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# Introduction - The Electronic Whale

## Background

In *The Electronic Whale* curriculum students track one of the most incredible migrations known to humans. Following a migratory path of 10,000 to 14,000 miles, California gray whales swim from their summer feeding grounds in the far north of the Arctic Ocean to their mating and calving grounds in Baja California, Mexico and back each year. This migration serves as a vehicle for the investigation of many of the factors which influence life in the sea.



The Electronic Whale and the lessons included here are drawn from *The Year of the Gray Whale, Grade 7*, one of the FOR SEA curriculum guides from the Institute of Marine Science. Serialized narrative sections on the gray whale, followed by activities suggested by occurrences in the narrative, occur throughout the guide. The lessons selected for inclusion in this CD-ROM provide a useful outline of the migration. The table of contents from *The Year of the Gray Whale, Grade 7* is also included so that you may see how the gray whale migration narratives serve as unifying agents to tie a wide variety of activities together

The California gray whale is the only whale population that, following severe depletion, has recovered to near-original numbers. Its successful recovery is evidenced by the fact that the gray whale was removed from the endangered species list. Even so, we cannot be complacent about its future. The whale's calving lagoons are becoming increasingly accessible and industrialization and pollution of the lagoons accelerates as the human population grows. It is against the backdrop of this classic balancing act between human and wildlife needs that the lessons of this curriculum are set. They are presented with the hope that the education we provide today to tomorrow's decision-makers will enable them to make ecologically sound choices.