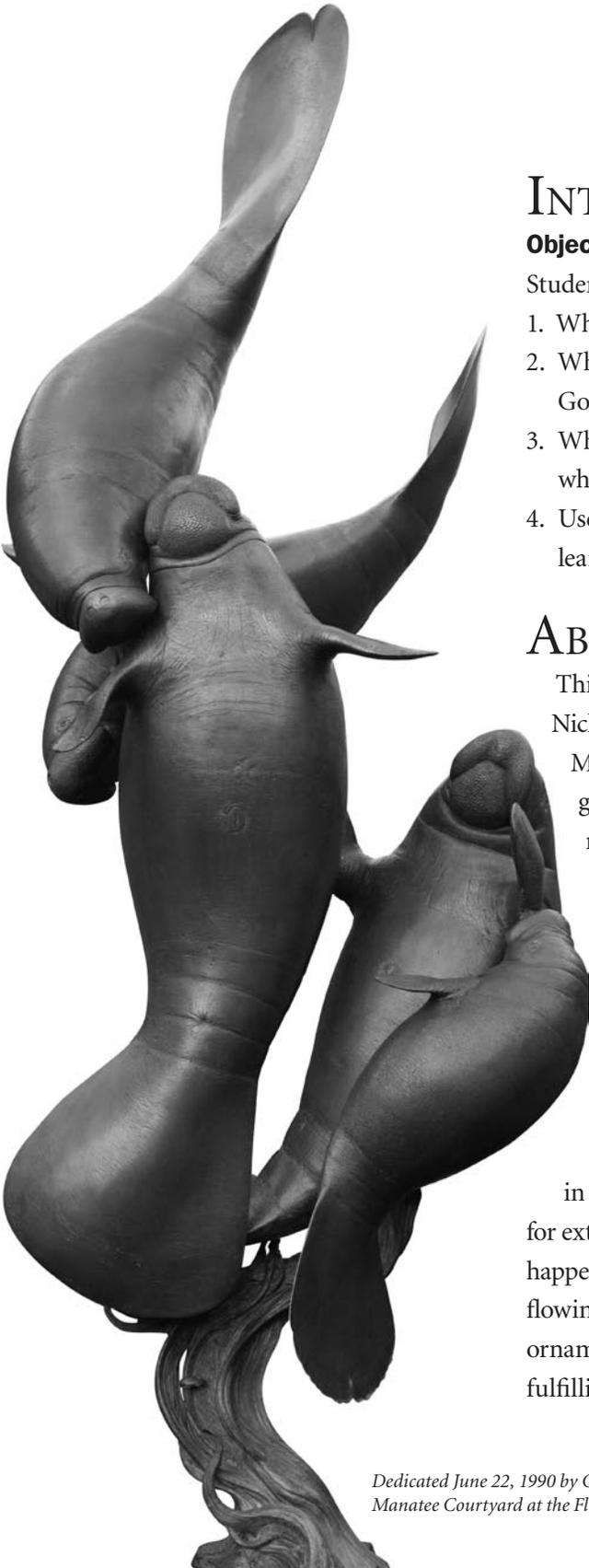


# Manatee Dance

TEACHING POSTER



## INTRODUCTION

### Objectives

Students (Grades 3-5) will learn:

1. Whether *Manatee Dance* is a fountain or a sculpture in a pond
2. Why the manatee was selected as subject matter for artwork at the Governor's Mansion.
3. What other animals in Florida (besides manatees) are endangered, and what is the difference between endangered and extinct?
4. Use KWL (What do I know? What do I want to know? What did I learn?) to connect text to yourself and teach Florida history.

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

This teaching poster features the artwork of Tallahassee artist Hugh Nicholson. In 1990, the artist was selected by Governor and Mrs. Bob Martinez to create the first piece of artwork ever commissioned for the grounds of the Florida Governor's Mansion. *Manatee Dance* was the result. The sculpture was created from bronze — a traditional, durable, material which the artist had never used before at such a large scale. Originally, he planned to make the artwork only four feet high; by the time he completed his design, the artwork measured seven feet tall. Why was there a change in scale? It was important to the First Lady that children could relate to this artwork. For that reason, the artist was asked to design the sculpture so that students about four-feet tall could look up into the faces of the manatee family. This is what the artist expressed about his artwork: "I want to convey a sense of worth in each animal sculpted. I try to do this to the point that its possibility for extinction causes the viewer to feel a personal sense of loss if this should happen." The sculpture is installed within an outdoor fish pond, with water flowing below the sculpture, surrounded by papyrus, water plants and ornamental goldfish called koi. Do you think the commission succeeded in fulfilling the First Lady's request? Why or why not?

*Dedicated June 22, 1990 by Governor and Mrs. Bob Martinez in the Manatee Courtyard at the Florida Governor's Mansion*

# LOOKING AND DISCUSSING

## Discussion Questions

1. Is *Manatee Dance* a sculpture within a pond or a fountain? Define each: elements of both are present. (VA.A.1.2; VA.B.1.2, VA.D.1.2, VA.E.1.2, LA.C.2.2) What animals do you see? How many animals are there? Can you describe their shapes? Are they all the same size? How do you know that this is a family of manatee? Are they life-size?
2. Why is the sculpture the color that it is? Why is it made from metal? Bronze is the chosen medium. How much do you think that it weighs? How much do manatees weigh? Why is the artwork much smaller than actual manatees? (SC.A.2.4, MA.A.3.2; MA.A. 4.2)
3. What is the process an artist uses to make a bronze sculpture? Investigate the steps of “lost wax” method. Why does the artist need a foundry to help him cast the sculpture into bronze? Discuss how this medium requires teamwork. (VA.A.1.2, VA.B.1.2, VA.E.1.2)
4. Of all the animals that could have been featured at the Governor’s Mansion, the manatee was selected. What makes them so special? Do you think that this sculpture has helped the manatees become less endangered? What other animals in Florida are in danger of extinction? (SS.A.6.2, SC.A.1.2;2.2, SC.F.1.2;2.2, SC.G.1.2; 2.2, SS.A.1.2; 5.1; 6.2, VA.B. 1.2, VA.C.1.2 , VA.E.1.2).

## HISTORY OF *MANATEE DANCE*

### How the Artwork Found its Home at the Mansion

Like many Florida citizens, Florida’s First Families share a bond with our state marine mammal and want to help protect this endangered species. In 1990, Governor and Mrs. Martinez were introduced to the artwork of Hugh Nicholson. They thought that he had a special talent for depicting animals and wildlife. They asked him to create a sculpture that would inspire students to help protect the Florida manatee. Since this artwork would be located at the Governor’s Mansion, they decided to ask the Governor’s Mansion Foundation to raise all the necessary private funds. On June 22, 1990, in the newly-designed courtyard located just outside the Florida Room, *Manatee Dance*

was dedicated by the governor and first lady for the school children of Florida. Year after year, *Manatee Dance* continues to touch and inspire the hearts and minds of thousands of school children and visitors, one generation to the next, in person and on-line, whenever they visit the Florida Governor’s Mansion.

### About the Manatee

Since 1975, when the Florida Legislature declared the manatee our “Florida state marine mammal”, citizens have actively campaigned for the protection of this unique subspecies of the West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus latirostris*, order Sirenia.) On April 4, 2005, Lee County, Florida (Pine Island-Estero Bay Manatee Refuge) was designated by the United States Department of Interior Fish and Wildlife Service as a manatee refuge. Watercraft operating in the refuge must not exceed a 25 mph speed limit in order to protect this endangered species from the danger posed by motorboat propellers.

Florida’s manatees inhabit both fresh water and salt water, enabling them to live throughout the many bays, rivers, estuaries, and coastal areas of our state. These mammals are gentle, lumbering herbivores which feed upon the abundant sea grasses and other vegetation within their natural habitats. Most of the day they spend feeding for six to eight hours, traveling, resting, and interacting with other manatees. At maturity, manatees weigh approximately 1,000 pounds and measure 10 feet long. Their basic social unit is a female and her calf, but manatees have been observed congregating in loosely-organized groups. It is not unusual for their playful behavior to resemble a game, dance, or child-like antics like “follow the leader.” At the January 2001 census, the Florida manatee population numbered 3,276. However, in the wake of recent hurricanes and other factors, their numbers have dwindled dramatically. To help this endangered species, log on to: <http://www.floridaconservation.org/psm>.

# AESTHETICS AND SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

## Initial Discussion Points: (VA.B.1.2, VA.C.1.2, V.A.D.1.2, VA.E.1.2)

1. Is *Manatee Dance* a fountain or a sculpture within a pond? Describe the qualities of each.
2. How do the surroundings of the sculpture make it more beautiful?
3. Why do people put sculptures in gardens? Why did the Governor and First Lady choose a manatee (rather than perhaps, a dolphin) to be created for the Governor's Mansion?
4. What are other endangered, Florida animals that currently face extinction?

## Activities:

1. Create a comic book using the ideas presented in *Manatee Dance* (VA.A.1.2.1). Encourage students to pay attention to details of the manatee anatomy (whiskers, navels, flippers, skin, etc.) and compare the manatee to other mammals, including humans.
2. Design a new Florida "Save the Manatee" license plate or decal. Enter student contests such as [http://myfwc.com/manatee/Decals/2006\\_Manatee\\_Winner.htm](http://myfwc.com/manatee/Decals/2006_Manatee_Winner.htm). (VA.A.1.2)
3. Create a diorama entitled: "*Exploration of Florida's Mammals*". Begin by exploring the characteristics that define mammals in general, followed by Florida manatee specifically. Categories to include: **Habitat and Distribution** of various types (Florida, Antillean, West African and Amazonian); **Physical Characteristics** (size, body shape, coloration, pectoral flippers, hind limbs, head, tail); **Senses** (hearing, eyesight, tactile, taste and smell); **Behavior** (daily activity cycle, social behavior); **Birth & Care of Young** (frequency of birth, size at birth, care of young calves); **Diet and Eating Habits** (diet preferences and resources, food intake, methods of feeding, fresh water); **Communication and Movement** (sound production and other forms of activity and communication) (LA.A.1.2; 2.2, MA.A.1.2; 2.2; 4.2, SC.A.1.2; 2.2, SC.B.1.2, SC.C.2.2; SC.F.1.2; 2.2, SC.G.1.2; 2.2, SC.H.1.2; 2.2; 3.2, SS.A.1.2; 5.1; 6.2, FL.A.2.2, FL.B.1.2, FL.C.1.2; 2.2, FL.D.1.2; 2.2)
4. Construct a time line of legislation/practical measures that leaders (including citizens and children) have taken

in Florida to protect the manatee since it became our state marine mammal in 1975. Be sure to include details comparing how many manatee existed in 1975 versus today, describe how our progress can be measured and discuss the on-going challenges we face to protect our endangered manatee. (SS.A.1.2, SS.A.6.2, VA.A.1.2, VA.B.1.2)

5. Write a grade-appropriate work about "*My Pet Manatee*" (fictional short story, prose, poem or haiku). Contrast different species of manatee, and include endangerment issues. Accompany writing with illustrations, drawings, original photographs, music. (LA.A.1.2; 2.2, SC.A.1.2; 2.2; SC.G.1.2; 2.2, SC.H.1.2; 2.2; 3.2, SS.A.1.2; 5.1; 6.2, VA.B.1.2, VA.C.1.2, VA.D.1.2)
6. Based on grade-appropriate reading and research on mammals in general (and manatees specifically) students write report or research paper on three-four "*Fascinating Facts*" about the Florida Manatee. (LA.A.1.2; 2.2, MA.A.1.2; 2.2; 4.2, SC.A.1.2; 2.2, SC.B.1.2, SC.C.2.2; SC.F.1.2; 2.2, SC.G.1.2; 2.2, SC.H.1.2; 2.2; 3.2, SS.A.1.2; 5.1; 6.2, FL.A.2.2, FL.B.1.2, FL.C.1.2; 2.2, FL.D.1.2; 2.2)
7. **Mammal/Manatee Jeopardy**. Students engage in grade appropriate reading and studying facts pertaining to Florida history, physical geography, habitat, facts about mammals, cultural symbolism, facts about the endangered status of the Florida manatee. Students team up and opposing groups compete against each other testing their knowledge of mammal and manatee facts. Winning teammates receive prizes. (SC.A.1.2; 2.2, SC.B.1.2, SC.C.2.2, SC.F.1.2; 2.2, SC.G.1.2; 2.2, SC.H.1.2; 2.2; 3.2, SS.A.1.2; 5.1; 6.2, VA.B.1.2, VA.D.1.2)
8. **Endangered Species Act**. Grade-appropriate introduction to the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973. Before a plant or animal can receive protection under the ESA, it must first be placed on the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants. Students learn about the Act, how it protects animals/plants, what it means to be "endangered," how animals/plants are added to/deleted from the list, and facts about Florida's 111 animals/plants (including the manatee) that the ESA protects. Students write letters of appeal to local legislators expressing support of the endangered manatee and/or other animals/plants. (SS.A.2.2; 5.2; 6.2, SS.A.2.2, SC.B.2.2, SC.D.1.2, SC.H.1.2, SC.C.1.2; 2.2)

# EXTENSIONS AND TEACHER RESOURCES

## Recommended Reading and Listening:

Carol Ann Mathews, music teacher at Kate Sullivan Elementary School (Tallahassee, Florida) has written and composed a musical cd entitled *Friendly Faces, Magical Places*. Awarded the 1998 Silver Honors Award by the Parents' Choice Foundation, this original cd is a musical trip through the state of Florida (see [www.floridagovernorsmansion.com](http://www.floridagovernorsmansion.com) and click to Teacher/Student Resources/ Musical Link for preview). Other books to consider: *S is for Sunshine, A Florida Alphabet* [Written by Carol Crane, Illustrated by Michael Monroe], *Mysterious Manatees* [Text by John E. Reynolds III, Photographs by Karen Glaser] and *The Gardens of Florida* [Written by Steven Brooke and Laura Cerwinske].

## Recommended Holiday Ornament:

*Manatee Dance*, featured as the 2005 Governor's Mansion Foundation Holiday Ornament, is available year-round at [www.floridaornament.com](http://www.floridaornament.com) and in gifts shops in Tallahassee at the Museum of Florida History Shop, Old and New Capitol, The Mary Brogan Museum of Art & Science and My Favorite Things.

## Recommended Web sites:

[www.floridagovernorsmansion.com](http://www.floridagovernorsmansion.com)  
<http://www.floridaconservation.org/psm>  
<http://floridaconservation.org/educator>  
<http://www.panther.state.fl.us>  
<http://wildflorida.org>  
[http://www.fws.gov/endangered/esa-library/pdf/ESA\\_basics.pdf](http://www.fws.gov/endangered/esa-library/pdf/ESA_basics.pdf)  
[Endangered Species Act]  
<http://www.fws.gov/>  
[U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service]  
<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/west-indian-manatee/#west-indian-manatee-group.jpg>



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700 NORTH ADAMS STREET TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32303 • (850) 922-4991 OR (850) 488-4661