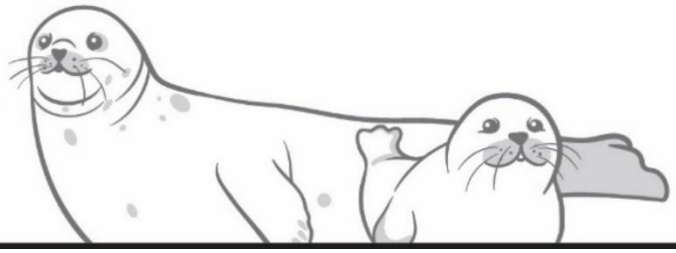
Lesson plan for grades 3–5

# Animal birthday party planning



**STANDARDS COVERED**

| | reading | writing | science |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3rd | RL.3.1<br>Rf.3.4.C | W.3.1.A<br>W.3.1.B<br>W.3.2.A<br>W.3.3.D<br>W.3.7 | 3-LS-1 |
| 4Th | RL.4.1<br>RF.4.4.C | W.4.1.B<br>W.4.2.A<br>W.4.3.E<br>W.4.7 | 4-LS-1 |
| 5Th | RL.5.1<br>RF.5.4.C | W.5.1.BW.5.2.A<br>W.5.3.E<br>W.5.7 | |

**Theme**

A research and Creative writing activity to create the “perfect birthday” for the animal that your class is celebrating.  The students can also create a drawing depicting their perfect birthday for your class's chosen animal. The goal of this lesson is to build upon your students' empathy and compassion for marine life while supporting the listed standards.

**PURPOSE**

At the Seattle Aquarium we believe one of the ways to inspire marine conservation is through fostering empathy for all marine life. What is empathy? Empathy is “a stimulated emotional state that relies on the ability to perceive, understand and care about the experiences or perspectives of another person or animal.” When building upon our

empathy skills for marine life, one of the goals is to see marine animals as beings who have needs like us.

The purpose of this activity is to build upon each student's empathy skills as they plan the "perfect birthday party" for one of the animals in the care of the Seattle Aquarium. During this lesson, students will learn about the animal's birth or hatch story, where they live, and what they eat, as well as the ways animal birthdays are different than—or similar to—people birthdays.

**ACTIVITY DETAILS**

In this research and creative writing activity students will plan the perfect *birth*day for one of the animals at the Seattle Aquarium. (For animals that hatch from eggs, the party celebrates their *hatch*day.)

The students may also create a drawing depicting the perfect birthday for the animal your class is celebrating. The goal of this lesson is to build upon your students' empathy and compassion for marine life while supporting the listed standards.

Each class will focus on one animal chosen by the teacher: a sea otter, a pair of blue-spotted stingrays or salmon. The lesson plan includes a workbook for each animal. You may scale-up the main activity by having students do the research themselves using the source list provided.

Students will learn about the marine animals' needs and notice any differences and similarities between their lifestyles and ours, including:

- Are birthdays the same as hatchdays?
- In what environment or habitat does the animal live?
- What do they eat?
- What challenges do they face?

**Topics to Discuss with Students**

- All life is deserving of respect.
- There are many reasons and ways to celebrate birthdays. We can honor animals' birthdays to show that we are grateful these animals exist with us.

- Animals need different conditions than us to be happy and healthy. What is good for them won't always be what is good for us.
- What can you do if you don’t understand a word you just read?
- How can you ask for help with understanding something?
- Hatchday vs birthday. Animals that hatch from an egg have hatchdays, animals that are born into this world have birthdays.

**Materials needed for the lesson**

- Printed student workbooks
- Animal birthday cards
- Writing and art utensils

**TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS**

**Supplemental Lesson Plan**

1. Select the animal that your class will celebrate. You may choose the sea otter, blue-spotted stingrays or salmon.
2. Review the scaling section and extension activities (below) to choose which of these optional exercises you would like to add to the activity.
3. Print and handout the correct version of the workbook to your students.
4. Download and print animal birthday cards from Seattle Aquarium website.
5. Explain that you will be helping the Seattle Aquarium celebrate your chosen animal.
6. For the scaled-up version of the workbook, print out the research resources or give the students the list of resources to search for themselves.
7. Have the students complete the workbook. This can be broken up into multiple days if you wish.
8. Have the students create and sign their birthday cards for your chosen animal.

**Scaling Options for Your Class Activity**

**Two versions of each workbook.** There are scaled-up versions for the 4th- and 5th-grade standards, and a scaled-down version for the 3rd-grade standards.

**Research resources.** Resource lists will be provided to help students answer research questions. The 3rd-grade list will be printed within the workbook. Teachers will print the 4th- and 5th-grade website resources to hand out. You may print directly from those websites as you deem necessary.

**Options for Extension Activities**

**A writing activity and/or an art activity.** These two extension activities can be added to your workbooks. The baseline workbook ends on page 6. If you do not wish to use the extension activities, remove them from the pages selected in your printer settings when printing.

**3rd-grade writing extension.** To meet 3rd-grade writing standards, this extension includes three writing prompts that should each be answered in three to five complete sentences.

**4th- and 5th-grade writing extension.** The 4th- and 5th-grade standards include an essay prompt that should be answered in three paragraphs.

**3rd-, 4th- and 5th-grade art extension**. Students use their creativity and what they have learned about their animal to draw their concept of the perfect birthday or hatchday.

**RESEARCH RESOURCES**

**Sekiu, the Sea Otter**

- Sea Otters Hold Hands While Sleeping and They Even Cuddle | Discover Magazine
- Meet the Sea Otters: Species, Habitat, and Behaviors - Sea Otter Foundation & Trust (seaotterfoundationtrust.org)
- Sea Otter - Animal profile, pictures, facts, range map (nationalgeographic.com)
- Get to know Sekiu the sea otter: Caretaker Q&A - Seattle Aquarium

**Fiesta and Siesta, Blue-spotted Stingrays**

- Ovoviviparous Definition & Meaning - Merriam-Webster
- Kuhl's maskray (Neotrygon kuhlii) (thainationalparks.com)
- Bluespotted Maskray (Neotrygon kuhlii) · iNaturalist
- Neotrygon kuhlii, Blue-spotted stingray : fisheries, aquarium (fishbase.se)

- Blue-spotted stingray - Seattle Aquarium

**Chinook salmon**

- About - Salmon Homecoming
- Chinook Salmon | NOAA Fisheries
- Chinook Salmon | National Wildlife Federation (nwf.org)
- Life of a Salmon - Science World
- Salmon - Seattle Aquarium