

**Grades: 6-8**

### **Nature- “The Whale Detective”**

A filmmaker investigates his traumatic encounter with a 30-ton humpback whale that breached and almost landed on him while he was kayaking. What he discovers raises far bigger questions about humans' relationship with whales and their future.

**After watching this episode, choose from the following questions and/or tasks to extend your learning**

#### **Question Box 1**

- According to the documentary, what is known about the humpback whale? What isn't known about the humpback whale?
- Why is there so much unknown about these giant mammals?
- How can we learn from listening to whales' vocalizations?
- Why is Monterey Bay a good place to study humpback whales?
- What does Mustill learn from Joy in “humpback 101”?
- What are some names for the ways that humpback whales splash?
- Why do whales breach?
- How have people's holiday snapshots become scientific tools?
- What was filmmaker, Mustill, traumatic encounter with a 30 ton humpback whale?
- What questions did the “accident” leave Mustill with?
- Why is Mustill obsessed in finding out as much as he can about humpback whales? Why is he obsessed with finding the whale that breached on his kayak?
- What behaviors does Mustill exhibit that are those of a detective?
- On May 9th, Joy investigates a dead whale, how is her behavior like a detective when investigating this whale's death?
- Does Mustill find “his whale”?

#### **Question Box 2**

- What are some questions you might have about humans' relationship with whales and their future?
- What would you do if you came across a whale while out in the ocean on a kayak or boat?
- What other interesting facts did you learn from this documentary that weren't asked?

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### **Question Box 3 (Tasks)**

- Watch the paper slide show on amphibians:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m7qw4jaFmQI>
- Make your own paper slide like the example you viewed about humpback whales.
- Size Comparison Activity:  
Using 5 basic measurements of your body, compare your size to the size of the animal in the Nature episode. If you are watching multiple episodes this week, create a table to record all of your discoveries. Use the following measurements: height, weight, arm length, waist circumference, foot length. Some animals may not have the same features. Adjust as necessary. Extension: Using the length of the animal you are exploring; can you find something in your home, or that you are familiar with to make a comparison? *For example: A blue whale can be 80-110 feet long, that is more than two big yellow school buses.*

### **Question Box 4 (Enrichment)**

- Draw a diagram of a humpback whale to scale.
- Create a graphic of the different whales and their different sizes (to scale).

### **Question Box 5 (Extend/Real-Life)**

- Be a “whale detective”:  
The scientific name for the humpback whale is *Megaptera noveangliae*. Tell what the scientific name means, tell why you think it got this name. Find evidence from videos and pictures justifying why this whale is appropriately named.
  - Do the same for the nickname “humpback”.
  - Write an opinion editorial telling which name should be used when referring to this whale: its scientific name or nickname.