

H Lyla is reading a magazine article about whales on the flight back to Hong Kong. Read the article.

10mins

Marks: /15

Giants of the Ocean: Whales



Are whales fish? You may think so because they live in the sea. In fact, whales are mammals, like dolphins. Why are they mammals? Like humans, whales are warm-blooded and give birth to live offspring and nurse them, feeding them with their milk. Fish are cold-blooded and most of them lay eggs. Whales breathe air through their lungs and a hole at the top of their heads.

There are two types of whales: toothed and baleen. The former hunt and eat fish, squid and seals. The latter are bigger and eat tiny shrimp-like creatures called krill. Whales usually have a long life, up to 80 to 90 years. They also make the loudest sound in the world. The call of a blue whale can reach 180 decibels – as loud as a jet plane and it is a world record.

The huge size of blue whales, one of the more famous species of whales, is amazing. As the largest animals on Earth, blue whales can grow to 30 metres or more and weigh up to 200,000 kg, as heavy as 33 elephants!

Whales are at the top of the food chain and have an important role in the overall health of the marine environment. They play their part in the fight against climate change by capturing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. They store a huge amount of carbon in their bodies.

Unfortunately, although they are large, they are not protected. Six out of the thirteen great whale species are endangered. One of the threats is bycatch. Lots of whales are caught by mistake when fishing boats target other species of sea animals like fish. Other threats include whaling (catching a lot of whales, especially blue whales), habitat loss and shipping.

Choose the best answers by blackening the circles. (2 marks each)

1. In which of the following magazines is the information likely to appear?

- A *Travelling Fun* B *Sports Weekly*
 C *Hi-tech World* D *Nature Wonder*