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Common Core State Standards 8

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Wave-Riding Whales

“I can’t wait for January 5th,” Brady said to Chad. “That’s the day we leave for Argentina.”

Chad turned from his window where he was watching the snow plows clear the streets from last night’s snowfall. “Wow,” he said, “Argentina is really far away! It’s not going to be like Chicago, Illinois, at all. You’re going to a different continent. You’re going to a different hemisphere, too. Why are you going?”

“That’s right,” Brady said. “We will be going to a different continent and hemisphere. Argentina is on the southern part of South America, bordering the Pacific Ocean. We will actually be going to Puerto Valdés. That’s a peninsula north of Buenos Aires, the capital. A peninsula is a piece of land almost surrounded by water or projecting out into a body of water. This peninsula is almost an island.

“We’re going there,” continued Brady, “because my dad is a marine biologist. He studies whales. Right now he’s doing a study on orcas. There are some orcas off the coast of Argentina that have learned a new way of catching seals. It only works because some of the beaches on the peninsula are so steeply banked. The orca’s hunting method is not natural. It’s incredibly dangerous, and it takes years of training. In fact, fewer than half of the orcas even attempt it. My dad wants to observe the parents that are teaching their young. He thinks that the first time an orca hunted this way might have been a lucky accident. My dad says it’s an amazing **feat**, especially because some of the orcas weigh 7,250.5 kilograms.”

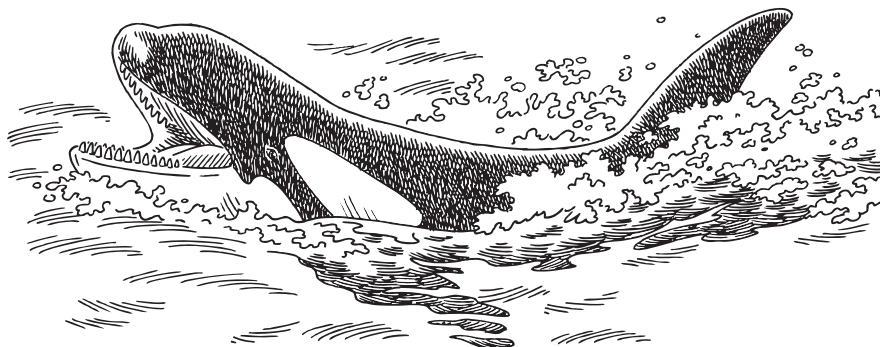
“What amazing feat do the orcas perform?” asked Chad, curiously.

“They ride a wave to shore! Then they seize their unsuspecting prey off the beach and slide back into the water with their kill. It’s very dangerous because if they can’t slide back into the water, they will die.”

“That’s quite a feat for *ballenas en blanco y negro* that weigh eight tons,” said Chad.

“I have no idea what those Spanish words mean,” said Brady, “but can you help me shut this suitcase? All these winter clothes are heavy and bulky, but I’ll need them at this time of year.”

Chad looked over at the mountain of winter clothes heaped up in the middle of Brady’s suitcase and spreading over the sides. “Yes,” Chad laughed, “it will be quite a feat to get all those clothes in your suitcase, but you don’t have to. You also might want to look at a map.”



Wave-Riding Whales (cont.)

What does Chad know that Brady doesn't know? It is time to check facts.

Thesaurus



1. List two synonyms for *feat*. _____
2. Describe a feat that you might like to accomplish one day.

Atlas



Write **True** or **False**. If your answer is **False**, cross out the incorrect word(s) and write the correct word(s) on the line.

- _____ 1. Argentina borders the Pacific Ocean. _____
- _____ 2. Buenos Aires is the capital of Argentina. _____
- _____ 3. Puerto Valdés is north of Buenos Aires. _____

Image Search



Find an image of an orca. What color(s) is it? _____

Translator (from Spanish to English)



1. *ballenas en blanco y negro* _____
2. Does this description match the image of an orca? **Yes** **No**

Metric Converter



Brady said that orcas weigh 7250.5 kilograms. Chad said that they weighed 8 tons. Check the math to see if they agree on the weight of an orca.

1. 7250.5 kilograms = _____ pounds
2. 8 tons = _____ pounds

In Your Own Words

On a separate piece of paper, write a paragraph in which you describe what you might pack for a whale-watching trip to Argentina in January. Before you write, think about which season it will be in Argentina. You can investigate by typing these key words into a search engine or encyclopedia: *seasons hemispheres*.



Spaghetti Harvest

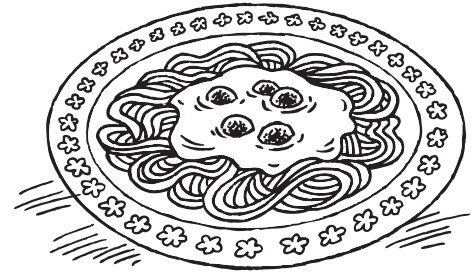
“It was on television. It truly aired! The report was broadcast by the BBC. The BBC stands for the British Broadcasting Corporation, and it was on their current-affairs program *Panorama*. Elizabeth, this is the honest truth,” Oliver said.

“I don’t believe it,” Elizabeth said. “The BBC is a reputable source of news. It wouldn’t report on anything that can’t be **verified**.”

“I saw the footage,” Oliver said. “The story was about a family in southern Switzerland. They were able to gather a bumper crop of spaghetti because of the mild winter and the disappearance of the spaghetti weevil. You can look at the same footage I did. When you do, you will see a family picking long strands of spaghetti off of tree branches. You can hear a broadcaster discussing breeding strains of spaghetti so they are the perfect length.”

Elizabeth was silent for a moment. Then she got a knowing look on her face. She said, “Oliver, you don’t need to verify anything for me. I don’t need any kind of verification because I just realized what day it is. It is April 1. This is April Fool’s Day. People all over the world play pranks on this day. You are trying to trick me by making up a story. It would be impossible to verify this story because it isn’t true.”

Oliver said, “I’m telling you that I didn’t make up this story, but you are right. It was an April Fool’s Day prank. It aired on April 1, 1957. It was broadcast at a time when spaghetti wasn’t widely eaten in the United Kingdom. At that time, not that many people in England knew that pasta was made from wheat flour and water. Hundreds of people called the station wanting to know how they could get a spaghetti tree. Even now, decades later, this prank has been called the greatest hoax a reputable news source has ever pulled.”



Elizabeth started to laugh. “It is a great story, but I’m not going to try and verify it. I know you’re making it up because you can’t even get your countries right! First you say it was on British television. Then you say it was broadcast in the United Kingdom. Then you talk about people in England. Was it in Britain, the United Kingdom, or England? It can’t be all three.”

Oliver started to say something, but Elizabeth stopped him. “Wait,” she said. “Now it’s my turn to tell you about what a common prank is on April 1 in France and Italy. There, the tradition is to try and tack a paper fish on each other’s back without the other knowing. Then, instead of saying ‘April Fool!’ they say, ‘*Poisson d’avril*’ or ‘*Pesce d’aprile!*’”

“I don’t know what those words mean,” Oliver said, “but I swear I’m telling the truth. The spaghetti tree hoax can be verified!”

Elizabeth shook her head as she patted Oliver on the back. Then, backing away, she smiled and cried, “*Poisson d’avril!*”

Spaghetti Harvest *(cont.)*

Can the spaghetti harvest hoax have truly happened? It is time to check facts.

Thesaurus



1. Write two synonyms for *verify*. _____
2. Which word is an antonym for *verify*?
Ⓐ disappear Ⓑ disprove Ⓒ discuss Ⓓ disgust

Image Search

Key Words:  *spaghetti harvest hoax video BBC*



Watch the actual footage of this hoax. Then answer these questions: Is the spaghetti hanging in single strands or in large clumps? Does it look real?

Search Engine/Encyclopedia



1. The United Kingdom is the common name for the _____
_____ of _____ and _____.
2. The United Kingdom is commonly called by the two initials _____.
3. England is on the island of _____. England is part of the United Kingdom.
4. If something is British, it is from the _____.

Translator



1. French to English: *Poisson d'avril* _____
2. Italian to English: *Pesce d'aprile* _____
3. French to English: *poisson* _____
4. Italian to English: *pesce* _____

In Your Own Words

On a separate piece of paper, explain why you think it was possible to trick so many people. Do you think you would have been tricked if you had seen the footage in 1957? What about if you saw the footage today? How do you know if you can believe what you see on television now?