

TEACHER READING GUIDE

**Who Would Win?:  
Walrus vs. Elephant Seal**

written by Jerry Pallotta  
illustrated by Rob Bolster

This book is part  
of the **Who Would  
Win?** series.



**Essential Question:** How does identifying relevant details in a text help me understand the author's central idea?

**BOOK SNAPSHOT**

Selected from the New Worlds Reading Initiative Booklist

**Text Type:** Nonfiction

**Genre:** Informational

**Themes/Topics:** Animal Science

**Lexile:** 570L

**SKILLS ALIGNED WITH FLORIDA'S ELA  
B.E.S.T. STANDARDS**

**Word Work**

**ELA.3.F.1.3 (b)**

Decode words with common derivational suffixes (-less).

**Vocabulary**

**ELA.3.V.1.1**

Use grade-level academic vocabulary. (Tier 2)

**Comprehension**

**ELA.3.R.2.2**

Identify the central idea and relevant details.

**BUILDING BACKGROUND**

Display a picture of a walrus and an elephant seal for students to view. Ask:

- What is similar about these two animals?
- What is different about these two animals?

Gather facts about walruses and elephant seals from the text and the Internet. Read each fact out loud to students, and ask them to determine if the fact applies to walruses or to elephant seals.

Engage students in a discussion around what other information they might want to learn about each creature.

**STUDENT LEARNING TARGETS**

**Today I am:**  
identifying the relevant details of a text.

**So that I can:**  
explain how the details support the author's central idea.

## WORD WORK – DERIVATIONAL SUFFIX –less

ELA.3.F.1.3: Use knowledge of grade-level phonics and word-analysis skills to decode words.

b. Decode words with common derivational suffixes and describe how they turn words into different parts of speech (e.g., *-ful*, *-less*, *-est*).

- Review the terms **suffix**, **noun**, and **adjective** with students.
- Display the **suffix** *-less*.
- Say, "This **suffix** is *-less*. It means *without*. When I add the **suffix** *-less* to a base word that is a **noun**, it will turn it into an **adjective** and change the meaning of the word."
- Create a chart like the one below. In the first column, write the word *ear*. Say, "This is the **noun** *ear*." Write *earless* in the middle column. "When I add the **suffix** *-less* to the **noun** base word, it becomes an **adjective**, *earless*. *Earless* means *without ears*." Write the meaning in the right column.
- Repeat the activity with other nouns from the text, such as *tooth*, *whisker*, *noise*, *hair*, *fur*, and *breath*. Use the Gradual Release of Responsibility Instructional Framework to model the activity, support students' learning with guided practice, and provide an opportunity for independent practice.

What is the Noun Base Word?	Add the Suffix <i>-less</i> . What is the Adjective?	What is the Meaning of the Adjective?
ear	earless	Without ears

### ELL and SWD Suggestion

Provide students with picture cards that depict noun base words and their corresponding adjectives with the suffix *-less* to encourage understanding of how the suffix alters the meaning of the word. Through a matching game, students will pair the base word picture card (e.g., *hair*) with the *-less* adjective picture card (e.g., *hairless*).

Activity Extension: Students will identify additional **nouns** from the text and add the **suffix** *-less* to decode the new adjective and determine its meaning.

## TALK ABOUT NEW AND INTERESTING WORDS

ELA.3.V.1.1: Use grade-level academic vocabulary appropriately in speaking and writing.

Tier 2 vocabulary words, paired with student-friendly definitions, can be used for explicit vocabulary instruction. It is important to provide background information and learning opportunities to help students make connections to the words. Examples of Tier 2 vocabulary words for this text are:



**noticeable** (p. 11): When something or someone is **noticeable**, they are easily seen by others. A male elephant seal's large snout is its most **noticeable** feature.



**enlarged** (p. 11): If something is **enlarged**, it is made bigger. Female elephant seals do not have an **enlarged** snout like male elephant seals.



**exclusively** (p. 20): **Exclusive** describes something that only belongs to a certain place or group of people or things. Most seals live in saltwater, but Baikal seals live **exclusively** in freshwater.



**wounded** (p. 31): When something or someone is **wounded**, they are hurt very badly. The walrus is **wounded** when the elephant seal bites it on the neck during the water battle.

### Vocabulary Extension Activity

Creating visual representations of vocabulary words will engage learners, improve memory and recall of target words, and support meaningful connections to new words. Ask students to write the target words. Then give them one minute for each vocabulary word to create a quick sketch representing the word in their notebooks or on a piece of paper. Add to the vocabulary sketchbook as students learn new words.

## READ FOR MEANING – CENTRAL IDEA AND RELEVANT DETAILS

- ELA.3.R.2.2: Identify the central idea and explain how relevant details support that idea in a text.
- ELA.3.R.3.2: Summarize a text to enhance comprehension.
  - b. Use the central idea and relevant details for an informational text.



### Before:

Provide a student-friendly explanation of the word *relevant*. *Relevant* describes something that is closely connected to a central idea. Provide students with a topic and three details. Students will use a thumbs-up or thumbs-down to display which details are relevant to the central idea and which are not. Ask students to elaborate on their decisions. For example:

- **Central Idea:** I am a great basketball player.
- **Details:**
  - I scored 22 points in my last basketball game. (Relevant)
  - My school installed new basketball hoops in the gym. (Non-relevant)
  - I won the Most Valuable Player award. (Relevant)



### During:

- Explain that the author, Jerry Pallotta, writes the *Who Would Win?* series to teach readers different physical features animals use for survival and how these features assist in a fight against other animals.
- Proficient readers identify the author's intended central idea from closely reading each text section. Readers examine the details to determine the most relevant, or important, to the author's central idea.
- To scaffold students in explaining how relevant details support the central idea, use the RAP strategy, which stands for:
  - **R**ead the text,
  - **A**sk questions, and
  - **P**ut the central idea and relevant details in your own words.

### I Do: Tusks and Snout (p. 10 – 13)

- Create a graphic organizer on chart paper similar to the chart below.

<b>1. Read the Text</b>	
<b>2. Ask Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>What is the central idea?</b></li><li>• <b>What are two <u>relevant</u> details that support the central idea?</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>3. Put the Central Idea and Relevant Details in Your Own Words</b>	

- **Read** p. 10 – 13 aloud.
- **Ask Questions.**
- Use a think aloud to model identifying the central idea and relevant details in the sections *Tusks and Snouts*.
  - P. 10 explains walruses have tusks that help in self-defense and whiskers that help feel vibrations in the water.
  - P. 11 explains that male elephant seals use their snouts to make noise.

## READ FOR MEANING – CENTRAL IDEA AND RELEVANT DETAILS



- The information underneath each header explains both elephant seals and walruses have special features on their faces to help them in certain ways. Write the central idea on the graphic organizer.
- Model how to examine relevant details that directly support the central idea versus details that are interesting, but do not directly support the central idea. Write two relevant details on the graphic organizer, and elaborate on why they are relevant.
  - Example of a relevant detail: Tusks help walruses defend themselves against killer whales or polar bears. (p. 10)
  - Example of a non-relevant detail: Elephants are the largest living land mammal. This is an interesting fact but not relevant to the central idea. (p. 12)
- **Put the Central Idea and Relevant Details in Your Own Words**
  - Model how to write complete sentences on the graphic organizer to identify the central idea of the text and two relevant details that support the central idea.
  - Ex: Walruses and elephant seals both have special features on their face that help in different ways. Walruses have long tusks that help defend them if they are attacked by polar bears or killer whales. Male elephant seals have big, long snouts that help them make loud noises.

### Did You Know?

Graphic organizers are a powerful tool that support the reading and writing connection while also scaffolding students in organizing their ideas and understanding of the text.

**We Do:** Repeat the steps of the RAP strategy for p. 14 – 15 under the header *Body*.

- Students will assist in completing the graphic organizer to determine and write the central idea and relevant details in complete sentences.
  - Students will collaborate with a partner to determine the central idea of the section.
  - Use a voting system to engage students in determining relevant vs. non-relevant details, such as thumbs-up/thumbs-down.



### After:

**You Do:** Provide students with a blank RAP graphic organizer. Students will work independently or with a partner to:

- Read the section *Flippers* on p. 18 – 19.
- Write the central idea and two relevant details that support the central idea of the section.
- Write the central idea and relevant details in their own words using complete sentences.

### Writing Extension Prompts:

Choose one of the battles described in the book: land, sea, or water.

1. What other physical feature described in the text could each animal have used in the fight?
2. How would this physical feature help the animal attack or defend themselves in the fight?