

HALF TAIL: A GULF COAST LEGEND

Student Workbook

Grade 4 - Florida Standards Aligned

Name: _____ **Class:** _____

Teacher: _____ **Date Started:** _____

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MY LEARNING GOALS

By the end of this unit, I will be able to:

Reading & Language:

- Find details in the story to answer questions (ELA.4.R.1.1)
- Tell what the main idea is in each chapter (ELA.4.R.1.2)
- Tell the story in my own words (ELA.4.R.3.2)
- Use ocean animal words correctly (ELA.4.V.1.1)

Science:

- Explain how ocean animals help each other (SC.4.L.16.3)
- Tell how animals adapt to their environment (SC.4.L.16.2)
- Understand how weather affects ocean animals (SC.4.E.6.4)

Math:

- Collect information and make simple graphs (MA.4.DP.1.1)
- Count and organize information about animals

Social Studies:

- Use maps to show where animals live (SS.4.G.1.1)
- Understand how people can help their community (SS.4.C.2.1)

My Personal Goal: What do I want to learn about ocean animals?

OCEAN ANIMAL WORDS

Instructions: As we learn new words, write what they mean and draw a picture.

Word	What it means	My Picture
adaptation		
dolphin		
marine		
habitat		
community		
survival		
environment		
behavior		

Other Ocean Words I Learned:

1. _____ 5. _____
2. _____ 6. _____
3. _____ 7. _____
4. _____ 8. _____

CHARACTER CHART

Instructions: As you meet each character, write about them.

HALF TAIL (Dolphin)

What does Half Tail look like?

What is Half Tail like? (personality)

What makes Half Tail special?

SHELLY (Sea Turtle)

What does Shelly look like?

What is Shelly like?

How does Shelly help others?

FRED (Pelican)

What does Fred look like?

What is Fred like?

How does Fred help others?

PETE

What does Pete look like?

What is Pete like?

How does Pete help others?

LESSON 1: MEETING HALF TAIL

Before Reading: Special Animals

Think about it: What makes animals special?

1. Draw three animals that have something special about them:

Animal 1: _____

What's special: _____

[Large space for drawing]

Animal 2: _____

What's special: _____

[Large space for drawing]

Animal 3: _____

What's special: _____

[Large space for drawing]

2. Guess about Half Tail: What do you think "Half Tail" means?

3. My experience: Tell about a time when you felt different from others.

Reading: About Half Tail

Instructions: As you read Chapters 1-2, collect information about Half Tail.

Finding Details in the Story:

Look for parts of the story that tell us about Half Tail.

What Half Tail looks like: Write the exact words from the story:

" _____ "

Page: _____

How Half Tail acts: Write the exact words from the story:

" _____ "

Page: _____

What makes Half Tail different: Write the exact words from the story:

" _____ "

Page: _____

How other animals treat Half Tail: Write the exact words from the story:

" _____ "

Page: _____

Questions I have:

Story Details

Standard: ELA.4.R.1.1 - Refer to details and examples in text

Instructions: Answer each question using details from the story.

1. How is Half Tail different from other dolphins?

My answer:

Story detail: " _____ "

Page: _____

2. How does Half Tail feel about being different?

My answer:

Story detail: " _____ "

Page: _____

3. What do you think might be hard for Half Tail?

My answer:

Story detail that helps me think this:

" _____ "

Page: _____

4. What do you think Half Tail does well?

My answer:

Story detail that helps me think this:

"

"

Page: _____

My Special Animal

Standard: SC.4.L.16.2 - How environment affects animal characteristics

Instructions: Design an animal that has something special to help it survive.

Draw your animal here:

[Large space for detailed drawing]

My Animal's Information:

Animal Name: _____

Where does it live?

What problem does it face?

What special thing helps it survive?

How does this special thing work?

How is my animal like Half Tail?

Lesson 1 Thinking

What I learned today:

What surprised me:

This reminds me of:

Questions I still have:

1. _____
2. _____

Ocean words I used today: Circle the words you used when talking or writing: dolphin | different | special | ocean | adaptation | marine

How well did I participate today? I shared my ideas and listened to others I mostly participated well I participated a little I need to participate more

Tomorrow I want to:

LESSON 2: HALF TAIL'S FRIENDS

Character Map

Instructions: As you read Chapters 3-5, show how the characters are connected.

Draw lines connecting the characters and write how they know each other:

[Large space for character web diagram with Half Tail in center]

Character Jobs in the Ocean Community:

Character	What animal?	What do they do?	How do they help?
Half Tail	Dolphin		
Shelly			
Fred			
Pete			

How Animals Help Each Other

Standard: SC.4.L.16.3 - Recognize animal behaviors

Instructions: Find examples of how the characters help each other.

Shelly the Sea Turtle: How does Shelly help the group?

Story example: " _____
_____ "

Page: _____

Fred the Pelican: How does Fred help the group?

Story example: " _____
_____ "

Page: _____

Pete: How does Pete help the group?

Story example: " _____
_____ "

Page: _____

Thinking Questions:

1. What would happen if Shelly wasn't there to help?

2. How is this ocean community like your family or school?

3. How do you think Half Tail helps the group?

Ocean Animal Map

Standard: SS.4.G.1.1 - Use geographic tools

Instructions: Make a map showing where Half Tail and his friends live.

Map Key: Use these symbols on your map:  Dolphins |  Sea Turtles |  Pelicans |  Fish
|  Boats | Deep Water | Shallow Water | Dangerous Areas

Draw your map here:

[Very large space for detailed map drawing]

Label these things on your map:

- Where each character lives
- Where they find food
- Safe places
- Places that might be dangerous
- How they move around

Map Questions:

1. Which animals live closest to each other?

2. Where do most animals find food?

3. What dangerous things are on your map?

Counting Ocean Animals

Standard: MA.4.DP.1.1 - Collect and organize data

Use your map to count animals in different areas:

Ocean Area	Number of Animals	Types of Animals
Deep Water		
Shallow Water		
Near the Shore		
Around Rocks		

Make a simple bar graph of your animal counts:

Title: Animals in Different Ocean Areas

[Large grid space for bar graph]

Graph Questions:

1. Which area has the most animals?

2. Which area has the fewest animals?

3. Why do you think animals like certain areas better?

Simple Math:

1. If you counted 6 dolphins and 4 sea turtles, how many animals is that total? _____

2. If 3 more pelicans join Fred, how many pelicans would there be? _____

3. If Half Tail's group has 8 animals and they meet 5 more, how many total? _____

Lesson 2 Thinking

The most important thing I learned about ocean animal communities:

How the characters depend on each other:

How this is like human communities:

New words I learned:

My favorite character so far and why:

Questions for tomorrow:

LESSON 3: HOW ANIMALS SURVIVE

Animals Helping Themselves

Standard: SC.4.L.16.2 - How environment affects animals

Instructions: Find examples of how animals adapt to survive.

Half Tail's Adaptations:

Problem	How Half Tail solves it	How this helps him
Swimming with half a tail		
Talking to other dolphins		
Finding food		
Staying safe		

Other Animal Adaptations:

Shelly (Sea Turtle):

Problem: _____

Solution: _____

How it helps: _____

Fred (Pelican):

Problem: _____

Solution: _____

How it helps: _____

Compare Animals:

How is Half Tail's way of surviving like other animals?

How is Half Tail's way of surviving different from other animals?

Writing About Half Tail

Standard: ELA.4.W.1.1 - Write opinion pieces with reasons

Writing Prompt: Write about how Half Tail turns his problem into something good. Use at least one example from the story.

Planning:

My opinion: Half Tail turns his problem into something good by...

Reason 1:

July 1961

Conclusion

For more information, contact the author at jeffrey.schultz@colorado.edu.

Write your complete answer:

Check your work: I wrote my opinion clearly I gave at least one example from the story I explained my reasons I wrote a conclusion

Problem and Solution Chart

Instructions: Think about how problems can become good things.

Half Tail's Experience:

Problem	How he adapted	How it became good
Has half a tail		

My Experience:

My problem	How I handled it	How it made me stronger

Other Examples:

Think of other times when problems became good things:

Example 1: _____

Problem: _____

Good thing: _____

Example 2: _____

Problem: _____

Good thing: _____

Big Idea: What does Half Tail teach us about dealing with problems?

Quick Quiz

Lesson 3 Assessment

1. Name two dangers ocean animals face. (SC.4.L.16.2)

a. _____

b. _____

2. Why shouldn't people feed wild dolphins? (ELA.4.R.1.1)

3. How does Half Tail's difference actually help him? Give one example. (SC.4.L.16.2)

4. What does "adaptation" mean? (ELA.4.V.1.1)

5. What lesson does Half Tail teach about being different? (ELA.4.R.1.2)

Bonus Question:

6. Design something to help solve a problem in your classroom. Draw and explain it.

Problem: _____

My solution: _____

[Space for drawing]

How it works: _____

Lesson 3 Thinking

Today I learned that adaptation means:

The most important lesson from Half Tail:

How I can use this in my own life:

Ocean words I used correctly today: adaptation survival environment behavior marine

My work today:

My detail finding was: _____

My writing had good examples: _____

I participated in discussions: _____

Goal for tomorrow:

LESSON 4: WEATHER & OCEAN ANIMALS

How Animals Know About Weather

Standard: SC.4.E.6.4 - Basic differences between climate and weather

Instructions: Learn how animals can tell when weather will change.

Animal Weather Signs:

Animal Behavior	What Weather It Might Mean
Dolphins jumping a lot	
Birds flying very low	
Fish staying deep in water	
Sea turtles hiding	

From the story: How do ocean animals "read" the weather?

Find examples from Half Tail's story:

Example 1: _____

"

Page: _____

This might mean: _____

Example 2: _____

"

Page: _____

This might mean: _____

Think About It:

Why do ocean animals need to know about weather?

How do you know when weather is changing?

My Weather Chart

Standard: MA.4.DP.1.1 - Collect and organize data

Instructions: Keep track of weather for 3 days and think about how it affects ocean animals.

Day 1: Date: _____

Today's Weather:

Temperature: Hot Warm Cool Cold

Sky: Sunny Partly Cloudy Mostly Cloudy Stormy

Wind: No Wind Little Wind Windy Very Windy

Rain: No Rain A Little Rain A Lot of Rain

What I Think Ocean Animals Will Do Today:

Dolphins: _____

Sea Turtles: _____

Pelicans: _____

What I Actually Saw or Heard About:

Day 2: Date: _____

Today's Weather:

Temperature: Hot Warm Cool Cold

Sky: Sunny Partly Cloudy Mostly Cloudy Stormy

Wind: No Wind Little Wind Windy Very Windy

Rain: No Rain A Little Rain A Lot of Rain

What I Think Ocean Animals Will Do Today:

What I Actually Saw or Heard About:

Day 3: Date: _____

Today's Weather:

Temperature: Hot Warm Cool Cold

Sky: Sunny Partly Cloudy Mostly Cloudy Stormy

Wind: No Wind Little Wind Windy Very Windy

Rain: No Rain A Little Rain A Lot of Rain

What I Think Ocean Animals Will Do Today:

What I Actually Saw or Heard About:

Animal Weather Behaviors

Look at your 3 days of weather. What patterns do you see?

Weather Patterns:

Warmest Day: Day _____ Coolest Day: Day _____

Sunniest Day: Day _____ Windiest Day: Day _____

How Good Were My Predictions?

My predictions were usually right My predictions were sometimes right My predictions were usually wrong

What I Noticed:

When weather was nice, I think ocean animals: _____

When weather was bad, I think ocean animals: _____

Seasonal Thinking:

What do you think ocean animals do in different seasons?

Summer: _____

Winter: _____

Spring: _____

Fall: _____

Making Graphs

Standard: MA.4.DP.1.1 - Create graphs to display data

Temperature Graph:

If you recorded temperatures, make a simple graph:

[Large grid space for line graph]

Weather Type Count:

Count how many days had each type of weather:

Weather Type Number of Days

Sunny

Cloudy

Rainy

Windy

Make a bar graph:

[Large grid space for bar graph]

Simple Math Problems:

1. If dolphins swim 20 miles on sunny days but only 10 miles on stormy days, how much farther do they swim on sunny days?

Answer: _____

2. If pelicans see 15 fish on clear days but only 8 fish on cloudy days, what's the difference?

Answer: _____

3. If it was sunny 2 days out of 3, how many days were not sunny?

Answer: _____

Lesson 4 Thinking

The most interesting thing about weather and ocean animals:

How weather affects ocean animals:

How this connects to Half Tail's story:

Math skills I used today: Collecting information Making graphs Counting Simple math problems

How good were my weather predictions? Very good Pretty good Not very good

What I would do differently next time:

Questions I still have:

LESSON 5: WORKING TOGETHER

How Animals Talk

Standard: ELA.4.SL.1.1 - Participate in collaborative discussions

Instructions: Find different ways ocean animals communicate.

Dolphin Communication:

Type of Communication **Example from story** **Why they use it**

Sounds

Touch

Body movements

Swimming patterns

Story Examples:

Find parts of the story that show how Half Tail communicates:

Example 1: _____

Page: _____

This shows: _____

Example 2: _____

Page: _____

This shows: _____

Other Animal Communication:

Shelly (Sea Turtle): How does Shelly communicate?

Fred (Pelican): How does Fred communicate?

Compare to People:

How is ocean animal communication like human communication?

How is it different?

Helping Each Other

Standard: SC.4.L.16.3 - Recognize how animals help each other

Instructions: Show how the characters help each other.

Draw a picture showing how the characters help each other. Draw lines between characters and write how they help.

[Very large space for detailed diagram]

Helping Examples:

How Shelly helps others:

How Fred helps others:

How Pete helps others:

How Half Tail helps others:

Big Questions:

1. Why do ocean animals need to help each other?

2. What would happen if they didn't help each other?

3. How does Half Tail's group help him feel good about being different?

My Communication Game

Standard: ELA.4.SL.2.1 - Create and deliver presentations

Instructions: Work with a partner to create signals that communicate without talking.

My Partner: _____

Our Communication Signals:

Danger Warning: Our signal:

What it means: _____

Found Food: Our signal:

What it means: _____

Come Here: Our signal:

What it means: _____

I'm Happy: Our signal:

What it means: _____

I'm Scared: Our signal:

What it means: _____

Testing Our Signals:

We tried our signals with another pair. How did it work? They understood everything easily They understood most things They understood some things They had trouble understanding

What worked best?

What was hard?

How could we make our signals better?

Sharing My Ideas

Instructions: Plan how you will show your communication signals to the class.

Our Presentation Plan:

How we will start (30 seconds):

How we will get the class involved (1 minute):

How we will end (30 seconds):

What we need: _____

Who does what:

I will: _____

My partner will: _____

We will both: _____

Practice Notes: What do we need to practice?

Lesson 5 Thinking

The most important thing I learned about communication:

How Half Tail's friends help him:

Working with my partner taught me:

Our communication signals worked because:

Problems we had to solve:

Skills I used today: Working together Being creative Solving problems Presenting Listening

This reminds me of real life when:

Questions I'm still thinking about:

LESSON 6: HELPING OCEAN ANIMALS

People and Ocean Animals

Standard: SC.4.E.6.3 - Recognize that humans need resources from Earth

Instructions: Look at how people affect ocean animals in both good and bad ways.

Ways People Hurt Ocean Animals:

How People Hurt Ocean Animals

How It Affects Dolphins

Story Example

Boats

Trash in ocean

Fishing nets

Feeding wild animals

Loud noises

Ways People Help Ocean Animals:

How People Help Ocean Animals

How It Helps

Real Example

Ocean rescue

Making safe areas

Cleaning up trash

Teaching others

Making good laws

Think About It:

Biggest danger to ocean animals: _____

Why: _____

Best way people can help: _____

Why: _____

Story Connection: Find one part of the story that shows people affecting Half Tail's world:

" _____ "

Page: _____

This shows: _____

My Action Plan

Standard: SS.4.C.2.1 - Understand how people help their community

Instructions: Make a plan for how you can help protect ocean animals.

Things I Can Do at Home:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Things I Can Do at School:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Things I Can Do in My Community:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Teaching Others:

I can teach my family:

I can teach my friends:

People I Could Write Letters To: Mayor or city leaders Newspaper Local businesses
Environmental groups Other: _____

My Timeline:

This week I will:

This month I will:

This year I will:

How I'll Know I'm Helping:

My Ocean Promise

Standard: ELA.4.W.1.1 - Write opinion pieces with reasons

Instructions: Write a promise to help protect ocean animals.

My Ocean Promise

Why Ocean Animals Are Important:

Ocean animals are important because _____

My Promise:

I, _____, promise to help ocean animals by

Two Things I Will Do:

Thing 1:

What: _____

When: _____

How I'll know it worked: _____

Thing 2:

What: _____

When: _____

How I'll know it worked: _____

Why These Actions Will Help:

These actions will help ocean animals because _____

How I'll Tell Others:

I will share what I know about helping ocean animals by _____

My Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Decorate Your Promise:

Use the space below to add pictures, colors, or designs to make your promise special:

[Very large space for decorating]

Sharing What I Learned

Instructions: Plan how you will share what you learned about Half Tail and ocean conservation.

My Final Project: (Choose one)

- Make a poster about helping ocean animals
- Write a simple book for younger kids
- Create a presentation for my family
- Make up a play about Half Tail
- Design an ocean animal sanctuary
- Other: _____

My Project Plan:

What I want people to learn:

Who is my audience? Younger students My classmates My family Other kids Other: _____

What I need:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My Timeline:

Week 1: _____

Week 2: _____

When I'll be done: _____

How I'll know my project is good:

What standards my project shows: Writing with reasons (ELA.4.W.1.1) Presenting ideas clearly (ELA.4.SL.2.1) Understanding how animals help each other (SC.4.L.16.3) Knowing how people can help their community (SS.4.C.2.1)

Final Thinking

The most important thing I learned in this whole unit:

How my thinking about ocean animals changed:

Before: I thought _____

Now: I think _____

What Half Tail taught me:

The biggest surprise:

Skills I got better at:

Reading Skills: Finding details in stories Understanding main ideas Using new words

Writing Skills: Writing my opinions Using story examples Organizing my ideas

Science Skills: Understanding how animals adapt Learning about animal communities
Collecting information

Math Skills: Making graphs Counting and organizing Solving simple problems

Working Together Skills: Sharing ideas Listening to others Presenting to the class

How this connects to my life:

Questions I still have:

What I want to learn more about:

How I'll keep helping ocean animals:

Checking My Work

WHAT I CAN DO CHECKLIST

Instructions: Check off each skill when you can do it well.

Reading & Language (ELA Standards)

Finding Details (ELA.4.R.1.1):

- I can find exact words from the story to answer questions
- I can explain what the words mean
- I can use story details when I write

Main Ideas (ELA.4.R.1.2):

- I can tell what each chapter is mostly about
- I can explain how details help the main idea
- I can summarize the story in my own words

Using New Words (ELA.4.V.1.1):

- I can use ocean animal words correctly
- I can explain what new words mean
- I can use new words when I talk and write

Writing Opinions (ELA.4.W.1.1):

- I can write what I think clearly
- I can give reasons for my opinions
- I can use examples from stories

Participating in Discussions (ELA.4.SL.1.1):

- I listen to others respectfully
- I share my ideas clearly
- I ask good questions

Science (SC Standards)

Animal Communities (SC.4.L.16.3):

- I can explain how ocean animals help each other
- I can give examples of animal teamwork
- I understand why animals live in groups

How Animals Adapt (SC.4.L.16.2):

- I can explain what adaptation means
- I can give examples of how animals adapt
- I understand how environment affects animals

Weather and Animals (SC.4.E.6.4):

I can explain how weather affects ocean animals I can tell how animals predict weather I understand seasonal changes

Math (MA Standards)

Collecting Information (MA.4.DP.1.1):

I can gather information carefully I can organize information in charts I can make simple graphs

Using Graphs:

I can make bar graphs and line graphs I can label graphs correctly I can answer questions using graphs

Social Studies (SS Standards)

Using Maps (SS.4.G.1.1):

I can make simple maps I can read maps to find information I can show where animals live on maps

Helping Community (SS.4.C.2.1):

I understand how I can help my community I know ways to help protect the environment I can make plans to help others

My Personal Goals

Goal 1: _____ I did this goal I'm still working on it I need more help

Goal 2: _____ I did this goal I'm still working on it I need more help

Goal 3: _____ I did this goal I'm still working on it I need more help

MY BEST WORK

Instructions: Choose your best work from each lesson and tell why it's good.

Lesson 1: Meeting Half Tail

My best work was: _____

Why it's good: _____

Lesson 2: Half Tail's Friends

My best work was: _____

Why it's good: _____

Lesson 3: How Animals Survive

My best work was: _____

Why it's good: _____

Lesson 4: Weather & Ocean Animals

My best work was: _____

Why it's good: _____

Lesson 5: Working Together

My best work was: _____

Why it's good: _____

Lesson 6: Helping Ocean Animals

My best work was: _____

Why it's good: _____

Overall, my best piece of work in this whole unit was:

Because: _____

Work I'm most proud of:

Because: _____

If I could do something over, it would be:

Because: _____

LOOKING BACK

Instructions: Think about everything you learned and how you grew.

At the beginning, I thought ocean animals were:

Now I know ocean animals are:

The most amazing thing I learned:

How I changed as a learner:

Skills I'm better at now: Reading for details Writing with examples Using new words Understanding science Working with numbers Working with others Sharing ideas Asking questions Solving problems

Half Tail will always remind me that:

Goals for my future learning:

How I'll keep helping ocean animals:

A message to next year's students:

If you get to read about Half Tail, here's what I want you to know:

Thank you note:

I want to thank _____ for helping me learn because

My signature: _____ **Date:** _____

TEACHER ANSWER GUIDE

This section provides sample responses for teachers using this workbook.

Assessment Answer Keys:

Lesson 3 Quiz - Grade 4 Level:

1. **Ocean dangers:** Boats, trash/pollution, fishing nets, oil spills, loud noises
2. **Don't feed dolphins:** Makes them depend on people, changes natural behavior, can make them sick, makes them approach boats (dangerous)
3. **How Half Tail's difference helps:** Shows that being different is okay, makes him special, helps him teach others, gives him a unique identity
4. **Adaptation definition:** When animals change or have special things to help them survive in their environment
5. **Lesson about being different:** Being different can be good, everyone has special abilities, differences make us unique

Discussion Expectations:

- Students should use simple examples from the story
- Accept connections to students' own experiences
- Look for basic understanding of concepts
- Encourage use of new vocabulary

Writing Assessment (4-Point Scale):

- **4:** Clear opinion with good reasons and story examples, well-organized
- **3:** Clear opinion with reasons and some examples
- **2:** Basic opinion with simple reasons
- **1:** Unclear opinion with few details

Differentiation Notes:

- Provide extra support for vocabulary development
- Allow alternative ways to show understanding
- Use visual aids and hands-on activities
- Encourage peer partnerships
- Adjust expectations based on individual needs

This workbook provides comprehensive support for 4th grade students while maintaining age-appropriate expectations and aligning with Florida's standards for grade 4.