

Zack's Search for the Manta Ray



Learn to Read with ALOHA

All of the books in the Hawaiian Cat Tales collection were designed, written, and illustrated by school children, most of whom reside on the Big Island of Hawaii.

Keiki Classroom* teachers, with 50+ years of experience between them, developed the curriculum. These books bring to life aspects of the Hawaiian culture while addressing social and emotional issues. Reluctant readers become excited when identifying with their peers' stories. Each book represents a letter of our alphabet and teaches phonics, parts of speech, homophones, sentence starters for proper grammar and writing, and spelling rules. The intention of the Hawaiian Cat Tales Collection A-Z is to **Learn to Read with ALOHA**. Read with love, joy, and connection.

Keiki

Get ready to go on a treasure hunt! Look for the paw print in each picture. Find the Paw and pause. Reflect on what is happening in the picture. Then, challenge yourself as you read about the adventures of Brotu, Brycen, Bossy Brent, and Bayaku Ban. You will find words that teach you new vocabulary. You will also learn about phonics, parts of speech, homophones, sentence starters for proper grammar and writing, and spelling rules. If you want more information, go to the back of this book and read the words in each section so you can find them in the story. The more you find, the better treasure hunter you are!

*Keiki Classroom is a Division of Creating Keiki Curriculum, 501(C)(3) Non-Profit

Parents

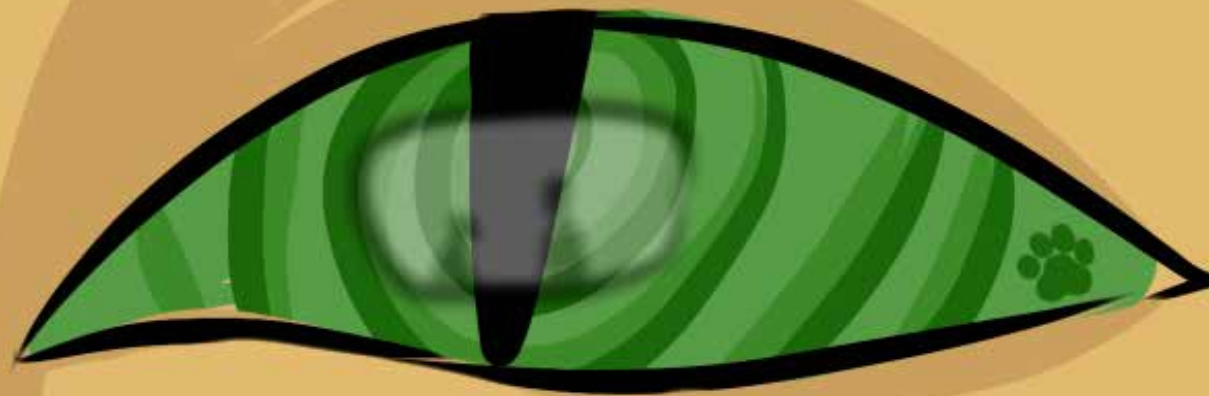
Read the “Teaching Tips” in the back of this book. Each section will guide you so you get the most out of reading with your child. Make connections to the story by asking your child deep-thinking questions such as, “Would you be brave enough to sneak onto Bossy Brent’s boat? How would you react if you saw a little one getting taken out in the surf? What would your three wishes be if you found Byaku Ban’s cave?”

We have also added a few simple ways to improve your child’s reading experience. Be on the lookout for our YouTube channel, Customized Curriculum By Kristen, where experts explain the wisdom of these simple suggestions. Most of all, enjoy the time reading with your child. You bring the fun factor to reading and your child will find joy in reading. Through our work at ***Keiki Classroom***, we hope to instill a lifelong love of reading in your child. Children whose parents read with them behave better in school.

Teachers

There are sections in the back of the book for 6 objectives. You choose the best objective for your students. There is also an enrichment section for lesson plan ideas. Please reach out to us with your feedback as you read these books to your students: **LearningIsFunInKona@Gmail.com**





Zack was an orange, fluffy, long-haired cat who loved to watch screens.

His screen time zapped all his energy and made his eyes gloss over.



One day Zack's mom said, " You are on your screens too much." She asked him to find something fun to do outside. Zack heard about a contest in Hawai'i called Find the Albino Manta Ray. If you find the rare albino manta ray and take his picture, you win one million dollars.

Since the adventure was in the Hawaiian Islands, Zack flew to the Big Island of Hawai'i. When he arrived, he found a keiki boat tour which took him to look for the albino manta ray. He spent days searching. Zack had so much fun that he didn't miss his screen time.



For days and days, Zack searched for the rare albino manta ray. He was determined and persistent. He would not give up.

One day when Zack was swimming next to the tour boat looking for the albino manta ray, he was surprised to see a magnificent mama whale shark. She started swimming towards Zack as if she had something to say. She needed his help. He thought he was on the search for an albino manta ray and never in his wildest dreams did he think he would be helping a mama whale shark.

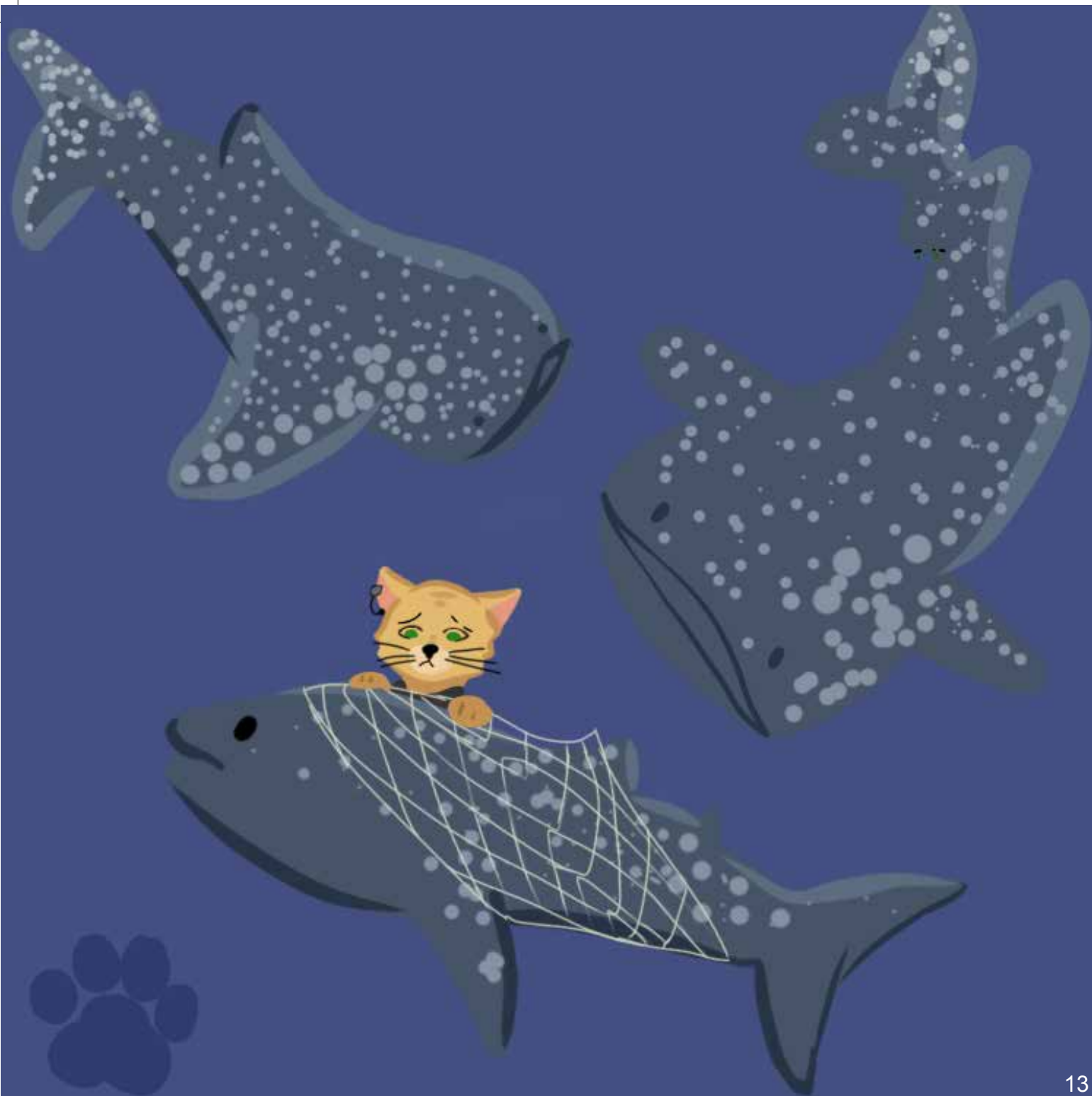
Zack's mind said,
"Swim away,
she is so big
and scary."



He was right! As he swam deeper, he saw her baby shark tangled in a big net! Quickly, Zack zipped down to the baby whale shark and gently untangled her.

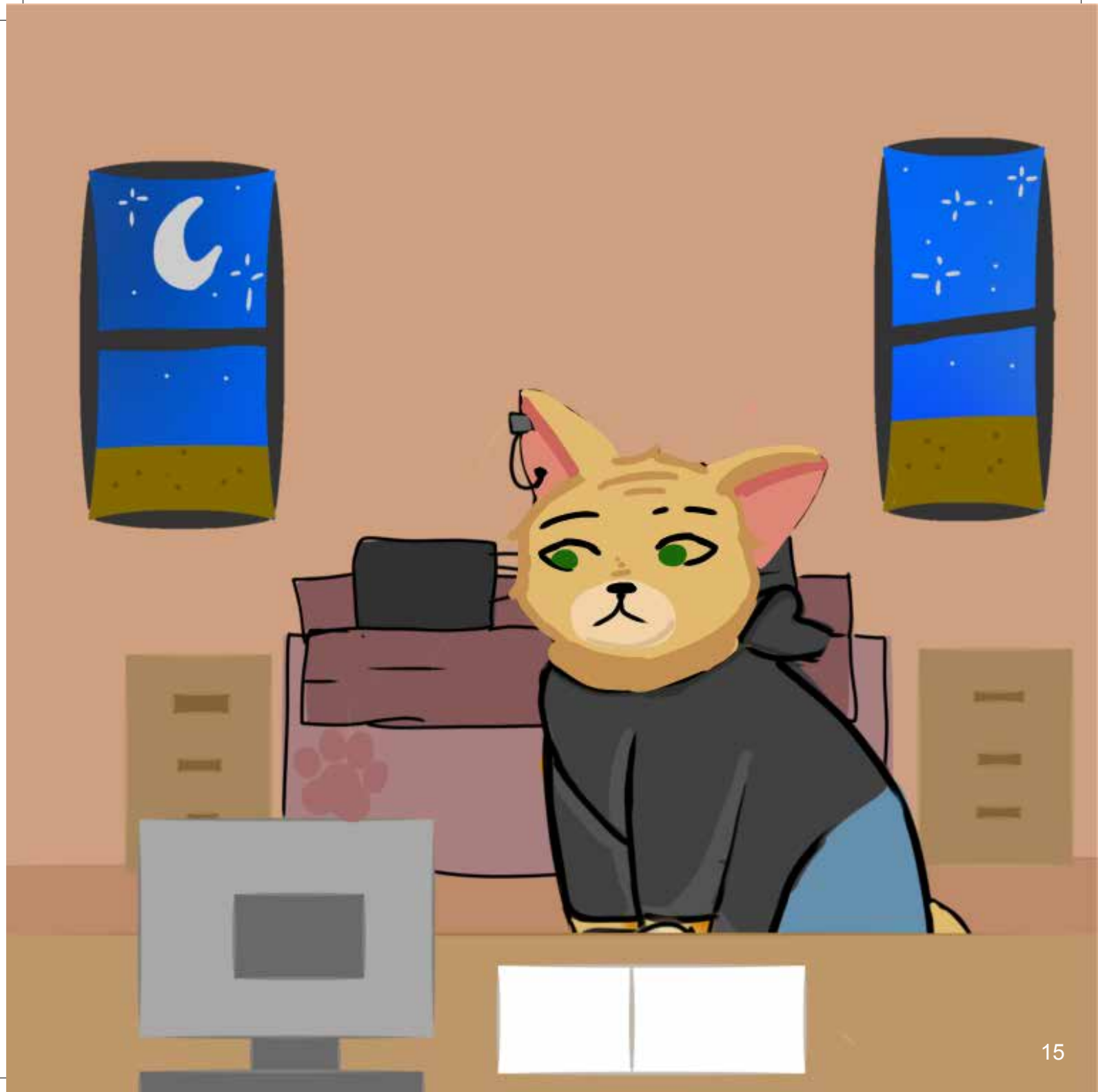


At last, the baby was free. Zack felt proud that he had helped her.



After the baby shark rescue, Zack was ready for a change. He booked himself into a cabin closer to the ocean so he could hear the calming waves of the sea. He was falling in love with Mother Nature more and more.

Still hoping to find the albino manta ray, Zack kept learning more about mantas. He learned they eat plankton. He also learned about the manta's life cycle.

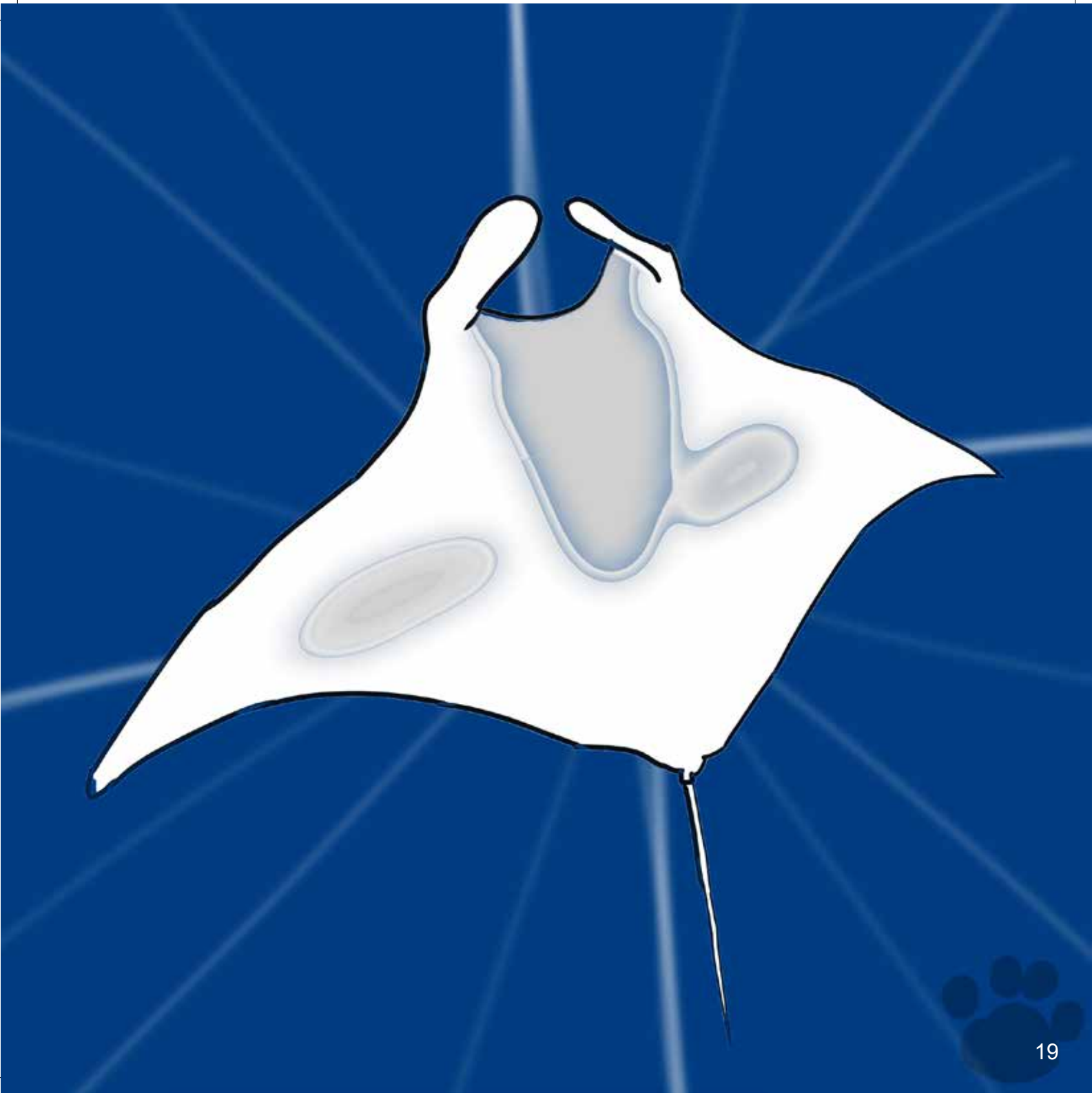




The next day, Zack zinged through a museum that exhibited sea life. His curiosity grew.

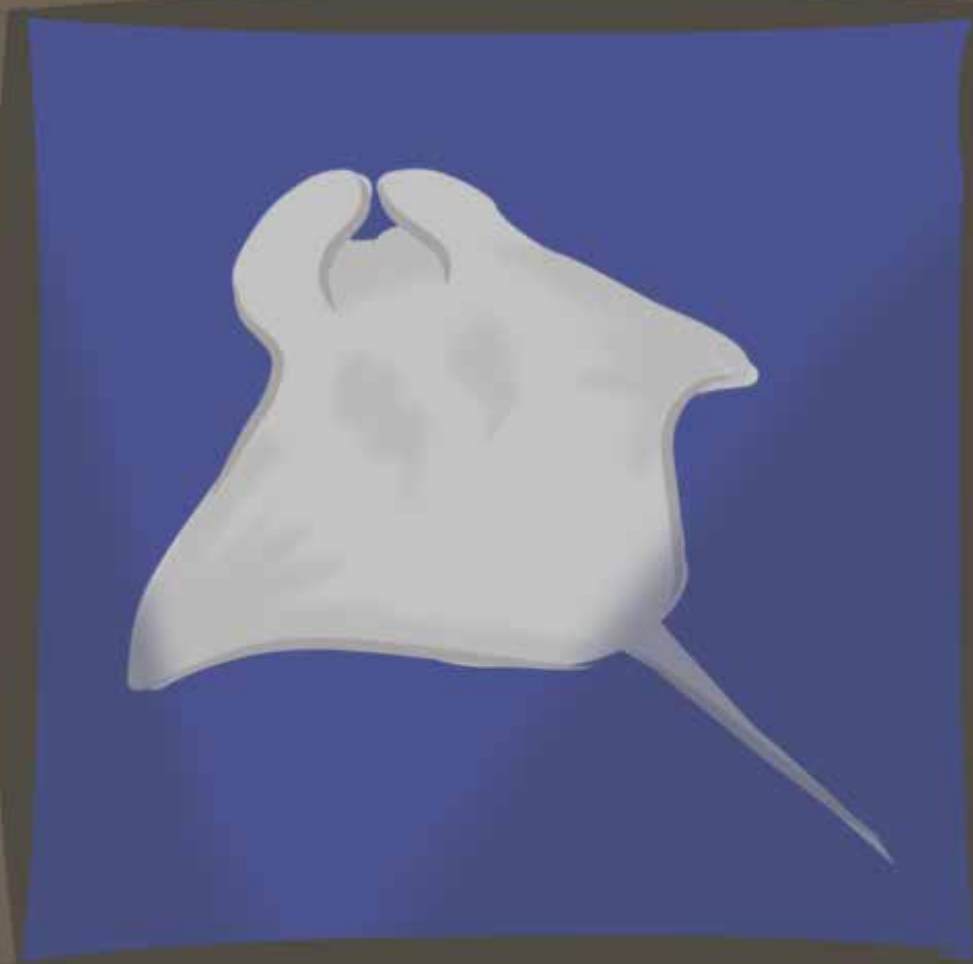
While at the museum, Zack met a kind boat captain named BZ Benda. The captain took out manta ray night tours on the Big Island.

That night, Zack went out on BZ Benda's tour. He couldn't believe it when he saw a big albino manta ray swimming by! He zapped a photo for the contest.



As soon as Zack got back to the cabin, he sent his picture to the contest.

The next morning Zack got a phone call. “Hello Zack, you are the first person to take a photo of the rare albino manta ray! You won the one million dollar prize!”





Zack started jumping up and down with excitement. He was happy that he had gone on this adventure in nature instead of spending his time on screens. He had saved a baby whale shark and found the white albino manta ray.

With his winnings, Zack, opened up his very own marine hospital on the Big Island of Hawai'i. He named it, *Helping the Animals of the Kai.**

Moral: Spend more time in nature and limit your time on the screens.

*Kai - Hawaiian for “ocean”

Parent Tips

A parent, in this context, means anyone in a caregiving role

Tips to decode a word you don't know:

1. Look for the base word. Is there a prefix or suffix? Is it a compound word? Cover up parts of the word with your finger so the student sees the base word.
2. Sound out the word phonetically. Use your phonogram memory and apply blends.
3. Look for context clues. What words surround the unknown word? Make it a game.
4. Pronounce the first syllable.
5. Keep giving clues: the word has 2 syllables, it starts with a "r", it is in the sky when it rains, it is a compound word. Let the child shout out the word, "RAINBOW". Let the child be successful, as it builds self confidence. Watch the light bulb go on, and celebrate them with Aloha.
6. Ask a friend.

Tips to create a successful learning environment:



1. Always have a glass of water nearby. Water is as essential as a pencil. Children think better when hydrated. "When children are dehydrated, they lose concentration and focus," according to Carla Hannaford PhD, author of Smart Moves Why Learning is Not All In Your Head, pages 150-156. Dr. Hannaford began her research in Kailua Kona, on the Big Island, and now resides in Montana.



2. Watch the child's eyes. If they continuously struggle when looking at a word. It might be wise to get their eyes checked by a behavioral ophthalmologist. The eyes have to mature to have the capacity to work together to read. This is called eye teaming. If they are not tracking (tracking means following the words in the sentence from left to right, there may be a visual block). One strategy is to

use Brain Gym movements or any physical activity that crosses the midline of a child's body. In Brain Gym these are called Lazy Eights. See our YouTube channel for a quick video. <https://www.youtube.com/@customizedcurriculumbykris3018>

You need three visual abilities to learn to read: the ability for the eyes to work together (eye teaming), the outer muscles of the eyes to move left to right (tracking), and the inner muscles for the eyes to focus from far-sighted to near-sighted (foveal vision).

If you notice a challenge, another easy teaching tip is to use large print. Use one or two sentences on a page (keeping content relevant and on grade level). Schools and libraries have large print books. Also, the text in online books can be enlarged. Use a bookmark blocker so that the student sees one line at a time.



3. Lighting is critical. Use natural light, not fluorescent lighting. Fluorescent lights flicker rapidly and cause agitation, hyperactivity, and aggression. Poor lighting causes distraction between the eye and brain, leading to reading, writing, and behavioral challenges. Lamps with a warm glow are attractive, even in the day-time because they mimic a camp fire. Everyone loves sitting around a campfire.



4. The room needs good-quality airflow, not AC. Overhead fans are fine.



5. Encourage keiki to be barefoot. In our experience over the years, their working memory, body awareness, balance, calmness, and comfort all are enhanced when they are barefoot. It also saves your carpeting.



6. Kids need an average of 10 hours of sleep per night. If they fall asleep when reading let them sleep. If that is not an option use a brain break where their head is lower than their heart.



7. Limit screen time.

We design our lessons to guide keiki to become whole-brain learners. Learning needs to be a joyful experience. Otherwise, students have difficulty integrating information. Integrated means both sides of the brain are optimally working together. When children are happy, they learn better. Their hearts are open, and they **Learn with Aloha**.

Teacher Tips

by Rex Dubiel Shanahan

Rex has taught on the North Shore of Oahu at Sunset Beach Elementary. She has 37 years, and counting, of experience in Elementary Education.

Teacher Enrichment Extensions for lessons with Book Z

1. Have the student look at the vocabulary section and write their own sentence using one or all of the words. Another activity is to ask them, "Who wants to find the vocabulary in the story and write down the page number and definition?"
2. Homophone charades- after the kids find the homophones in the book and are familiar with them divide the class into two groups for homophone charades. They must spell the word correctly on a whiteboard to win the point. As a follow-up the students can write the homophone and draw a picture in their journal.
3. Make a chart and divide it into two to eight columns. Label each column with a part of speech. Then find the parts of speech in the story and write them in the proper column. Have the students share their findings with the class.
4. Sentence starters - with a partner, begin your own creative sentence with each one of the eight parts of speech. Use comedy or action in your new sentence.
5. Write a paragraph. What you would wish for if you had found Byaku Ban? You need a topic sentence, three supporting detail sentences, and a closing sentence from the story.
6. Create a diorama of a favorite scene from the book.
7. Build a sculpture with newspaper and masking tape of a favorite cat character.
8. Reading comprehension: make stick puppets for each character and retell the story.

Phonics:

The sound for z is a sound students can hold for a long time. It tickles your tongue. Make the sound of a bumblebee - this will help practice the sound of Z.

Story Word examples:

Zack
Lazy
Memorize
breeze
Recognize
Amaized
Prize

Spelling Rules:

Z, NEVER S, spells /z/ at the beginning of a base word (zoo, zero)
S makes the "Z" sound. For example: is, was, scissors,

Homophones:

Pg 7 - "See more of the Sea"

Parts of Speech:

Intonation - words that express feelings
Zapped
Zinged