The Name Game

**OBJECTIVE**

The students will be able to sound and recognize the letters that begin the names of animals and place the animals with the same letters into groups.

**MATERIALS**

*per class or student group:*

- enlarged photocopies of California sea lion, harbor seal, Pacific walrus, and northern elephant seal illustrations (*Pinniped Picks*, pages 6 and 7)
- scissors
- 26 milk cartons
- ocean and land animal pictures from magazines

**ACTION**

1. To prepare for this activity, cut out animals from magazines and photocopy the images from the *Pinniped Picks* cards.

2. Place all pictures on a table or distribute them to student learning groups.

3. Ask students to name the animals that they know. Introduce those animals new to students. Which animals live in the ocean? Which animals live on land? Can some of the animals live on land and in the ocean?

4. As a class or in student groups, sort the animals according to the first letter in each animal’s name. Place like-letter animals in a milk carton and write the letter on the front. Arrange the cartons alphabetically. There will probably be some missing letters. Can the students name which ones?

**DEEPER DEPTHS**

Using the animals in the letter cartons, have students choose a favorite and tell a imaginary or real story about that animal. As an extra challenge, can a student create a story using all the animals in a letter carton?

The name walrus comes from the Danish word *hvalros*, meaning sea horse.
**Pacific walrus**  
*Odobenus rosmarus divergens*  
- **size:** Male to 3.6 m (11.8 ft.) and to 1,900 kg (4,189 lb.)  
  Female to 3 m (10 ft.) and to 1,200 kg (2,646 lb.)  
- **distribution:** northeastern Pacific and Arctic oceans  
- **prey:** clams, mussels, fishes, snails, crabs, shrimps, and squids. Some eat seals and small whale carcasses.  
- **predators:** killer whales, polar bears  
- **population:** 240,000 (1980s)  
- **status:** not endangered but regulated in international trade to restrict harvest

**California sea lion**  
*Zalophus californianus californianus*  
- **size:** Male to 2.4 m (7.9 ft.) and to 390 kg (860 lb.)  
  Female to 2 m (6 ft.) and to 110 kg (240 lb.)  
- **distribution:** British Columbia to northern Mexico  
- **prey:** fishes, squids, octopuses  
- **predators:** killer whales, sharks  
- **population:** 185,000 (1993)  
- **status:** not endangered or threatened

**harbor seal**  
*Phoca vitulina*  
- **size:** Male about 1.9 m (6.2 ft.) and 70 to 159 kg (150–351 lb.)  
  Female about 1.7 m (5.6 ft.) and 60 to 110 kg (132–242 lb.)  
- **distribution:** Pacific (Arctic to Baja California, Mexico), Atlantic (Greenland to Florida), and European waters  
- **prey:** fishes, shrimps, squids, octopuses  
- **predators:** killer whales, sharks, and Steller sea lions. Coyotes and eagles eat juveniles.  
- **population:** 500,000 (1981)  
- **status:** not endangered or threatened

**Pinniped Picks**

Use these cards to help your students get started exploring pinnipeds. Here are some ideas for ways to use these cards in your classroom:

- Use the facts on the cards to help you prepare lesson plans and lead discussions in class.
- Copy and cut apart the cards. Distribute a different card to each learning group. Visit the school library to learn more about the animals. Groups may even adopt that animal as their “mascot” while working on this unit.
- Copy and cut apart the cards. Distribute a complete set to each student or group of students. Students compare similarities and differences among various pinnipeds.
- Copy and cut apart the cards. Use the cards to sort endangered or threatened species from those that are not. Visit the library to find more species to add to your “endangered list.” Do some of these animals live in your area?
Hawaiian monk seal  
*Monachus schauinslandi*

- **size:** Male to 2.4 m (8 ft.); 270 kg (600 lb.)
  Female to 2.1 m (6.9 ft.); 250 kg (551 lb.)
- **distribution:** northwestern Hawaiian Islands (leeward chain)
- **prey:** eels and other fishes, octopuses, lobsters
- **predators:** sharks
- **population:** about 1,500 (early 1990s)
- **status:** classified as endangered under the Endangered Species Act

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