

Island of the Blue Dolphins, Chapter 3
Island Animals—Pets or Products?

Grade Level

Upper Elementary: Third Grade through Fifth Grade

Subject

Literacy and Language Arts, Social Studies

Common Core Standards

4.SL.1, 4.RL.1, 5.SL.1, 5.RL.1

Background Information

Karana has an intimate knowledge of the animals that live around her island, and she expresses a clear affection for them—particularly the sea otters. However, not everyone feels the way that she does. For example, in chapter 3 Karana’s father gently mocks her for being sentimental about the sea otters, and Captain Orlov sees them as a source of profit. This activity is designed to help students compare and contrast the characters’ views so they can better understand each character’s attitudes towards the animals.

Expanded T-chart: This is a graphic organizer-based strategy designed to help students compare and contrast ideas. The chart consists of three columns. Students label each column with an idea, or in this case, the name of a character. In the appropriate column, they write what they know about that idea—in this case, that character’s attitude towards nature in general and sea otters in particular.

Materials

- Copy of activity sheet for each student (provided)
- Class set of *Island of the Blue Dolphins*

Procedure

1. Make copies of expanded T-chart and give one to each student.
2. Model the strategy using an example from the chapter.
3. Assign students to work in pairs to complete the activity sheet.
4. Discuss student findings as a class. Be sure to talk about how the different attitudes of these characters lead to them acting in different ways.
5. To shorten this activity: Divide students into three small groups and assign each group a character to study. Once all groups have completed their work, they can share their findings with the class during the discussion.
6. To lengthen this activity: Have students work alone first. Then, pair them up to share their answers before the whole-class discussion.

Enrichment Activities

1. Writing prompt: What types of animals do you care a lot about? How would you feel if those animals were being hunted? If the animals were hunted in small numbers and only to meet immediate needs (like food, clothing, and tool

manufacture), would you feel differently than if they were being hunted in large numbers for their furs to be sold in another part of the world for profit? Why or why not?

2. Research: Have students research the sea otter trade that flourished in the 1800s (nineteenth century), using resources of your choosing.

Name _____

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Directions: Reread the chapter and look for places that Karana, Chief Chowig, or Captain Orlov talk about sea otters. Keep the following questions in mind as you work:

- 1. What is this character’s attitude toward sea otters?
- 2. How do I know?
- 3. Based on the text, can I figure out why he or she feels that way?

Write down the quotes or examples that help to answer these questions in the chart below. Be sure to include page numbers.

Karana	Chief Chowig	Captain Orlov