

Something's Missing!



Objective

Students will learn about and be able to identify the different parts of a dolphin's body.

Materials

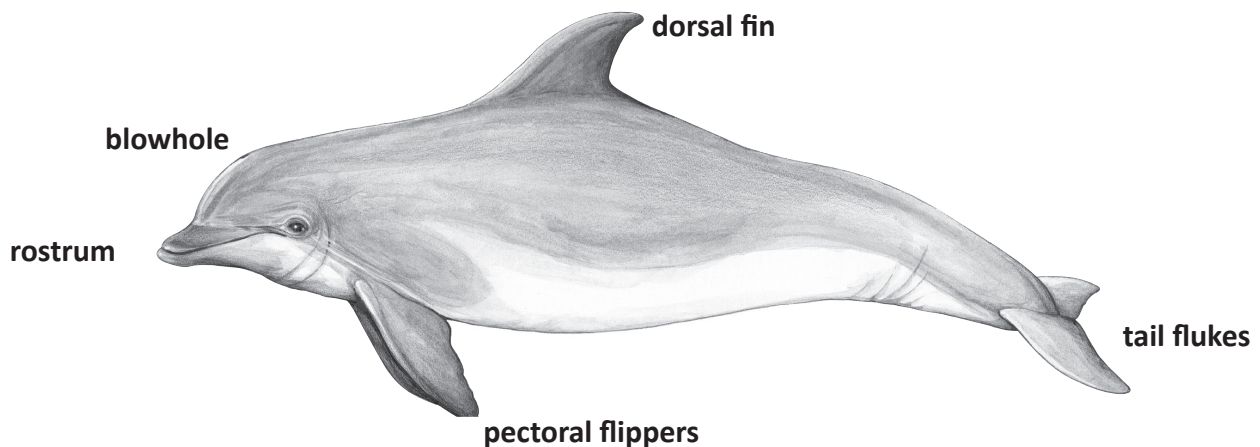
- copies of *Something's Missing* worksheet per student
- crayons, markers, or pencils
- photos or illustrations of different dolphin species for reference (or the diagram below)

Background

A dolphin has streamlined body parts that help it swim easily through the water. The *dorsal fin*, located on the center of its back, is made of dense, fibrous connective tissue — there is no bone inside. The dorsal fin acts as a keel, giving the dolphin some stability as it swims. Each lobe of a dolphin's tail is called a *fluke*. Like the dorsal fin, flukes have no bones or muscle inside. A dolphin uses the powerful muscles along its back and tail stock to move its flukes up and down, propelling the dolphin forward through the water. As it swims, a dolphin uses its *pectoral flippers* to steer, and with the help of the flukes, to stop. Pectoral flippers are a dolphin's forelimbs. If you looked at an X-ray of a dolphin's pectoral flipper, you would see what looks like fingers and hand bones! A dolphin breathes through a single *blowhole*, located on top of its head. A muscular flap covers the blowhole, making a watertight seal when the dolphin dives. To take a breath, the dolphin contracts the muscular flap. When the dolphin relaxes the muscles, the flap stays tightly closed. The snoutlike projection on a dolphin's face is called a *rostrum*. Inside the rostrum are almost 100 teeth used for grasping and tearing food, not chewing.

Action

1. Using a photo or illustration for reference, review the body parts of a dolphin and what they are used for. For younger students, role-play each of the parts.
2. Distribute worksheet and writing utensils to each student.
3. Explain that this group of dolphins needs some help. Each dolphin is missing a body part. Direct students to draw the missing body parts on the dolphins using pictures to guide them. Younger students can simply draw lines that match the missing body parts with the correct dolphins.



Something's Missing!



Name _____

Each of these dolphins is missing something! Help them by drawing in the correct body part.

