

# www.**Breaking News English**.com

Ready-to-use ESL / EFL Lessons

## **The Breaking News English.com Resource Book**

“1,000 Ideas & Activities For Language Teachers”

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/book.html>

## **London whale died from dehydration**

URL: <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0601/060126-whale-e.html>

## **Contents**

The Article	2
Warm-ups	3
Before Reading / Listening	4
While Reading / Listening	5
Listening Gap Fill	6
After Reading	7
Discussion	8
Homework	9
Answers	10

**26 January, 2006**

## **THE ARTICLE**

### **London whale died from dehydration**

Tests on the whale that died in London's River Thames have shown that the creature died from dehydration. The six-meter long whale became the center of the world's attention after it was spotted swimming up London's famous river last week. Despite a huge rescue effort to save the young whale that cost over \$100,000, it died on Sunday. Rescue teams had tried for days to turn the whale around and return it to the Atlantic Ocean - its natural habitat. Veterinarians were always worried about the whale's chances of survival. It had cut its head and probably damaged its eyes and lungs in the fresh water.

The stray whale made the headlines in London and in many newspapers around the world. It almost swam the whole way through London. It is the farthest such a sizeable creature has gone up the River Thames. The noise from boats on the congested Thames probably added to its stress. The bottle-nosed whale is one of the world's deepest diving mammals. It usually swims with its family. Experts have guessed it was so far from its natural environment for several reasons. Some say it was very ill and wanted to swim in shallow waters, others say it got lost after chasing food.

## WARM-UPS

**1. I'M LOST:** You are lost in life. Write down three reasons why. In pairs / groups, talk about the reasons you are lost. Change partners and report on what you heard from you previous partners.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

*Tests / London / River Thames / swimming / rescues / \$100,000 / Atlantic Ocean / natural habitat / survival / headlines / stress / diving / mammals / getting lost*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

**3. PREDICTION:** Talk with your partner(s) about what you think the article will be about. Use the words in the "chat" section above to help you. Change partners and share and compare your predictions.

**4. RESCUE ATTEMPTS:** With your partner(s), talk about the following kinds of rescue attempts. How interested are you in following the news of each? Have you heard about any of these stories recently? What would you do if you were in need of rescue in each situation?

- a. Animals getting lost
- b. Miners in mines
- c. Submariners in submarines
- d. Earthquake victims
- e. Hurricane victims
- f. Transportation accidents
- g. Cats up trees
- h. Kidnappings

**5. RESCUE:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "rescue". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**6. GETTING LOST:** In pairs / groups, talk about the times you have got lost. What would you do if you got lost in the following places?

- a. In the jungle
- b. At sea
- c. In a big city in another country
- d. In the desert
- e. In the mountains
- f. At an airport

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| a. A lost whale died due to a lack of water.                           | T / F |
| b. It cost more than a million dollars to try and rescue the whale.    | T / F |
| c. The lost whale's natural environment is the Pacific Ocean.          | T / F |
| d. Whales have no health problems swimming in fresh water.             | T / F |
| e. The whale made the headlines only in a few local London newspapers. | T / F |
| f. Whales often swim right the way through London.                     | T / F |
| g. Noise from the whale caused stress to London's boat owners.         | T / F |
| h. A specialist said the whale was being chased by a hungrier whale.   | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |                  |               |
|------------------|---------------|
| a. tests         | saw           |
| b. dehydration   | crowded       |
| c. spotted       | vets          |
| d. habitat       | speculated    |
| e. veterinarians | large         |
| f. stray         | examinations  |
| g. sizeable      | environment   |
| h. congested     | a number of   |
| i. guessed       | loss of water |
| j. several       | lost          |

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

- |                                      |                              |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| a. the creature died                 | from its natural environment |
| b. became the center of              | save the young whale         |
| c. a huge rescue effort to           | sizeable creature has gone   |
| d. Rescue teams had tried for days   | the world's attention        |
| e. worried about the whale's chances | diving mammals               |
| f. The stray whale made              | to turn the whale around     |
| g. It is the farthest such a         | from dehydration             |
| h. one of the world's deepest        | in shallow waters            |
| i. it was so far                     | of survival                  |
| j. wanted to swim                    | the headlines in London      |

## WHILE READING / LISTENING

**GAP FILL:** Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

### London whale died from dehydration

\_\_\_\_\_ on the whale that died in London's River Thames have shown that the \_\_\_\_\_ died from dehydration. The six-meter long whale became the center of the world's \_\_\_\_\_ after it was spotted swimming up London's famous river last week. Despite a \_\_\_\_\_ rescue effort to save the young whale that cost over \$100,000, it died on Sunday. Rescue teams had tried for days to \_\_\_\_\_ the whale around and \_\_\_\_\_ it to the Atlantic Ocean - its natural habitat. Veterinarians were always worried about the whale's chances of survival. It had \_\_\_\_\_ its head and probably damaged its eyes and \_\_\_\_\_ in the fresh water.

The stray whale made the \_\_\_\_\_ in London and in many newspapers around the world. It almost swam the \_\_\_\_\_ way through London. It is the farthest such a \_\_\_\_\_ creature has gone up the River Thames. The noise from boats on the \_\_\_\_\_ Thames probably added to its stress. The bottle-nosed whale is one of the world's \_\_\_\_\_ diving mammals. It usually swims with its family. Experts have \_\_\_\_\_ it was so far from its natural environment for \_\_\_\_\_ reasons. Some say it was very ill and wanted to swim in \_\_\_\_\_ waters, others say it got lost after chasing food.

*cut*  
*attention*  
*turn*  
*lungs*  
*tests*  
*huge*  
*creature*  
*return*  
  
*several*  
*sizeable*  
*deepest*  
*shallow*  
*headlines*  
*congested*  
*whole*  
*guessed*

## **LISTENING**

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### **London whale died from dehydration**

Tests on the whale that died in London's River Thames have \_\_\_\_\_ that the creature died from dehydration. The six-meter long whale became the \_\_\_\_\_ of the world's attention after it was \_\_\_\_\_ swimming up London's famous river last week. Despite a huge rescue \_\_\_\_\_ to save the young whale that cost over \$100,000, it died on Sunday. Rescue teams had tried for days to turn the whale around and return it to the Atlantic Ocean - its natural \_\_\_\_\_. Veterinarians were always worried about the whale's \_\_\_\_\_ of survival. It had cut its head and probably damaged its eyes and \_\_\_\_\_ in the fresh water.

The \_\_\_\_\_ whale made the headlines in London and in many newspapers around the world. It almost swam the \_\_\_\_\_ way through London. It is the farthest such a sizeable creature has gone up the River Thames. The noise from boats on the \_\_\_\_\_ Thames probably added to its stress. The bottle-nosed whale is one of the world's deepest \_\_\_\_\_ mammals. It usually swims with its family. Experts have guessed it was so far from its natural environment for \_\_\_\_\_ reasons. Some say it was very ill and wanted to swim in shallow waters, others say it got lost after \_\_\_\_\_ food.

## AFTER READING / LISTENING

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'bottle' and 'nose'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. STUDENT "LOST" SURVEY:** In pairs / groups, write down questions about getting lost and rescue efforts.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

**6. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| • shown     | • headlines |
| • attention | • whole     |
| • spotted   | • sizeable  |
| • turn      | • congested |
| • habitat   | • diving    |
| • damaged   | • shallow   |

## DISCUSSION

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. How often do you get lost?
- c. Did you follow the news of this whale?
- d. Are you surprised that the rescuers couldn't save the whale's life?
- e. Do you think so much money should have been spent on rescuing the whale?
- f. What do you think the rescuers could have done to save the whale?
- g. Have you ever thought you were close to dehydration?
- h. Would you like to be involved in a rescue attempt rescue attempts?
- i. Do you always follow the news of rescue efforts of disasters?
- j. What adjectives describe your feelings about this article?

### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. What do you now about whales?
- d. Why do you think the whale tried to go so far up the River Thames?
- e. Which do you prefer reading, this kind of news or news about politics and wars?
- f. Has an animal ever made the headlines in your town?
- g. Would you have given money to save the stray whale?
- h. What kinds of things add to your stress?
- i. What do you do when you find yourself outside of your natural habitat?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

**AFTER DISCUSSION:** Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b. Was there a question you didn't like?
- c. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d. What did you like talking about?
- e. Which was the most difficult question?



## **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 more information on bottle-nosed whales. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

**3. GETTING LOST:** Write an essay about a time you got very lost. How did you feel? Read your essay to your partner(s) in your next class. Did you all write about similar things?

**4. A DAY IN THE LIFE:** You are a whale. Write an account of one day in your life. What are your thoughts on what is happening in the world today? Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Did everyone have similar days and thoughts?

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

- a. T      b. F      c. F      d. F      e. F      f. F      g. F      h. F

### SYNONYM MATCH:

- |                  |               |
|------------------|---------------|
| a. tests         | examinations  |
| b. dehydration   | loss of water |
| c. spotted       | saw           |
| d. habitat       | environment   |
| e. veterinarians | vets          |
| f. stray         | lost          |
| g. sizeable      | large         |
| h. congested     | crowded       |
| i. guessed       | speculated    |
| j. several       | a number of   |

### PHRASE MATCH:

- |                                      |                              |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| a. the creature died                 | from dehydration             |
| b. became the center of              | the world's attention        |
| c. a huge rescue effort to           | save the young whale         |
| d. Rescue teams had tried for days   | to turn the whale around     |
| e. worried about the whale's chances | of survival                  |
| f. The stray whale made              | the headlines in London      |
| g. It is the farthest such a         | sizeable creature has gone   |
| h. one of the world's deepest        | diving mammals               |
| i. it was so far                     | from its natural environment |
| j. wanted to swim                    | in shallow waters            |

### GAP FILL:

#### London whale died from dehydration

**Tests** on the whale that died in London's River Thames have shown that the **creature** died from dehydration. The six-meter long whale became the center of the world's **attention** after it was spotted swimming up London's famous river last week. Despite a **huge** rescue effort to save the young whale that cost over \$100,000, it died on Sunday. Rescue teams had tried for days to **turn** the whale around and **return** it to the Atlantic Ocean - its natural habitat. Veterinarians were always worried about the whale's chances of survival. It had **cut** its head and probably damaged its eyes and **lungs** in the fresh water.

The stray whale made the **headlines** in London and in many newspapers around the world. It almost swam the **whole** way through London. It is the farthest such a **sizeable** creature has gone up the River Thames. The noise from boats on the **congested** Thames probably added to its stress. The bottle-nosed whale is one of the world's **deepest** diving mammals. It usually swims with its family. Experts have **guessed** it was so far from its natural environment for **several** reasons. Some say it was very ill and wanted to swim in **shallow** waters, others say it got lost after chasing food.