

## PHONICS FUN WITH ANIMAL SOUNDS

### *WALRUS SONG* by Janet Lawler

Animals make sounds for many reasons, usually to communicate. The walrus is one of the loudest and most interesting noisemaking animals. The many and varied calls of walruses sparked the idea for *WALRUS SONG*, a narrative nonfiction book about this fascinating arctic mammal. Walruses make sounds to warn of danger, locate a calf, keep order in a herd, protect territory, attract mates, and claim resting spots. Walruses may chatter, cry, snort, screech, growl, burp, bellow, whistle, clack, and more.

#### **Read the Book**

Read *WALRUS SONG* to students, including the sound/noise back matter facts.

Point out how some of the walrus sound words in the text are words that have been “made up” by the author to represent different walrus calls and noises.

Ask students what they think the author was trying to do with extra letters, or a letter repeated in a word (for example, 4 O’s in HOOOOT!)

Have students look at walrus sound words again. Ask them to identify any examples of phonics rules they have learned (Glub has the *gl* consonant blend; Swee has the *ee* vowel team, etc.)

#### **Readers Theater**

Before class, write each sound/noise from *WALRUS SONG* noise pages (see below) on a numbered card (1-14).

Give one card to each student (pair students as necessary to include all). For younger students, model reading the sound and ask student to repeat it. Then do a class “reader theater” of the noise pages, having each student (or pair) read their sound out loud, starting with #1 (Intro and closing lines to be read by you or added as additional cards for students to read).

After, ask students to shout out their sounds, at the same time and multiple times, to imitate a noisy herd of walruses.

*Walrus noise pages from WALRUS SONG:*

What’s the ruckus?

What’s that sound?

Walrus calls and songs  
astound—

Honk, honkkkk!	(1)
HOOO, HOOOOT!	(2)
Squee! Squee, SQWEEE!	(3)
Toot, TOOT!	(4)

SPUUH, Sppputtterr	(5)
Huhh, HUFFF	(6)
Swee, SWEEE!	(7)
Grrr, GRRUFF!	(8)
Auugh! AUUGGHH!	(9)
Glub, GULUB	(10)
Eeeya, EEYAAA	(11)
Snuff, SUNNUFF!	(12)
Ding, DONG, DONG	(13)
Roar! Rrrroar, RROOAARRRR!	(14)

Walrus noises  
never bore!

### **Writing Walrus Sounds**

Play short YouTube segment(s) of walrus noises (there are many, one is [WALRUS SOUNDS 1 HOUR](#)). Ask students to close their eyes and listen again. Ask them to sound out and write down as a word a noise they hear. (There are no right or wrong spellings!)

### **Other Animal Sounds**

Ask students to think of other animals and the sounds those animals make. Have students share. Discuss how there are words to identify/name a sound, such as **bark** (the noise a dog makes), and then there are words that are the actual sound, such as **Woof!** or **Yip!** Older students may research an animal (such as an elephant or monkey), listen to noise recordings, and write a sentence that includes phonetic spelling of the animal's sound(s).

### **Animal Language Art**

Have students draw a picture of an animal. In dialogue bubble, or somewhere on page, have them phonetically write a word for the sound that this animal makes. (Alternative: Have all students draw a walrus, after reading **WALRUS SONG** and back matter regarding shape, whiskers, flippers, and tusks. Have students listen again to a walrus noise recording. Ask students to write what they hear as a sound word in a dialogue bubble on their drawing.)

### **Extension activity**

Sounds are all around us! Students can draw a picture and/or write sound words for any noise they hear, whether created by an animal, an insect, or a machine.

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