is permitted to hunt a *gargantuan / limited / restricted* number of whales for research, although the two million kilograms of *meat / grub / flesh* from the whales killed is sold commercially. Opponents of whaling, including the USA, say such research is unnecessary as it has no scientific basis. Greenpeace call the research a "loophole", which "makes a *mockery / fool / stand* of the IWC and international efforts to control whaling." Norway is the only country that has commercialized whaling, while Iceland, like Japan, culls whales for scientific purposes. Greenpeace *alleges / asserts / contradicts* South Korea also kills hundreds of whales each year and is building a whale and dolphin meat processing factory.

HOMEWORK

- 1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.
- 2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find information on whaling. Share your findings with your class next lesson.
- 3. LETTER TO IWC:** Write a letter to the International Whaling Commission letting them know your views on Japan's desire to double the number of whales it wants to kill. Read it to your class in your next lesson.
- 4. ONE WHALE:** Write a short article about one species of whale. Talk about your article in your next class.

DISCUSSION:

- a. Did anything in this article make you angry?
- b. Was there anything in this article you cannot agree with?
- c. Have you ever eaten whale meat?
- d. What do you think of whaling for scientific reasons?
- e. What do you think of whaling for commercial purposes?
- f. Is it OK to ask countries with a centuries-old tradition of eating whales to stop their cultural practices?
- g. Is eating whale any different from eating beef?
- h. Many believe whales are too intelligent to eat. What do you think?
- i. Many believe whales suffer too much when they are slaughtered. What do you think?
- j. There are communities in Iceland and Greenland that depend on whales to exist. Is it right to ban them from hunting whales?
- k. Are there any ethical differences between eating whales and fish?
- l. Some whales will become extinct within decades. What can we do about this?
- m. Do you belong to Greenpeace or any other environmental groups?
- n. It is illegal to hunt and kill elephants and rhinos for their tusks and horns. Why is there no legally enforceable ban on killing whales?
- o. Many countries get angry about whaling, but practice blood sports in their own countries. Isn't this hypocritical?
- p. What would you think if you saw whale meat on sale in a Japanese supermarket?
- q. Did you like this discussion?
- r. Teacher / Student additional questions.

TEXT

BNE: The Japanese Government has announced it intends to *double / increase* its whaling programme in the Antarctic. Japan will *obtain / seek* permission from the International Whaling Commission at its annual meeting in June to hunt the supposedly endangered humpback and fin whales for research purposes. Japan currently *kills / culls* about 500 minke whales, 50 Bryde's whales, 50 sei whales and 10 sperm whales for its research on feeding and migration habits. Fisheries Agency spokesman Takanori Nagatomo said: "We plan to look at a broader picture of the ecological system [of the Antarctic]... We will *conduct / carry out* research that can examine the overall picture of the earth's environment." Japanese scientists say no endangered whales are killed and that *abundant / plentiful* and growing whale populations are a threat to other marine life. Regardless, the plan is sure to spark worldwide anger.

Japan's whaling programme has always been controversial. Although the IWC banned commercial whaling in 1986, it is not legally *enforceable / binding*. Japan is permitted to hunt a *limited / restricted* number of whales for research, although the two million kilograms of *meat / flesh* from the whales killed is sold commercially. Opponents of whaling, including the USA, say such research is unnecessary as it has no scientific basis. Greenpeace call the research a "loophole", which "makes a *mockery / fool* of the IWC and international efforts to control whaling." Norway is the only country that has commercialized whaling, while Iceland, like Japan, culls whales for scientific purposes. Greenpeace *alleges / asserts* South Korea also kills hundreds of whales each year and is building a whale and dolphin meat processing factory.

EXTRA FLUENCY ACTIVITIES

NOT ME: In pairs / groups, chose which of the animals below you would like to be for this activity. Write down as many reasons as you can why you should NOT end up on a dinner plate. Talk with other “creatures” in the class and try to persuade them why they, and not you, would make a better dinner for humans.

whale / dog / shark / elephant / cow / snake / eagle / elephant / dolphin

WHALING ROLE PLAY: Use the following role play cards in a discussion about whaling. Team up with partners to discuss your roles and “strategy” before the role play begins. After the role play, discuss whether you really believed what you were saying.

THE ROLES:

Student A

You are a Japanese whaler living in a very remote coastal village. Your community has whaled for centuries. Without whaling the whole community would die an economic death. You hate Greenpeace. They don't understand the oceans.

Student B

You are a Greenpeace activist. You believe it is ethically and morally wrong to kill whales. They are endangered and very intelligent. There is no scientific reason to kill whales. You think whaling is barbaric.

Student C

You are president of a whale meat processing company. You believe whales are a sustainable source of food. You believe that when deforestation makes it uneconomical to raise cows on land, whales will become an important source of food.

Student D

You are a whale with a family.