

# Pipaluk and the Whales

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**LOVE**  
USSR  
Fiction  
Reading Time: 8 minutes

## CONCEPTS

Love  
Hope  
Perseverance  
Compassion

## SUMMARY

**With the help of her father and the villagers, young Pipaluk, tries desperately to save a group of beluga whales trapped in a frozen inlet. After many attempts, Pipa figures out a way to lead them safely to sea. This story of love and hope is based on an event that took place in 1984 off Russia's Chukchi Peninsula. The author's watercolor and colored pencil illustrations clearly express the characters' emotions and beautifully enrich the text.**

## OBJECTIVE

The student will be able to identify, define, and discuss love, hope, perseverance, and compassion as they apply to the story. The student will be encouraged to explore love as caring and compassion and hope related to perseverance and taking action.

Note to the teacher: Before reading the story it may be helpful to discuss why people in Arctic regions hunt whales for their survival in this harsh environment.

# Interdisciplinary Ideas

## LANGUAGE ARTS

1. Together, create poems or songs about beluga whales. Begin with lines such as "Beluga whale beluga whale follow my song or follow me" For more poem suggestions, visit [www.heartwoodethics.org](http://www.heartwoodethics.org), Teaching Heartwood, Activities, Primary, Whale Poems.
2. The expression "a whale of a tale" means an exaggerated story. Talk about exaggeration, use your imagination to write your own "Whale of a Tale," include details that couldn't be true, illustrate stories, and compile in a whale shaped class booklet.

## SCIENCE

1. In pairs, watch a beluga whale video online (Keyword: beluga whale National Geographic). Afterwards, create a class chart titled; Beluga Whales, Fast Facts, post on a bulletin board, and add facts you find in books and online. (keyword: beluga whales, kids)
2. On beluga whale templates, label parts such as blowhole, melon, flippers, jaws, and beak. Teacher resource (keyword: beluga whale template)
3. Listen to beluga whales online. (keyword:hear beluga whales)

## ART

Make whale puppets. Fill white paper bags with crushed newspaper, tie the ends with string or rubber band, draw features with markers, glue on paper flippers, and name your puppet. Give a beluga whale presentation to another class. Have each child hold up his or her puppet and say one of the facts about beluga whales from the class chart.

## MATH

Together, make a list of questions about beluga whales involving numbers such as ; How long is an adult beluga?, How fast can it swim? In books or online, find answers to your questions and add the information to the class chart, Beluga Whales Fast Facts. (keyword: beluga whale number facts)

# After the Story

## Pipaluk and the Whales

### DISCUSSION

1. Talk about the danger to the whales in the story. When Father and Pipa first see the whales trapped, why do you think he says, "We can't hunt them this way"?
2. Why do you think the people want to help the whales? How do you help people you care about? How do they help you?
3. The villagers hope to save the whales. What actions do Pipaluk and the villagers take to save the whales? How do these actions show perseverance, or not giving up?
4. Reread the first page of the story. How do the picture and the words show love? How does Pipa show love to the whales? Discuss times you showed love to a pet or to an animal.
5. What does Pipa think about when she sees the older whales push their young calves to the surface, so they can breathe? How did Pipa feel when she looked into the young calf's eyes? Why do you think singing made her feel better? Have you ever comforted someone with a song? Tell about it.

### ACTIVITIES

1. Locate Arctic regions on a world map. Read the Author's Note, look at the map in the book, and locate the Chukchi Peninsula on a world globe.
2. Talk about kinds of caring in the story such as parent/child, people/animals/, animal /animal.
3. In a dictionary or thesaurus, find definitions for the words, "perseverance" and "compassion", and write them on the chalkboard. With a partner, talk about one example (from the story or you own life) for each of these words. Share with the class.

### WRAP-UP

1. In *My Heartwood Journal*, draw a picture of yourself showing love by taking care of a pet, and write a sentence about it. (Play classical music while the children work.)
2. Read the Author's Note at the back of the book and discuss how the hunter, government, and scientists showed love, hope, perseverance and compassion.

### EXTENSION

1. At home, talk with family members about times they helped each other in emergencies. With permission, share stories with the class.
2. Retell the story at home. Discuss hopes you have for each other, and actions you can take to realize one of those hopes.

### VOCABULARY

**Beluga whales**  
**icebreaker**  
**pelts**  
**savssats**

**calves**  
**reflection**  
**Classical music**  
**channel**

**perseverance**  
**compassion**