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Arctic

# Whale Danger!

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# Arctic Whale Danger!



**Rob Waring**, *Series Editor*

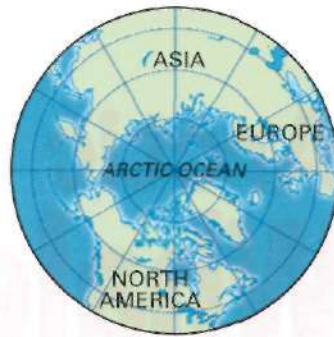
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## Words to Know

This story is set in the Arctic Ocean.



**A The Arctic Shore.** Write each word in the picture below next to the correct definition.

1. the land next to the ocean: \_\_\_\_\_.
2. a large white sea animal: \_\_\_\_\_.
3. hard pieces of water formed in the cold: \_\_\_\_\_.
4. big stones that you sometimes find near the sea: \_\_\_\_\_.
5. a part of the sea that is nearly closed in by land: \_\_\_\_\_.
6. a large sea animal that has a long object on its head: \_\_\_\_\_.



**B Arctic Animals.** Look at the pictures and captions. Complete the paragraph below with the correct form of the words in **bold**.



**Narwhals** have a long tusk.



An **adult beluga whale** and her **calf**.

**Codfish** swimming in the ocean.

Many different types of whales live in the Arctic Ocean.

1) \_\_\_\_\_ are very big and white. 2) \_\_\_\_\_ have a long tusk. A baby whale is called a 3) \_\_\_\_\_. Most whales like eating fish. One type of fish they often eat is called 4) \_\_\_\_\_.



**B**eluga whales are very social animals. This means that they like to be around other whales. Their relationships with the whales around them are very strong. A mother and her calf will often swim together for three years. Beluga whale calves are grey when they are born. They turn white, like the ice around them, when they become adults.

It may seem as if the beluga whales have a very happy life, but sometimes this isn't the case...

 CD 1, Track 1







On one particular day, a group of beluga whales is swimming in the bay. When the **tide**<sup>1</sup> goes out, the adult belugas are able to swim back to deeper water.

However, one young beluga has gone too far onto the shore. It can't get back to the water. Suddenly, playtime becomes a **race against time**!<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>**tide:** the rising and falling of the ocean

<sup>2</sup>**race against time:** need to act quickly



The Sun now becomes the whale's biggest danger. It's very hot on the young beluga's body. The whale could easily get **sunburn**<sup>3</sup>, become too hot, and die. The young beluga has nothing to cover it. It's totally helpless. The other belugas can only watch and wait as the calf tries to move.

As the beluga calf moves around on the shore, the rocks cut its skin. More and more time passes. The minutes slowly turn into hours. There's nothing that the whale can do for now. It can only wait for the tide to come back.

Everyone has **made a mistake**<sup>4</sup> once in their life. However, this mistake could be deadly for the little beluga. Finally, the tide starts coming back. But will it be soon enough to help the baby beluga?

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<sup>3</sup>**sunburn:** when the skin becomes red and hot from the sun

<sup>4</sup>**make a mistake:** do something wrong

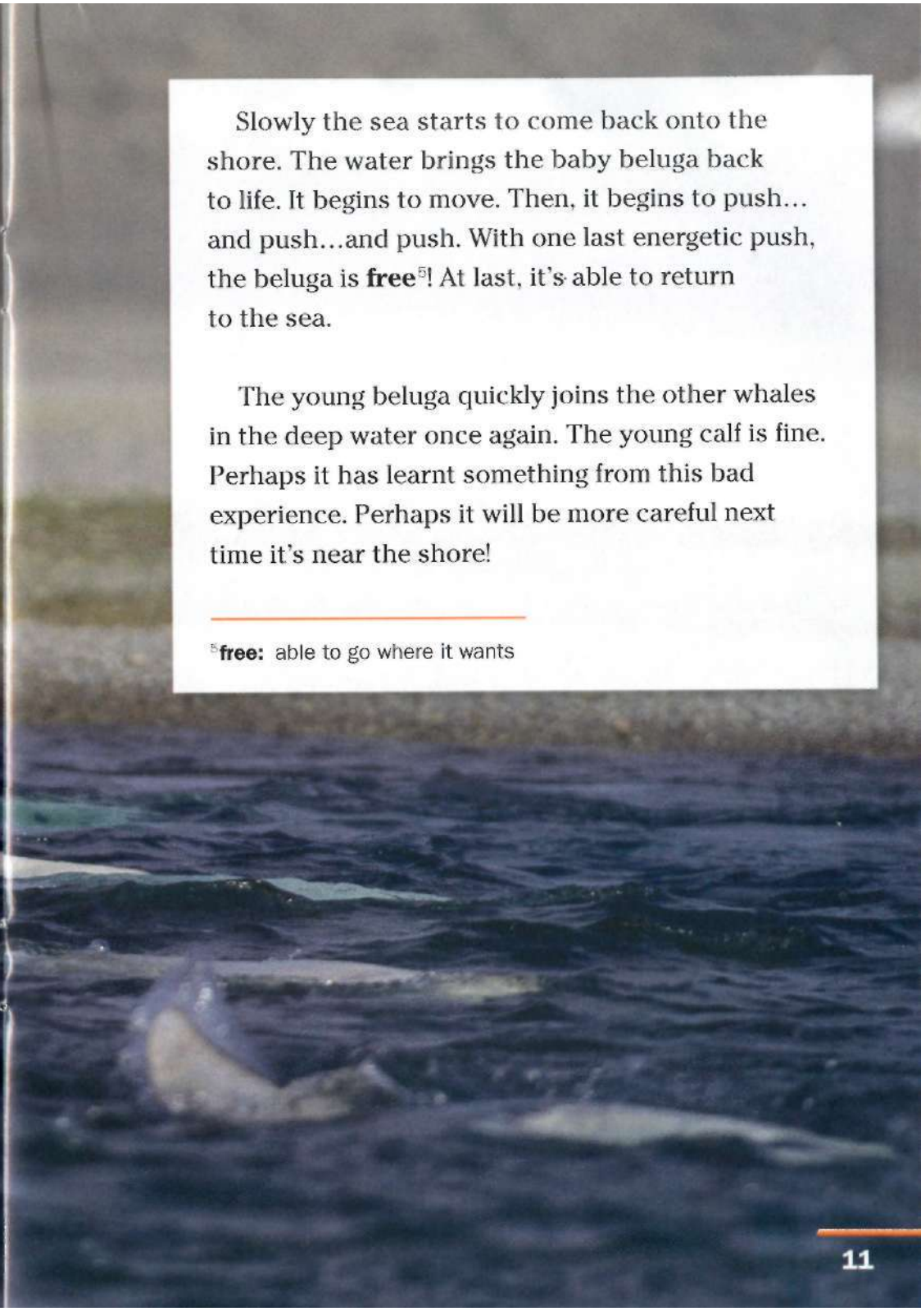


### Predict

Answer the questions. Then, scan page 11 to check your answers.

1. What will happen to the beluga calf?
2. Why do you think that?





Slowly the sea starts to come back onto the shore. The water brings the baby beluga back to life. It begins to move. Then, it begins to push... and push...and push. With one last energetic push, the beluga is **free**<sup>5</sup>! At last, it's able to return to the sea.

The young beluga quickly joins the other whales in the deep water once again. The young calf is fine. Perhaps it has learnt something from this bad experience. Perhaps it will be more careful next time it's near the shore!

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<sup>5</sup>**free:** able to go where it wants



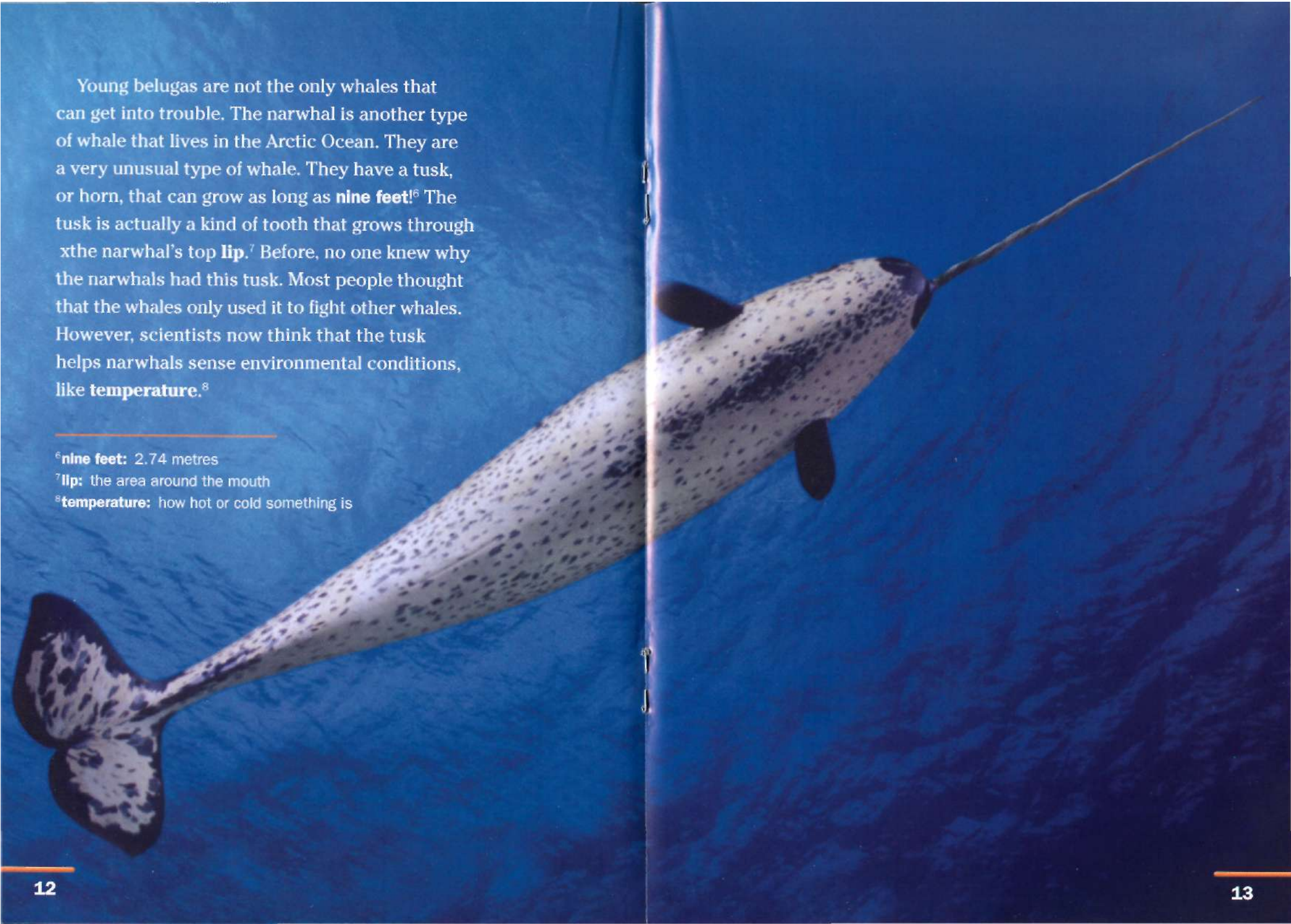
Young belugas are not the only whales that can get into trouble. The narwhal is another type of whale that lives in the Arctic Ocean. They are a very unusual type of whale. They have a tusk, or horn, that can grow as long as **nine feet!**<sup>6</sup> The tusk is actually a kind of tooth that grows through the narwhal's top **lip.**<sup>7</sup> Before, no one knew why the narwhals had this tusk. Most people thought that the whales only used it to fight other whales. However, scientists now think that the tusk helps narwhals sense environmental conditions, like **temperature.**<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>**nine feet:** 2.74 metres

<sup>7</sup>**lip:** the area around the mouth

<sup>8</sup>**temperature:** how hot or cold something is





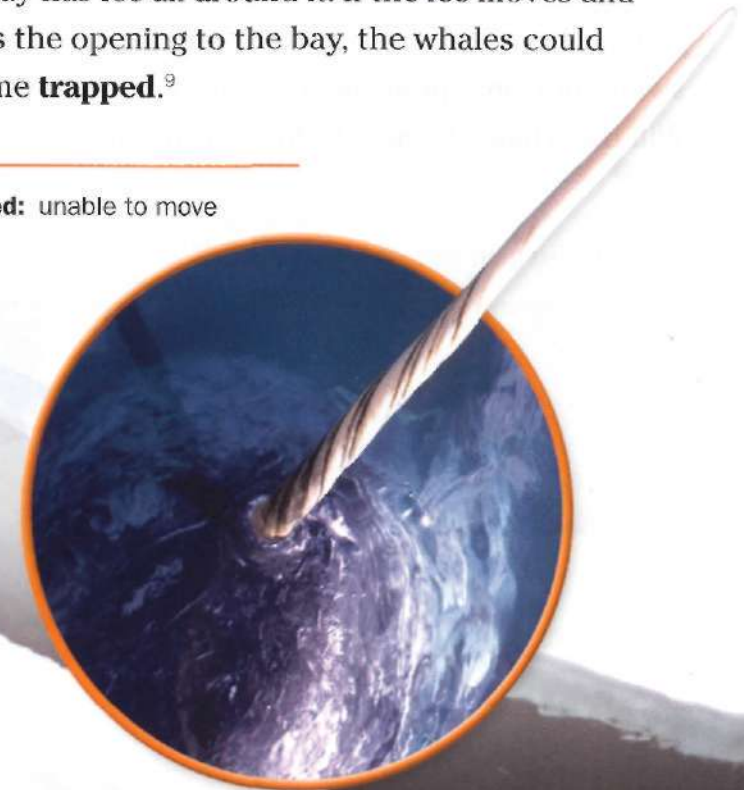


Narwhals usually swim in small groups. However, on this day the number of narwhals swimming together is much larger. The exact number may vary, but sometimes the group might grow to more than one hundred whales! The whales are swimming together as they look for one of their favourite foods—codfish.

After a while, the narwhals follow a group of codfish into the bay. But they're taking a big risk. The bay has ice all around it. If the ice moves and closes the opening to the bay, the whales could become **trapped**.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>**trapped:** unable to move

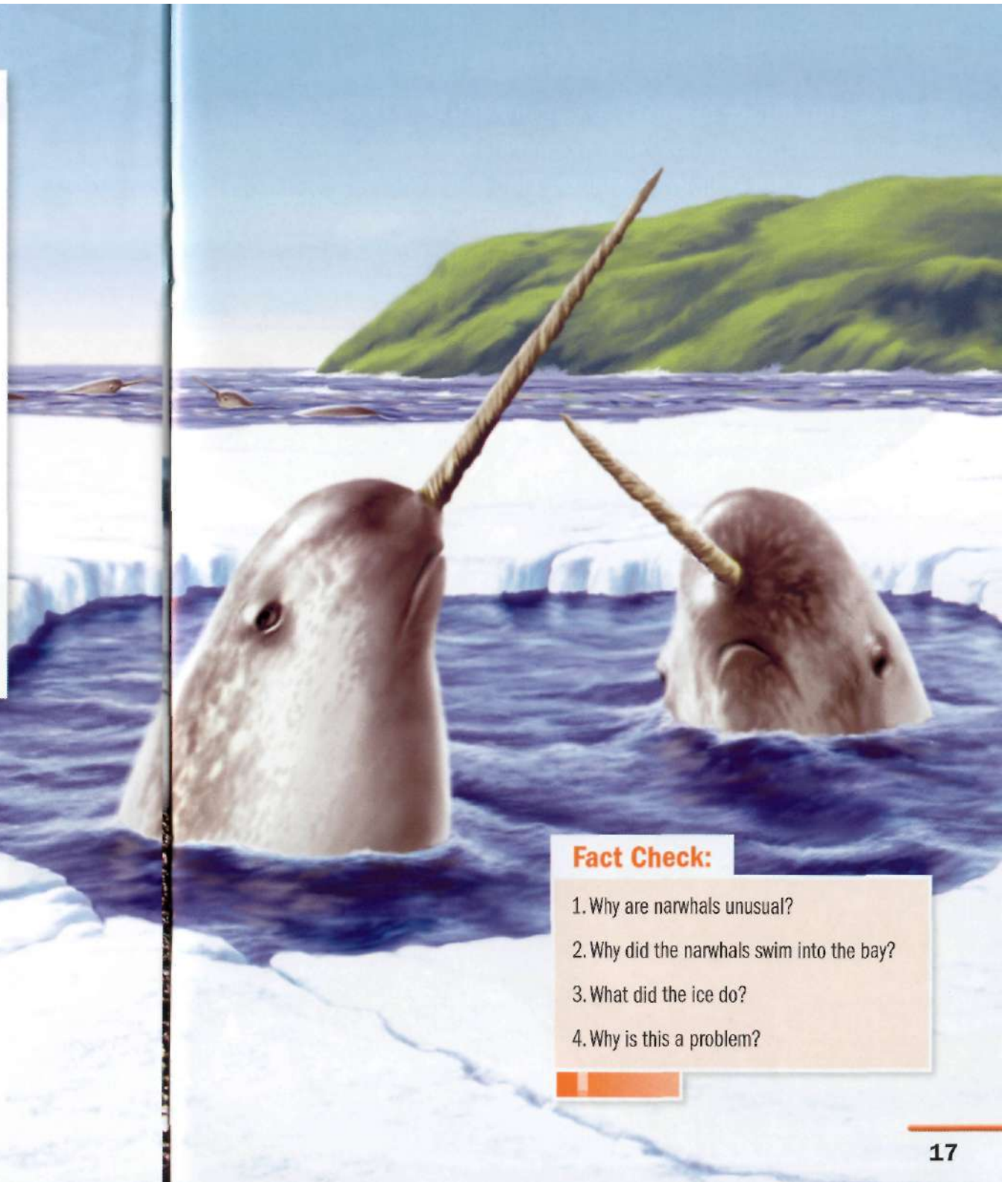




And that's exactly what happens! Suddenly, the ice moves in and closes off the way out to the open sea. The narwhals can't get out of the bay. They're trapped! Not even their long tusks can help them now...

All of the narwhals now have to swim in a very small area of water that has no ice on it. It's a very difficult situation for the narwhals. Whales **breathe oxygen**.<sup>10</sup> If the ice moves closer and covers the water, the narwhals won't be able to come out of the water. They won't be able to get air! They'll have to swim out from under the ice to find it or they'll die. Will the whales be able to find air in time?

<sup>10</sup>**breathe oxygen:** use air in their bodies

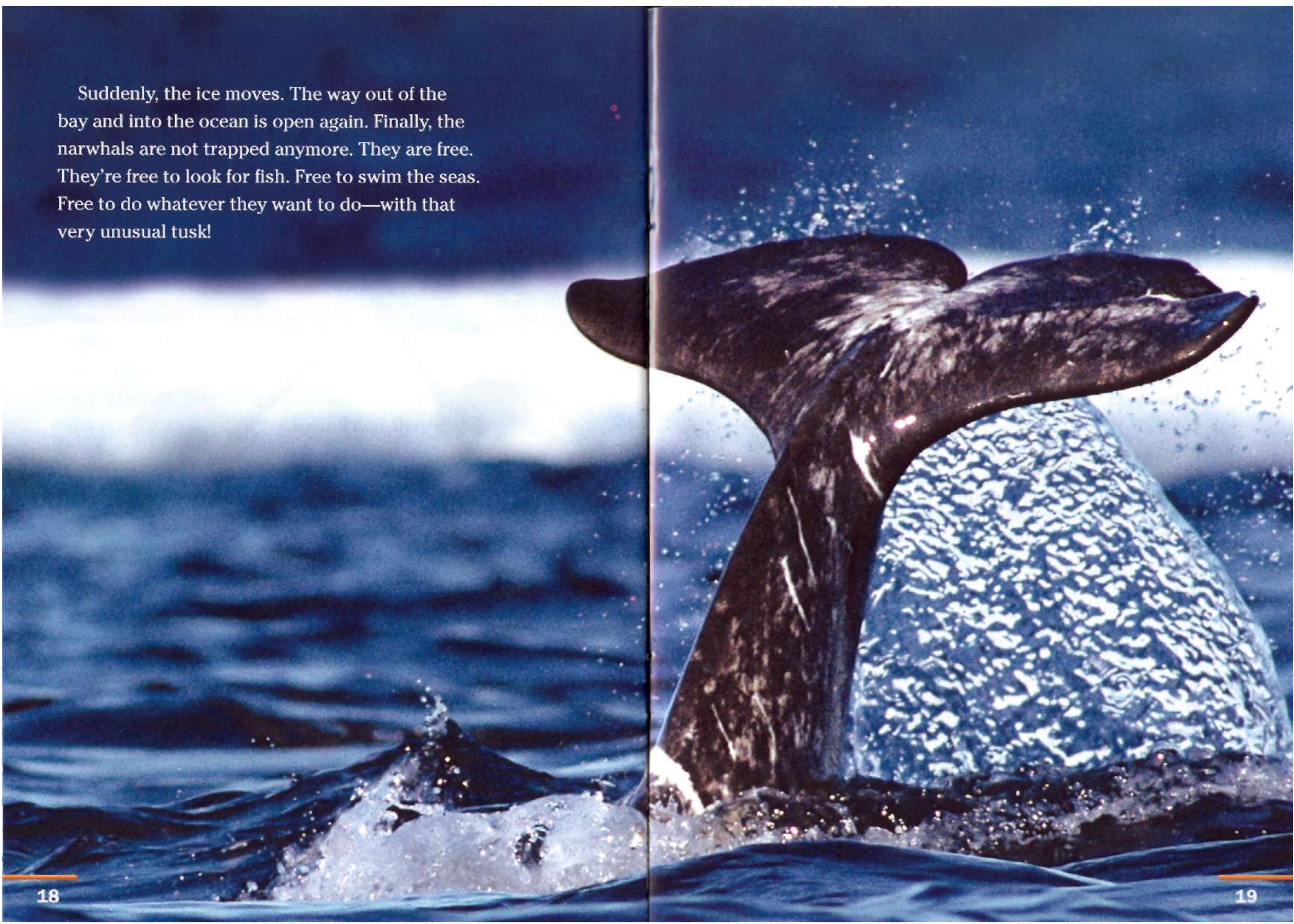


### Fact Check:

1. Why are narwhals unusual?
2. Why did the narwhals swim into the bay?
3. What did the ice do?
4. Why is this a problem?



Suddenly, the ice moves. The way out of the bay and into the ocean is open again. Finally, the narwhals are not trapped anymore. They are free. They're free to look for fish. Free to swim the seas. Free to do whatever they want to do—with that very unusual tusk!





## After You Read

1. The beluga whale is \_\_\_\_\_ very social animal.  
A. the  
B. an  
C. that  
D. a
2. An adult beluga whale is grey.  
A. True  
B. False  
C. Not in text
3. On page 7, 'it' in the phrase 'It can't get back to the water' refers to:  
A. the shore  
B. a baby beluga  
C. the ocean  
D. deeper water
4. What is a good heading for page 8?  
A. Young Whale in Trouble  
B. Mother and Calf Swim Together  
C. Adult Beluga Makes Deadly Mistake  
D. Whale Finds New Home
5. After the tide comes back, where does the young whale go?  
A. to the rocks  
B. to the other whales  
C. to the shore  
D. to the ice
6. What is the purpose of a narwhal's tusk?  
A. To break ice.  
B. To swim better.  
C. To look for codfish.  
D. To sense the temperature.

7. The purpose of page 12 is:  
A. to describe belugas.  
B. to describe all the whales living in the Arctic Ocean.  
C. to describe a beluga's tusk.  
D. to explain what makes narwhals special.
8. On page 15, 'a big risk' means:  
A. something good  
B. something unusual  
C. something bad might happen  
D. something great
9. The narwhals are trapped in the \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. shore  
B. rocks  
C. open sea  
D. bay
10. The writer thinks that belugas and narwhals are interesting because:  
A. they sometimes get into trouble.  
B. they are not social animals.  
C. they don't swim well.  
D. they argue with each other.
11. According to the story, which of the following is true for belugas and narwhals?  
A. They have tusks.  
B. They change colour as they grow.  
C. They never get into trouble.  
D. They breathe oxygen.



# Visiting the Arctic

**Y**ou've seen pictures of beluga whales and narwhals. You've read about how they live in the Arctic Ocean. But have you ever thought of visiting the Arctic yourself? Every year thousands of people do. They get there on ships that leave from cities in Canada, Russia, and parts of Europe. Here are some questions that people planning a trip to the Arctic often ask.



Tourists on a ship  
in the Arctic Ocean

## Q: WHAT TYPES OF SHIPS GO TO THE ARCTIC?

**A:** Only special ships can go to the Arctic. They must be very strong because of all the ice in the Arctic Ocean. Many of the ships are also quite small. The largest ones hold no more than 100 people. Most of them only hold around 50 people. Some ships leave from small towns in northern Canada. Tourists usually have to fly there from Montreal. People can also leave from cities in northern Europe or the north of Russia.


## Q: WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO GO?

**A:** The best time to visit the Arctic Ocean is during the months of July and August. During these months, the temperatures are usually above 45 degrees Fahrenheit (7 degrees Celsius) during the day. In January and February, the temperature can be very cold. During these months, ice covers many parts of the Arctic Ocean and ships cannot pass through. In some places this ice can be several feet deep.

**“Most travellers say that their trip to the Arctic was very interesting.”**

## Q: WHAT DO PEOPLE DO ON THE SHIP?

**A:** Most ships offer classes every day. People can learn about the things they will see on the shore. They can also learn about the history of the area. Who first found the area? What did they see there? There are also often classes about local sea animals, like birds, whales, or codfish. All of these animals are common in the Arctic. Most travellers say that their trip to the Arctic was very interesting. Some think it's the best holiday they've ever had.

 CD 1, Track 2

 Word Count: 316

Time: \_\_\_\_\_



# Vocabulary List

**adult** (3, 4, 7)  
**bay** (2, 15, 16, 17, 18)  
**beluga whale** (2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12)  
**breathe oxygen** (16)  
**calf** (3, 4, 8, 11)  
**codfish** (3, 15)  
**free** (11, 18)  
**ice** (2, 15, 16, 18)  
**lip** (12)  
**make (a) mistake** (8)  
**narwhal** (2, 3, 12, 15, 16, 18)  
**ocean** (2, 3, 18)  
**race against time** (7)  
**rocks** (2, 8)  
**shore** (2, 11)  
**sunburn** (8)  
**swim** (3, 7, 15, 16)  
**temperature** (12)  
**tide** (7, 8)  
**trapped** (15, 16, 18)

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