Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Fall 2015

ACTIVITY: SAVING SPRINGER: MAKE YOUR OWN WHALE CALL

OBJECTIVE: Students will use balloons to create their own whale calls and will write down each call using symbols to describe it.

BACKGROUND Orca calls are repeated and consistent over time. The noise is made by residual air left in the nasal cavity. Researchers are able to listen to whale vocalizations on a hydrophone and record them for further analysis. They can then use computer programs to play back the sound and visually view the sound using a spectrogram, also called a sonogram.

In this activity, you will use balloons to create echolocation clicks, whistles or calls. You will transcribe the sounds, using notations that are used by killer whale whale researchers.

MATERIALS Balloon for each student

PROCEDURES

1. Pick up a copy of the worksheet. Pick up a balloon.

2. Watch demonstration on how to make the whale sounds with the balloons.

3. Look at worksheet to see how to make notations– separate vertical lines to show distinct short sounds, swooping upward or downward lines to show distinct sounds that change pitch, or a wiggly line to show a continuous line that goes up and down.

4. Practice making whale calls. Once you make what they think would be a good whale call, repeat it. Draw your notations to match. Then switch drawings with a friend and have them attempt to make that sound.

5. You will turn in your activity sheet. I’ll copy the whale calls and then we’ll see if we can match them up.

Discuss possible reasons that whales vocalize (finding food, communicating with other whales, recognizing whales from the same family).

More information on whale calls: Discovery of Sound in the Sea website <http://www.dosits.org/animals/intro.htm>

The Center for Whale Research <http://www.whaleresearch.com/audio_video.html>

If time we will take the Facts and Myths quiz <http://www.dosits.org/factsandmyths/>

Adapted from

