

The Narwhal is a medium-size whale that lives in the Arctic region all the year-round. It is characterised by its single, straight tusk, which is actually an elongated canine (tooth) that can grow to a length of ten feet. Normally, such tusks are unique to males. Occasionally, a male narwhal will have two tusks. The tusk functions as a sensory organ and is rarely, if ever, used for aggressive or defensive purposes. The Narwhal itself can grow to about 18 feet in length, but most average about 13 feet. Narwhals can weigh up to 3,500 pounds. The word “Narwhal” comes from an old Norse (from Norway) word meaning “corpse.” The Narwhal’s greyish, drab coloration reminded sailors of a dead body. The Narwhal feeds on Arctic fish such as cod and halibut, as well as shrimp and squid. Because Narwhals lack teeth, it is thought that they swim toward their prey and suck it into their mouths. Narwhals are a migratory species of whale. They migrate to shallow, ice-free, coastal waters in the spring in pods (groups) of 10-100 individuals. In winter, they move to deeper waters under pack ice. Narwhals can dive to depths of over 2,500 feet and can stay under water for 25 minutes or more. Their dives are among the deepest ever recorded for marine mammals. They use sonar to guide themselves through the murky depths. Scientists believe there are about 75,000 Narwhals living in the Arctic waters. Individuals in the wild can live up to 50 years. Narwhals are thought to be extremely sensitive to climate change and reduced pack ice in Arctic waters.

- 1.) What is the narwhal’s tusk used for?
 - A. To fight with other narwhals
 - B. To hunt
 - C. As a sensory organ
 - D. To scare off predators

- 2.) The narwhal’s tusk...
 - A. is longer than its body
 - B. is actually a long tooth
 - C. is the same size as its body
 - D. is longer in females

- 3.) The Narwhal CANNOT...
 - A. grow to weigh more than 3,500 pounds
 - B. grow to a length of 15 feet
 - C. stay under water for 20 minutes
 - D. live up to 45 years

- 4.) Which of the following would not fit the PROFILE of a narwhal?
 - A. A narwhal swimming in icy waters
 - B. A narwhal using its teeth to tear prey
 - C. A narwhal migrating to shallow waters in the spring
 - D. A narwhal using sonar

- 5.) Which of the following words is an antonym of “murky” as used in the following sentence? They use sonar to guide themselves through the murky depths?
 - A. muddy
 - B. noisy
 - C. fast
 - D. clear

- 6.) Where would you find the answer to “What does the narwhal eat?”
 - A. Introductory paragraph
 - B. Second Paragraph
 - C. Third Paragraph
 - D. Concluding Paragraph

- 7.) Based on the passage, which is the best definition for the word “migratory?”
 - A. Something that travels
 - B. Something that hunts
 - C. Something that is rare
 - D. Something that stays in one place

- 8.) Based on the passage, which of the following might be harmful to narwhal populations?
 - A. Colder waters
 - B. More sea ice
 - C. More polar bears
 - D. Less sea ice

9.) Where are narwhals in the winter?

- A. Under pack ice in deep waters.
- B. Under pack ice in shallow waters
- C. In ice-free shallow waters
- D. In ice-free deep waters

10.) If the answer to a question is "13 feet," what is the question?

- A. How long is the narwhal tusk?
- B. How long can the narwhal grow?
- C. What is the average length of a narwhal?
- D. How much longer is the male narwhal than the female?

