



The diary of Fanny, the Humpback Whale

Purpose of the activity : Alone or in a group, transform the 15 paragraphs into drawings to make a comic strip or a mural painting.

1°) On a bright day in February, in the warm waters of the Caribbean Sea, I was born. My name is Fanny. I am a Humpback Whale. I came out of my mum's belly, tail first. I am light grey, and already rather big. My mum is very proud of me.

2°) My mummy pushes me quickly to the surface with her rostrum, so I can breathe. I open my two blowholes and for the first time, I fill up my lungs. I am breathing !

Then I breathe out quickly. It makes a big geyser that can be seen from afar, and goes really high. It feels so funny, I do it several times.

3°) I am hungry now. So I swim under my mum's belly, as she squirts milk for me to drink. It's delicious!

4°) Time to go to school ! My mum is teaching me how to jump : first we both stick out head above water, then we dive with lots of splashes. What fun it is !!!

5°) Now my mum teaches me to swim on my side and to slap my fin really hard. What a noise it makes ! We could be heard from far away !

6°) Beware, now it's time for Spy School ! First we float vertically. With only our head above water, we open our eyes really wide. So now we can look around.

7°) In the last 3 months, I learn more every day with my mum. Still I only drink milk, and I am gaining 60 kg a day. My mum is teaching me how to swim fast. I swim above her to make it even easier for me to swim faster. It's super coooooooooool !

8°) There is a male, singing as he swims around us, which is kind of weird. Mum is still taking care of me, but she enjoys listening to the songs. Even if he is few kilometers away, we can still hear him. He sings really loud !

9) May is here. Mum tells we will be taking a long trip to the Cold Water now that I am few months old. She is very hungry and she lost lots of weight since she left the Cold Waters last November. So we are heading towards the North Pole, or maybe it is Canada.



10)Wow, we just swam around 5000 km towards North. It's so cold now! Thankfully I have a thick layer of blubber under my skin! My mum never stops eating. She opens her mouth wide to take in as much water as possible. Then she filters the shrimps -also called Krill- with her She fills out her skin. In one day she can eat a ton of Krill! I, too, eat Krill as well as milk. Sometimes we also eat small fish. Mum introduced me to her girlfriends. I am a little shy!

11)Mum is huge. And so am I! I almost double my birth size! I am very happy because we are getting ready to go back to Caribbean's. My mum is scared because on the way we might encounter whaling ships which are trying to catch us. Luckily, there are numerous places, like Guadeloupe, Martinique or Polynesia, where we are not hunted anymore.

12)Ouch , the journey is hard!There are fishing nets we are trying to avoid. My friend Pipou was caught in a net, and we could not get him out. Oil Slicks are another obstacle, that doesn't allow us to go to the surface to breathe. Also there is a lot of garbage in the ocean. Pollution is mean.

13)Finally we made it to the warm waters of the Caribbean! Oh, look, I can see a boat with little people on it. They are taking pictures and waving at me! They are letting me know that a Cetacean Sanctuary is created : it's a big space where I will be protected! It is so wonderful for the megaptere, as well as for our cousins the dolphins and the sperm whales.... I clap my tail to applaud

14)I am two years-old now and mum has informed me that I am going to have a little brother or sister. She hugs me and she wishes me good luck. I am old enough to live on my own. It makes me emotional, but thankfully no one can see tears in the ocean...

15)I am now 8 years old. I am a big girl, and there is Mister Whale who's singing and swimming around me. In a few months, you'll be able to meet my daughter. We decided to call her Fanette.

It's time to say « so long », I am leaving with my boyfriend. I want to thank those who are helping me already , protecting me and caring for my home, the Ocean.

You can protect me too ! See you soon... and have a great journey also !

Written by Nelly Péliison

Translated by Laurent and Claire Delavault, Colette and Eddy Retournard

February 2012 / Guadeloupe

