

Island of the Blue Dolphins, Chapter 24
Writing for *Ranger Rick*

Grade Level

Upper Elementary: Third Grade through Fifth Grade

Subject

Literacy and Language Arts, Science

Common Core Standards

RI.3.7

Next Generation Science Standards

3-LS1-1

Background Information

In chapter 24, when Mon-a-nee shows up with two pups, Karana realizes that the sea otter she had cared for is a female. She renames her Won-a-nee, which means Girl with the Large Eyes. By watching Won-a-nee and her pups, Karana learns more about how female sea otters care for their young.

In this activity, students become scientific journalists. After watching video footage and accessing written resources, students will report on typical maternal sea otter and pup behavior. This activity develops their ability to extract information from various resources and then convey it to one another.

Note: Contrary to what is stated in the book, sea otters are polygamous animals, meaning they mate with more than one partner throughout their lifetime. Except for mating, male and female sea otters generally stay separated. A male will mate with a female and then go on to mate with others, leaving only the female to raise the young.

Materials

- Copy of activity sheet for each student (provided)
- Computer and display to show video clips:
 - [BBC: A Sea Otter's Life](#)
 - [Nature on PBS: Sea Otter Orphan Gets Adopted](#)
 - [Nature on PBS: Why Sea Otters Hold Hands & Wrap Pups in Seaweed](#)
- Research materials and/or a computer with Internet access for each group
- Class set of *Island of the Blue Dolphins*

Procedure

1. Introduce the activity, explain its goals, and provide directions before watching the clips as a group.
2. Show the video clips listed above, or ones of your own selection, and then ask students to brainstorm what they will write about in their articles.

3. Monitor the students as they write their articles, asking probing questions to help them expand their explanations where more detail is needed.
4. Have students share their article titles, and then trade papers. How are students' articles similar and different? Why?
5. To shorten the activity: Set a word or sentence limit for the article or reduce the writing time provided. The activity could also be divided so that the videos are viewed and discussed in class, while the writing of the magazine article is assigned as homework.
6. To lengthen the activity: Have students find one additional video clip or text resource to use as research for their article.

Name _____

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Directions: Using resources provided by your teacher, gather information about how sea otters care for their young. Write a non-fiction article on this topic for *Ranger Rick*.

Title:

[illegible]

[illegible]