



Gray Whales

4-8 Classroom Activities

Grow, Baby, Grow

OBJECTIVE

Students will chart and graph weight and length data measured from J.J. the gray whale.

ACTION

1. To introduce the activity, read the abbreviated background information below or the longer story in the GRAY WHALE BACKGROUND INFORMATION sheets on page 3. Ask students if they remember J.J. from TV news or newspaper articles. If so, ask what they thought of the whale and its story.
2. Copy and distribute "J.J. the gray whale" funsheet to individuals or student groups.
3. Have students read the story and plot data points for weight and height.
4. Using these data points as a base, ask students to estimate weight and length for six months and a year in the future.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

J.J., the orphaned California gray whale, arrived at SeaWorld on January 10, 1997. She was alone, very weak and lethargic. Through the excellent care of SeaWorld animal experts, J.J. survived. J.J. remained in the care of SeaWorld experts for 14 months. She grew to a massive 31 feet (9.4 meters), and tipped the scales at 19,200 pounds (8,709 kg). On March 31, 1998, J.J. was released with a radio transmitter to track her progress. Researchers were able to track J.J. for just two days before the transmitter was dislodged and J.J.'s location lost.

J.J. the gray whale

You are a member of the SeaWorld Animal Care Department team and have been assigned to oversee the care of J.J. the gray whale. One of your duties is to measure and weigh J.J. about every month. Now that J.J. is ready to be released, you need to graph the data you have collected.

date	weight	length	date	weight	length
1/11/97	1670 lb.	13' 10"	7/22/97	9600 lb.	24' 0"
2/11/97	2576 lb.	15' 6"	9/9/97	10580 lb.	26' 1"
3/11/97	3230 lb.	16' 10"	11/11/97	14950 lb.	27' 6"
4/22/97	4812 lb.	19' 6"	12/1/97	-----*	28' 7"
5/20/97	6304 lb.	20' 11"	1/6/98	-----*	29' 6"
6/17/97	7790 lb.	22' 6"	3/31/98	19200 lb.	31' 0"

*J.J. too heavy for scale at park

Researchers in the field have estimated adult weights at _____ and lengths at _____.

Using your data, estimate J.J. weight and length

in six months: weight _____ length _____

in one year: weight _____ length _____

