Third Grade Manatee Curriculum—Lesson 2: Reading Rainbow, “Sam the Sea Cow”¹
Maia McGuire and Ruth Francis-Floyd²

Description
Students learn about threats to manatees.

Objective
By the end of the activity, students will be able to list at least one threat to manatees.

Standards Addressed
Common Core—CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.3.6

You Will Need
• A copy of the Reading Rainbow DVD, “Sam the Sea Cow” episode
• A copy of the student worksheet (pages 2–3) for each student
• Optional: A copy of Sam the Sea Cow teacher’s guide (available at http://shopgpn.com/guides/rr/la/126_0083g.pdf)

Strategy
1. As a class, watch the Reading Rainbow DVD, “Sam the Sea Cow” (30 minutes).

2. Have students complete the student worksheet while watching the DVD.

3. Have a class discussion about the answers (also refer to the Sam the Sea Cow teacher’s guide for discussion ideas).

4. Optional: Have students write a story from the viewpoint of a manatee biologist. Students should use information from the video and describe a manatee rescue, rehabilitation, or release.

1. This document is VM205, one of a series of the Veterinary Medicine—Large Animal Clinical Sciences Department, UF/IFAS Extension. Original publication date July 2015. For more lessons in the Third Grade Manatee Curriculum series, go to http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/topic_series_third_grade_manatee_workbook. Visit the EDIS website at http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu.

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As you watch the movie, look and listen for the answers to the following questions.

1. Who reads the story *Sam the Sea Cow*?
   a. Francine Jacobs
   b. Laura Kelly
   c. LeVar Burton
   d. Jason Robards

2. Where does baby Sam get his milk? ________________________________

3. What part of the body do manatees use to steer themselves through the water?
   — — — — — — — — —

4. How old is Sam when he leaves his mother? ________________________________

5. When people rescue hurt manatees, what do they often use to take the manatee out of the water? ________________________________

6. How much do adult male manatees weigh?
   a. 500 pounds
   b. 1000–1200 pounds
   c. 2500 pounds
   d. 5000 pounds

7. Are female manatees bigger or smaller than male manatees? ________________________________
8. What animal is the manatee’s closest relative on land? 

9. Which word best describes manatees?
   a. Vegetarian
   b. Carnivore
   c. Omnivore
   d. Predator

10. What body part do manatees use to grab their food? 

11. Why do some manatees have scars on their backs? 

12. How much did Barnacle Bill grow in the 18 months between the time he was rescued and the time he was released into the wild? 

13. How many people does it take to carry Bill to freedom? 

14. What is the largest animal on earth? 

15. How long have manatees been around?
ANSWER KEY
As you watch the movie, look and listen for the answers to the following questions.

1. Who reads the story *Sam the Sea Cow*?
   a. Francine Jacobs
   b. Laura Kelly
   c. LeVar Burton
   d. Jason Robards

2. Where does baby Sam get his milk? *from under his mother's flipper*

3. What part of the body do manatees use to steer themselves through the water? *FLIPPERS*

4. How old is Sam when he leaves his mother? *2 years old*

5. When people rescue hurt manatees, what do they often use to take the manatee out of the water? *fishing nets*

6. How much do male manatees weigh?
   a. 500 pounds
   b. *1000–1200 pounds*
   c. 2500 pounds
   d. 5000 pounds

7. Are female manatees bigger or smaller than male manatees? *bigger*

8. What animal is the manatee's closest relative on land? *elephants*

9. Which word best describes manatees?
   a. *Vegetarian*
   b. Carnivore
   c. Omnivore
   d. Predator

10. What body part do manatees use to grab their food? *their lips*

11. Why do some manatees have scars on their backs? *because they have been hit by boats (cut by the propeller)*

12. How much did Barnacle Bill grow in the 18 months between the time he was rescued and the time he was released into the wild? *one foot*

13. How many people does it take to carry Bill to freedom? *8*

14. What is the largest animal on earth? *blue whale*

15. How long have manatees been around? *millions of years*