

## Little Whale

**Author/Illustrator:** Jo Weaver

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### Synopsis:

A heart-warming celebration of the love between parent and child. Told through the eyes of a whale and her calf, this mesmerisingly beautiful book is a story of migration, family and the strength of parental love. Travelling from the warm weather of the south, through coral reefs, kelp forests and glittering shoals of fish, Little Whale follows her mother north. For in the icy north is their family - but also great danger... With its evocative charcoal drawings and lyrical storytelling, Jo Weaver's illustrations have the feel of an instant classic celebrating the tender relationship between parent and child.

### Author/ Illustrator Bio:

Hello, I am an illustrator and picture book maker. I work by hand, mostly using willow charcoal and a putty rubber. But I sometimes use watercolour, ink and pencil too.

My books have been translated into 7 languages.

Before the illustration bug fully took hold, I worked in international development, and in the UK as a support worker with homeless people. I now live and work in north east London with a beardy man and a scrappy toddler. When I'm not drawing I love to walk in the wild. So much so that I once walked the length of Spain. Like many an artist before me, the natural world is a treasured source of creativity and I like to get out in it whenever I can. <https://www.joweaver.co.uk/>

### Themes:

**Migration**  
**Animal Migration**  
**Journeys**  
**Family**

### Curriculum Links

**Science Year 1 Biological Sciences:** [ACSSU211](#)

**English: Year 1: Literature/Literacy** [ACELT1582](#), [ACELT1583](#), [ACELT1584](#), [ACELY1658](#)

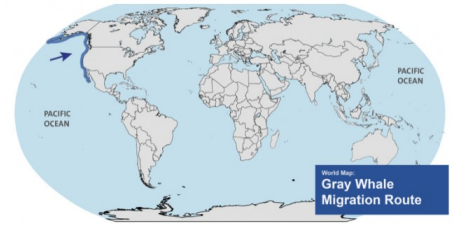
**The Arts: Visual Arts** [ACAVAM107](#)

**Cross Curricular Priorities:** Sustainability

## Science Year 1 Biological Sciences

### Living things live in different places where their needs are met:

**Gray whales** have the longest known **migration** of any mammal. They travel a 16,000 – 19,000km round trip every year between their winter calving lagoons in the warm waters of Mexico and their summer feeding grounds in the cold Arctic seas.



On a map of the world plot out the journey.

Why do the whales have to migrate?  
What would happen if they didn't migrate?

The gray whales do not pass Australia on their journey, but there are other whales that do, Humpback Whales and Southern Right Whales

Research the journeys of these whales:

All animals live in places where their needs are met. i.e. They have shelter and a food source.  
Look at some other animals from around the world. Where do these animals live?  
Do these animals have to migrate? If not, why not?

### Additional Resources:

#### Gray Whale Migration

A mother gray whale and her calf are on their migration path through Monterey Bay. But first they must get past a pack of killer whales.

[https://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/whale\\_graymigration](https://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/whale_graymigration)

#### Migration Facts:

<http://www.whalefacts.org/gray-whale-migration/>

### English: Year 1: Literature/Literacy

**Discuss characters and events in a range of literary texts and share personal responses to these texts, making connections with students' own experiences.**

In the story the mother and baby whale move from one place to another. Ask the students if they have had to move far away? From the country to the city? City to country? Or moved here from another country? What was their journey like? How is their new home different from the one they left behind?

On a map of the world, show the different places where students may have travelled from.

**Whale watching:** Have any students had an opportunity to go whale watching? What type of whales did they see? Did you see whales and their babies?

<http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/travel/destinations/2014/06/top-10-whale-watching-spots-in-australia>

## English: Year 1: Literature/Literacy

**Express preferences for specific texts and authors and listen to the opinions of others.**

This picture books tells a story, but it also gives the reader information, in this case the migration of whales. Ask the students if they like this kind of picture book? If not, why? Look at some other picture books about whales and compare.

Vote on which ones are the most popular and talk about why?

**More picture books about whales:**

Blue Whale Blues – Peter Carnavas

Little Whale - Johanna Weaver

Migaloo The White Whale – Mark Wilson

Storm Whale – Sarah Brennan and Jane Tanner

Welcome Home – Christina Booth

Whale In The Bath – Kyle Westaway and Tom Jellett

**Art:** [ACAVAM107](#)

**Use and experiment with different materials, techniques, technologies and processes to make artworks.**

Jo Weaver uses charcoal, putty rubber, watercolours, ink and pencil in her illustrations

Have each child choose their favourite animal, try drawing each of these animals using different mediums and see how the results differ.

Or have a look at this video and paint waves with watercolours

<http://splash.abc.net.au/home#!/media/2604126/how-to-paint-waves-in-watercolour>

**Sustainability:**

Every year we pollute the oceans with plastic, and plastic is a big problem for our ocean, dolphins and whales in particular.

What kind of plastic rubbish do we throw away? (Packaging/cling film/takeaway containers)

How can we cut down the amount of plastic we use?

What does your school do to make it environmentally friendly? ie: recycling, composting, no plastic policy? What ways do you think you could be more environmentally friendly?

<https://notwhalefood.com/>

<http://www.wdcs.org/wdcskids/en/index.php>

<http://splash.abc.net.au/newsandarticles/blog/-/b/2535555/25-educational-resources-to-help-kids-with-the-war-on-waste>