

Man briefly "swallowed" by humpback whale

17th February 2025



A packrafter had a lucky escape earlier this week after ending up in the jaws of a whale. Adrian Simancas, 23, was paddling through the icy waters of Patagonia, Chile, when an enormous humpback whale emerged from the deep and engulfed him and his inflatable raft in its mouth. Luckily for Mr Simancas, the esophagus of a humpback can only stretch to a diameter of 40 cm, and is ordinarily the width of a human fist. No sooner had Simancas been gulped up by the humpback than he was spat out into the choppy Southern Ocean. Simancas' father captured the whole horrifying incident on video. He said: "Suddenly, I saw Adrian emerge from the waves, along with what looked like a gigantic animal."

Mr Simancas recounted his terrifying ordeal to journalists back on dry land. He said: "I felt something hit me from behind. All this happened in a second. Something dark blue or white enveloped me, and a slimy texture brushed my face." He continued: "I started to sink, and I just closed my eyes, expecting an impact... I was surrounded by water. I realized that I was in something's mouth and I had been eaten." He added: "I felt like I was in a whirlpool... spinning around." The Guardian newspaper reported: "For a few fleeting moments, Adrian's fate was in the jaws of the 40-ton [mammal]." Adrian said his close encounter would not deter him from future rafting outings.

Sources: [nytimes.com](https://www.nytimes.com) / [theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com) / [cnn.com](https://www.cnn.com)

Writing

Whales are Earth's most wonderful creatures. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

lucky / escape / jaws / icy waters / whale / inflatable raft / human fist / video / waves / terrifying ordeal / dry land / slimy / texture / whirlpool / sink / fate / close encounter

True / False

- 1) The article says a whale had a lucky escape earlier this week. T / F
- 2) Adrian Simancas was traversing icy waters in a kayak. T / F
- 3) The throat of a humpback whale is just over a metre wide. T / F
- 4) Mr Simancas' father caught his son's encounter with the whale on video. T / F
- 5) Adrian Simancas was interviewed by journalists while still in the sea. T / F
- 6) Adrian said he felt something slimy touch his face. T / F
- 7) When he was inside the whale's mouth, he knew he had been eating. T / F
- 8) Adrian will go out to sea in the future. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 1. lucky | a. alarming |
| 2. enormous | b. swallowed |
| 3. emerged | c. brief |
| 4. gulped | d. told |
| 5. horrifying | e. gargantuan |
| 6. recounted | f. destiny |
| 7. slimy | g. appeared |
| 8. fleeting | h. put off |
| 9. fate | i. fortunate |
| 10. deter | j. greasy |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you know about humpback whales?
- b) What do you know about Patagonia?
- c) Would you like to go rafting in the sea?
- d) What do you think of Adrian's ordeal?
- e) Have you ever had a lucky escape?
- f) How would you feel at being in a whale's mouth?
- g) Have you had any scary encounters with animals?
- h) What advice do you have for Adrian?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. A packrafter had a lucky | a. dry land |
| 2. ending up in the jaws | b. the icy waters |
| 3. paddling through | c. moments |
| 4. stretch to a diameter | d. escape earlier this week |
| 5. he was spat out into the choppy | e. texture |
| 6. back on | f. of a whale |
| 7. Something dark blue or white | g. Southern Ocean |
| 8. a slimy | h. deter him |
| 9. For a few fleeting | i. enveloped me |
| 10. his close encounter would not | j. of 40 cm |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What do you think of whales?
- What three adjectives best describe Adrian's ordeal?
- How lucky is Adrian to have survived?
- Do you believe in fate?
- Should we do more to protect whales?
- Which are better – whales or dolphins?
- What questions would you like to ask Adrian about his experience?

Spelling

- emerged from the deep and lugenfed him
- his bleantlafi raft
- the hgsesaupo of a humpback
- Simancas been luegdp up by the humpback
- the whole riihrynofg incident
- looked like a icntggia animal
- recounted his terrifying dlorea
- Something dark blue or white eovnpdlee me
- a ilyms texture
- I felt like I was in a iolwhplro
- For a few nfigltee moments
- his close encounter would not etedr him

Answers – Synonym Match

1. i	2. e	3. g	4. b	5. a
6. d	7. j	8. c	9. f	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Giant Asian Hornets

You think giant Asian hornets are the scariest creatures. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their creatures aren't as scary. Also, tell the others which is the least scary of these (and why): lions, tarantulas or king cobras.

Role B – Lions

You think lions are the scariest creatures. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their creatures aren't as scary. Also, tell the others which is the least scary of these (and why): giant Asian hornets, tarantulas or king cobras.

Role C – Tarantulas

You think tarantulas are the scariest creatures. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their creatures aren't as scary. Also, tell the others which is the least scary of these (and why): lions, giant Asian hornets or king cobras.

Role D – King Cobras

You think king cobras are the scariest creatures. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their creatures aren't as scary. Also, tell the others which is the least scary of these (and why): lions, tarantulas or giant Asian hornets.

Speaking – Scary creatures

Rank these with your partner. Put the worst creatures to have a close encounter with at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------|
| • Humpback whale | • Tarantula |
| • Giant Asian hornet | • King cobra |
| • Lion | • Scorpion |
| • Grizzly bear | • Mosquito |

Answers – True False

1	F	2	F	3	F	4	T	5	F	6	T	7	F	8	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.