



GREAT WHALES

UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

Welcome to [Great Whales: Up Close and Personal!](#)

In 2017, we shared the incredible journey of Blue, ROM's beloved blue whale, in [Out of the Depths: The Blue Whale Story](#). The highly successful ROM-original exhibition [told the story](#) of one of nine [blue whales](#) that died tragically in the Gulf of St. Lawrence in 2014, and the [unprecedented opportunity](#) for [research](#) and [public education](#) it [presented](#).

Fast forward four years and we're going [back to the depths](#). Showcasing the ROM's commitment to Canada's iconic North Atlantic whales, this exhibition takes the story further and features Blue alongside two new [skeletons](#): the critically endangered North Atlantic [right whale](#) and the deep diving sperm whale. With multi-sensory interactives and [immersive experiences](#), Great Whales compares these three unique giants, from their size and [diet](#) to their intelligence and evolution, while highlighting the extensive ongoing [research](#) and [conservation](#) efforts being undertaken to [save these mammals](#) from extinction. The ROM invites you to dive back in and discover these incredible great whales of Canada's east coast, their [complex relationships with humans](#), and what we can do to save them.

You may work in small groups on the questions and the activities. If you are unable to visit the museum, ask your teacher for the link to the virtual tour. If you are at the museum, remember the [Museum Guidelines](#):

1. Walk. Do not run.
2. Use indoor voices.
3. Stay with your chaperone.
4. Make way for ROM educators if they need a space for a lesson.
5. Don't touch objects. Only touch objects that are clearly marked as safe to touch.
6. Don't rush. Focus your time on the objects that capture your interest and complete what you can within the time you have.
7. Ask questions and have fun!

Please note that **only pencils** may be used to complete this Gallery Trail while in the exhibition. Pens are not permitted for the safety of the objects.



ROM

Evolution of a Giant

 Whales are mammals that descended from an ancient wolf-sized creature with hoof-like toes, and their closest living relatives are hippos! They're part of a big group of even-toed mammals that includes cows, camels, and pigs. Find the **Evolution** section to learn how scientists unlocked 55 million years of evolution across the whale family tree.

Pick two whales and one whale ancestor. Find the similarities and differences between the skeletons and organize them in the chart below.

Species	Similarities	Differences
_____ Whale		
_____ Whale		

BACK IN CLASS:

Create an infographic or video to explain the similarities and differences you found. Paste a screencap (if you used an app), link (if you made a video), or a photo (if you designed your infographic by hand).

Surviving the Deep

-  Ancient whales were able to transition to the sea as they evolved very specialized adaptations over many generations spanning millions of years. **Adaptations** are [body structures](#) a living thing has, or activities a living thing does, which help it survive in its environment.

Sketch (or take a photo) of one of the whales. Label its adaptations and explain how they help the whale survive in its environment.

SELFIE CHALLENGE!

First, figure out how many students it takes in a line to reach the length of a blue whale.

Then, find a large open space within the ROM or at your school. As a whole class, figure out a way to recreate the length and shape of the whale in a tableau.

Your teacher can share your “whale-fie” @ROMtoronto #ROMGreatWhales. Your teacher can use this snapchat code to summon a whale into your photo. Paste a copy of it here!



A Day in the Life

-  Whales face many [challenges to their survival](#) in our changing world. List some of the threats whales face, and think about how we can help reduce these risks to protect them.

Threats that Whales Face	Actions to Reduce Risks

-  Using everything you learned about whales in this exhibition, tell the story of a day in the life of a whale.

Begin planning your story here, and finish it back in class. Your story could be:

- A written story
- A comic
- A digital storybook (using Slides, Prezi, or another app)
- Another format that tells your story best.

Things to think about:

- What type of whale is it?
- What is the whale's daily routine?
- What do they eat?
- Where do they go?
- Who interacts with them?
- If they interact with humans, are those interactions positive? Negative? Both?

BACK IN CLASS

Think of one action that students can do to help conserve whales. Design a poster that you think will catch the attention of students your age and convince them to take that action.

Share your poster with us
#ROMLearning @ROMtoronto #ROMGreatWhales