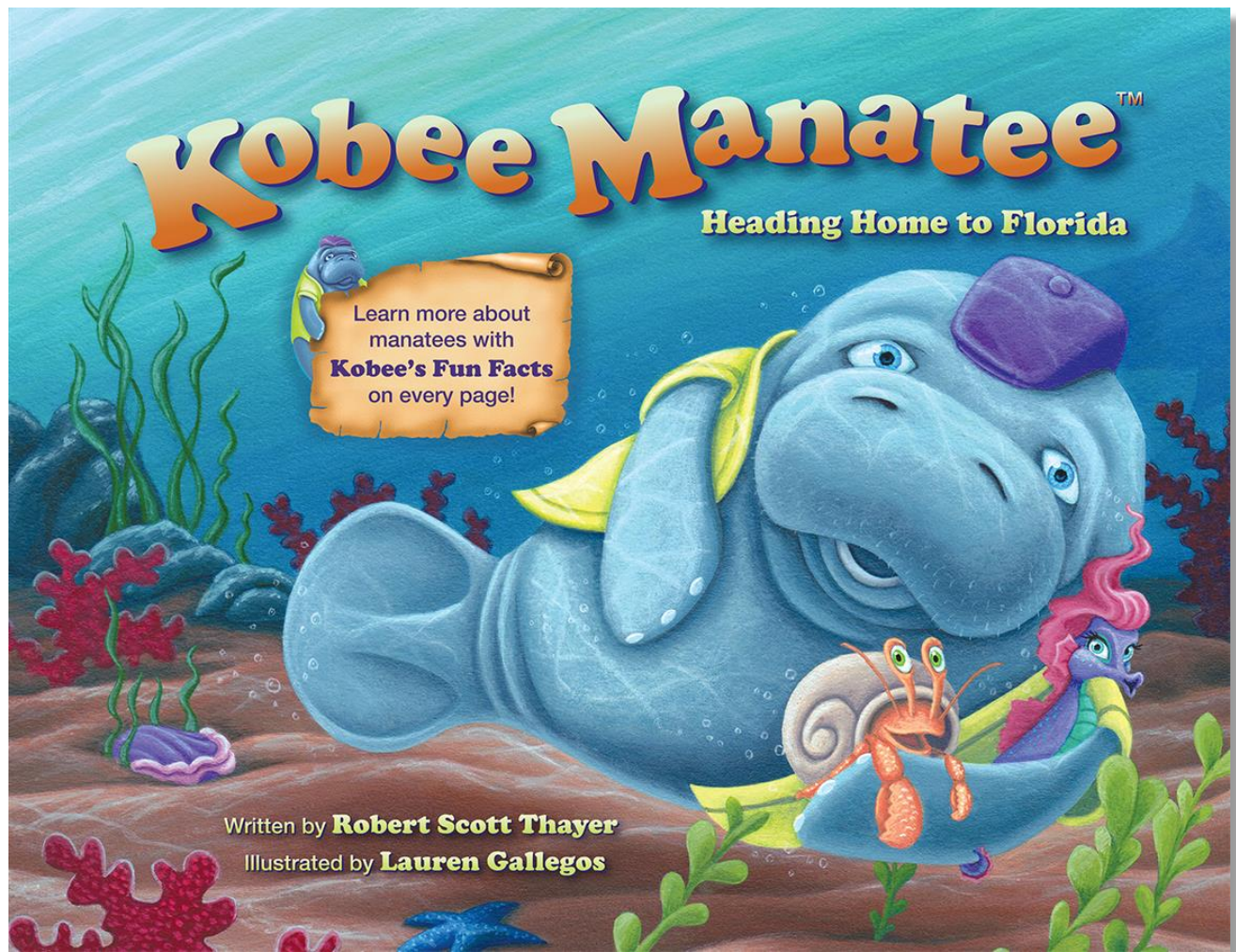


# Kobee Manatee: Heading Home to Florida

A teacher's guide created by Marcie Colleen  
based upon the picture book  
written by Robert Scott Thayer and illustrated by Lauren Gallegos



Published by  
Thompson Mill Press



### **Robert Scott Thayer**

**Author, *Kobee Manatee: Heading Home to Florida***

Author Robert Scott Thayer is also a recording artist who writes and sings in the pop, jazz, and children's genres. Robert has won several International Songwriting Awards. He earned a BBA from Temple University and has also worked as a copywriter. Robert always had a passion for manatees which grew and resulted in him

spending long hours doing manatee research. He is a member of SCBWI (Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators) and the Save the Manatee Club in Maitland, Florida. Robert currently resides in Bucks County, Pennsylvania.



### **Lauren Gallegos**

**Illustrator, *Kobee Manatee: Heading Home to Florida***

Illustrator Lauren Gallegos earned her BFA in Illustration from Cal State Fullerton in 2009 and is a member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI). Lauren has already illustrated several Children's Books and has won several awards including the PubWest Design Silver Award for Illustration in the Children's/Young Adult category. When Lauren isn't illustrating, she loves hiking and enjoys the beauty of nature, as well as exploring places she's never been before. She lives with her husband in Brea, California.

See more of Lauren's work at [www.laurengallegos.com](http://www.laurengallegos.com).

### **Marcie Colleen**

**Curriculum Writer**

This guide was created by Marcie Colleen, a former teacher with a BA in English Education from Oswego State and a MA in Educational Theater from NYU. In addition to creating curriculum guides for children's books, Marcie can often be found writing picture books of her own at home in Brooklyn, NYC.

Visit her at [www.thisismarciecolleen.com](http://www.thisismarciecolleen.com).

## **How to Use This Guide**

This classroom guide for *Kobee Manatee: Heading Home to Florida* is designed for students in kindergarten through third grade. It is assumed that teachers will adapt each activity to fit the needs and abilities of their own students.

It offers activities to help teachers integrate *Kobee Manatee: Heading Home to Florida* into English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies curricula. Art and drama are used as a teaching tool throughout the guide.

All activities were created in conjunction with relevant content standards in ELA, math, science, social studies, art, and drama.

# Table of Contents

## English Language Arts (ELA)

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Reading Comprehension                                    | 4  |
| Kobee's Library  | 5  |
| Writing Activities                                       | 6  |
| The Parts of a Journey Tale: <i>Kobee</i> as mentor text |    |
| Text-pplorers  | 8  |
| Speaking and Listening Activities                        | 9  |
| Choral Reading   |    |
| Mime   |    |
| Drama  | 10 |
| Vocal Style  |    |

## Math

|                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Word Problems                     |    |
| Kobee's Journey Board Game        | 11 |
| A Hop, Skip and a Jump to Florida |    |

## Science 12

|                               |    |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Sea Creature Research Project |    |
| Cold-blooded or Warm-blooded? | 13 |
| A House for Pablo             | 15 |

## Social Studies

|                               |    |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Kobee Mana-TEAM               |    |
| Save the Manatees ACTion Plan | 17 |

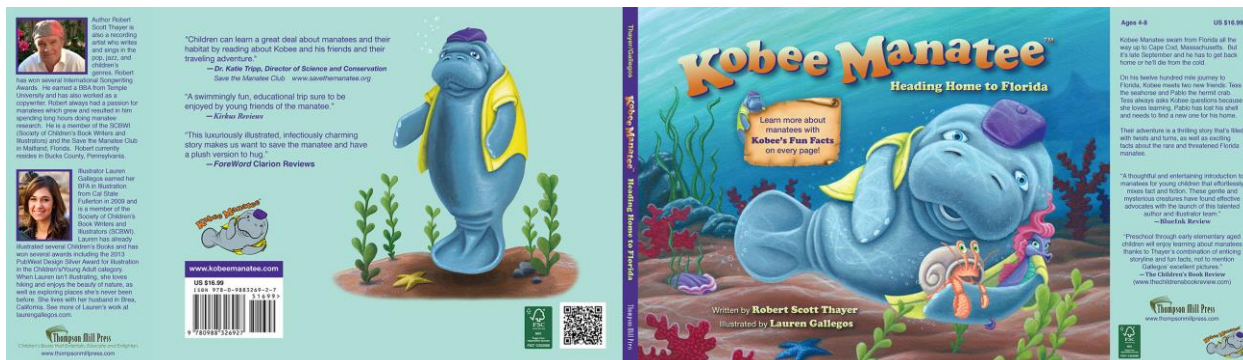


# English Language Arts

## Reading Comprehension

Before reading *Kobee Manatee: Heading Home to Florida*,

Help students identify the basic parts of a picture book: jacket, front cover, back cover, title page, spine, end papers, and jacket flap.



### The Front Cover ~

- Describe what you see. Who are the characters? What are the characters doing?
- Stand up and pretend to be the manatee in the illustration. How does this pose make you feel? Now pose with two other people—one as the seahorse and one as the hermit crab. How does being this make you feel? What kind of relationship do you think these three characters might have?
- Can you guess what the story might be about? What are some clues you can find in the cover illustration?

### The Title Page~

- Describe what you see.
- How are the hermit crab and seahorse traveling?
- How do you think the manatee feels? Why do you think this?

Now read or listen to the book.

Help students summarize in their own words what the book was about.

- Where is Kobee when the story starts? Why does he need to travel to Florida?
- How far does Kobee have to travel?
- Why does Tess decide to join Kobee on his journey?
- What is Pablo the hermit crab's problem?

- Why do you think Kobee tells Pablo to believe in himself?
- Describe the trip on Kobee's back. Is it a smooth ride? Slow?
- Who does Kobee notice is eyeing Pablo? How does Pablo hide from the shark?
- When Pablo gets to South Carolina he decides to stay with Kobee and Tess. Why?
- How does Kobee show he is happy when they get close to Florida? Can you try to squeak like a manatee?
- Who does Kobee save Pablo from the second time? How?
- Why is the boat dangerous for Kobee?
- Describe Blue Spring State Park.

Let's talk about the people who made *Kobee Manatee: Heading Home to Florida*.

- Who is the author?
- Who is the illustrator?
- What kind of work did each person do to make the book?

Now, let's look closely at the illustrations.

- Lauren Gallegos creates some really fun and expressive illustrations of Kobee. In fact, she stays true to the look of a real manatee—right down to his bristly whiskers.
  - Search the factual visual descriptions of manatees in Kobee's Fun Facts and make a list.
  - Can you find each one of these attributes in Gallegos' illustrations? Be sure to look at each spread.
  - Are there any added details about Kobee that are not factual? Why do you think Gallegos added these details?
- Using the illustrations of Kobee along with the Fun Facts list as inspiration, students may draw their own manatee. Be sure to add some fun non-factual details, too, to give the manatees personality.

## **Kobee's Library**

Gather fiction and non-fiction books, newspaper articles, internet clippings, videos and any other form of media about manatees.

Related book suggestions:

*A Manatee Morning* by Jim Arnosky Simon and Schuster, New York, NY (2000)

*Chessie the Meandering Manatee* by Carol A. Amato Barrons's Educational Series, Inc., Hauppauge, NY (1997)

*I'm a Manatee (book and CD)* by John Lithgow Little Simon, New York, NY (2003)

*Manatees: Peaceful Plant Eaters* by Adele Richardson Capstone Press, Mankato, MN (2002)

*Sam the Sea Cow* by Francine Jacobs Walker and Company, New York, NY (1992)



## **Writing Activities**

### **The Parts of a Journey Tale: *Kobee* as mentor text**

Journey tales—such as *The Wizard of Oz*, *Chicken Little* or *Kobee Manatee: Heading Home to Florida*—can be excellent mentor texts for good storytelling. Often they include vibrant characters, a clear plot arc and a compelling destination.

- **Characters:** Conduct character analyses for Kobee, Tess and Pablo. Draw three columns on a board or large piece of paper. Label a column for each character. Help students describe each character and record the descriptions in the column under each name. (*Teacher can provide the words, if students are unable to create descriptions themselves. ie. If the word is "brave" whose column would that word be placed?*)

Next, students need to find evidence within the text to support their description. If evidence is not found for a specific trait, it must be eliminated. Students should record all of their findings:

| Character | Feels | When/Why |
|-----------|-------|----------|
|           |       |          |
|           |       |          |
|           |       |          |

| Character | Trait | Evidence |
|-----------|-------|----------|
|           |       |          |
|           |       |          |
|           |       |          |

- Plot: Journey tales tend to have a very simple plotline with one central conflict or destination. Help students define the plot arc within *Kobee Manatee: Heading Home to Florida* and other journey tales.

| Beginning             | Middle     | End                            |
|-----------------------|------------|--------------------------------|
| I'm Kobee Manatee.... | First      | They lived happily ever after. |
|                       | Then       |                                |
| Enter conflict:       | Next       |                                |
|                       | After that |                                |
|                       | Finally    |                                |



Provide a list of possible journey tale characters and conflicts/destinations. Using the basic structure of a journey tale, create an original journey tale. Students can work either individually or as a class.

Extensions:

Art center ~ Provide a variety of art materials including crayons, pencils, markers, paint, scissors, colored paper, old magazines, and glue for students to illustrate the scenes in their stories.

Drama center ~ Provide puppets, costumes, and props so students can recreate their new fairy tales.

### **Text-pplorers**

Explain to students that although *Kobee Manatee: Heading Home to Florida* is fiction, it includes many nonfiction facts and information in the Kobee Fun Facts footnotes. However, that does not mean that it includes *everything* to be researched and discussed about the topic.

Real explorers are always asking questions and seeking answers.

Re-read *Kobee Manatee: Heading Home to Florida* without the Kobee Fun Facts and this time ask your students to be “text-pplorers”

For example:

- Read the first spread:

*I’m Kobee Manatee. I swam from Florida to Cape Cod, Massachusetts. Manatees rarely travel this far, but I love adventures.*

*It’s chilly in Cape Cod Bay this September day. So I’m heading home to Blue Spring State Park in Florida before winter, or I’ll die from the cold.*

- Ask the class if they have any questions after reading this spread. (How far is it from Cape Cod to Florida? Why will Kobee die from the cold?)
- Continue through the book in this manner, pausing after each spread and asking students to raise any questions they have.
- Make sure to record all questions.
- At the end of the book, review the list of questions and discuss possible answers. Maybe some kids would want to guess or “hypothesize” the answers.

- Now research the answers in the library or on the computer. Assign certain questions to specific students or the entire class may research together as a way to demonstrate good research skills to those who might not be as experienced.
- Compare the information in the students' research with the Kobee Fun Facts. Are some of the information the same? What is different?
- Optional: Explain what a "footnote" is. Create index cards for each question/answer and fix them with tape to the appropriate pages in the book as a reference.



### **Speaking and Listening Activities**

Picture books are written to be read aloud. Here are some other ways to bring *Kobee Manatee: Heading Home to Florida* to life in your classroom and also have fun with speaking and listening skills!

#### **Choral Reading**

The teacher takes the role of Kobee while the students take the roles of Tess and Pablo. Read the book aloud together. Emphasize memorization of the students' parts as well as good vocal expression.

#### **Mime**

While the teacher reads the book aloud, the students can act out the events in the book. Half the students can be Kobee and half the students can be Pablo, Tess and the other sea creatures. Emphasize body motion and facial expressions, as well as listening skills. Switch roles and read the book again.

## Drama

Ask the students if they can think of any other sea creatures that might have wanted to join Kobee and his friends on their journey. Have the students act out their ideas in front of the class. They can either tell the class what creature they're acting or ask the class to guess what actions they are acting out.

Or

Create a TV commercial to encourage people to read *Kobee Manatee: Heading Home to Florida*.

## Vocal Style

In small groups, act out *Kobee Manatee: Heading Home to Florida* as an opera, a western, a "breaking news" story, a thriller, etc. The rest of the class should guess what the "style" is.

## Math

**Word Problems** *For younger students, the use of pictures or props might be needed to figure out word problems.*

- 1) Kobee Manatee must swim 5 miles before he is able to eat some seagrass. Kobee swims 1 mile. How many miles does Kobee still need to swim before he is able to eat some seagrass?

$$5 - 1 = ?$$

- 2) Pablo scurries across the sand looking for a shell. He tries 4 shells but they are too big. He tries 3 more shells, but they are too small. How many shells does Pablo try?

$$4 + 3 = ?$$

- 3) Kobee and his friends have 6 more states to swim before getting to Florida. They swim passed 5 states: Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. How many more states until Florida?

$$6 - 5 = ?$$

- 4) A hungry shark circles the friends 2 times. He then circles 1 more time before swimming off. How many times does the hungry shark circle?

$$2 + 1 = ?$$

- 5) There are 9 manatees in Kobee's family. When he gets to Blue Spring State Park he finds 7 family members right away. How many family members are missing?

$$9 - 7 = ?$$

### **Kobee's Journey Board Game**

Math will never be boring when students use their creativity to transform their favorite board game into a Kobee's Journey math experience!

How?

- Choose a board game that includes a journey to a destination. Candy Land, Life and Sorry make excellent math games.
- Review the rules of the game.
- Write the new "math" instructions that will help players with their adding, subtracting or multiplication skills. Make sure they are simple and easy to understand, but also clear.
- Create your own version in which Kobee and his friends must solve math problems on their way to Florida. Be sure to include obstacles and traps. (ie. fashion the board, playing pieces and cards out of paper/cardboard/etc.
- Label all game pieces or add things to make them look pretty. People don't want to play games that are just plain pieces of paper.
- Place the game in a box or large envelope. If you have small pieces, place them in a bag. Label your box with the name of the game, who made the game, and a picture in the background to decorate.
- Present the game to the class, along with the playing instructions, and enjoy!

### **A Hop, Skip and a Jump to Florida**

This hopscotch activity will help students improve motor skills, balance, and self-regulation behaviors. Additionally, this game will encourage them to learn about math concepts such as number recognition and counting, as well as elements of art including shape and line.

*This game can be created for indoor spaces through simply taping out the boxes on the floor and/or traditionally by drawing them on the pavement outdoors.*

Materials:

- Masking tape (for indoor version)
- Sidewalk chalk, markers, or dark crayons
- Beanbag or object to represent Florida

- One die

Set Up:

Create the hopscotch boxes.

Students can help draw numbers in the squares. If they are not ready to write numbers alone, try lightly drawing the numbers first and then encourage them to trace over them.

How to Play:

1. Place "Florida" in one of the squares.
2. The first student rolls the dice twice and adds the two numbers together to know how many boxes they must hop to. (ie.  $2 + 4 = 6$ , hop six spaces).
3. The students hop their way through, counting as they go.
4. If they land on the box with "Florida," they have reached Blue Spring State Park! If they overshoot or fall short they must start all over again.
5. Play continues until "Florida" is reached by everyone.

*For an extra challenge, change the location of "Florida" each turn.*

## Science

### **Sea Creature Research Project**

There are several sea creatures mentioned in *Kobe Manatee: Heading Home to Florida*.

- Manatee
- Sea Horse
- Hermit Crab
- Sea Turtle
- Shark



However, there are many other sea creatures in the Atlantic Ocean worth researching, including:

- Whales
- Various fish
- Shrimp



- Lobster
- Jellyfish

Assign each student or pairs of students a sea creature that lives in the Atlantic Ocean to research on the Internet.

Information to be gathered must include:

- Type of sea creature
- What it eats
- Where it lives
- Draw a picture of the sea creature
- Write 3 words that describe your sea creature
- Interesting fact #1
- Interesting fact #2
- Interesting fact #3

Once all of the needed research is done, students must create a poster visual with all of the necessary information and present their findings to the class.

OR

Make a book. Students will choose their favorite sea creatures, cut and paste or draw them, and include the facts they have researched.

*Creative Bonus:* If the sea creature you research is not already in *Kobee Manatee: Heading Home to Florida*, add a scene in which Kobee and his friends meet this new sea creature. Is it a friend or a foe? Will it join the journey? Be creative, while staying true to the factual research you have conducted.

*Manatee Bonus:* The Save the Manatee Club's Educator's Guide provides everything and anything you could want to know about manatees. Chock-full of information and activities, this is a wonderful resource for any classroom reading *Kobee Manatee: Heading Home to Florida*.

### **Cold-blooded or Warm-blooded?**

Some animals are warm-blooded or *endothermic*. They generate their own body heat.

Other animals are cold-blooded or *ectothermic*. They get their body heat from outside sources. If it is hot outside, their body temperature rises. If it is cold, their body temperature will match the cold.

A clever video to introduce these concepts can be found at:

<http://www.teachertube.com/video/keeping-warm-654>.

Kobee is warm-blooded, and needs temperatures around seventy degrees Fahrenheit to be comfortable. Other sea creatures are cold-blooded.

Using the list of sea creatures from the above activity, determine which are warm-blooded and which are cold-blooded. How does water temperature affect both warm-blooded and cold-blooded creatures?

### Hands-on Experiment

You will need:

- Three large bowls
- Water
- Thermometer
- Rubber Gloves

Humans are warm-blooded, like Kobee Manatee. Like Kobee, humans feel most comfortable in water that is around 70 degrees. We call that "bath" temperature. Anything hotter or colder than 70 feels uncomfortable.

Fill one of the bowls with water that is 70 degrees and let the students take turns placing their hands within the bowl. How does it feel?

Fill the second bowl, with water that is colder. And fill the third bowl with much warmer water (but not scalding hot for safety purposes).

Have students attempt to place their hands within the second and third bowls. How does it feel? How long can they tolerate the extreme temperatures?

Lead students in a discussion about how humans keep warm or cool in extreme temperatures. Wearing layers can help protect humans from the elements.

Make a list of sea creatures who live in cold waters.

- Seals
- Penguins
- Whales
- Walruses

What do all of these creatures have in common? Fat or blubber. Kobee, unfortunately does not have a layer of fat like the cold water sea creatures.

Have students once again attempt to place their hands within the second and third bowls of water (the hot and the cold), but this time with a rubber glove on. How does it feel? Are you able to better tolerate the temperature? Why do you think?

Knowing what you know about keeping warm in extreme water temperatures, design a new breed of manatee that could live in Cape Cod all year round. What physical changes would be necessary? Share your design with the class.

## **A House for Pablo**

When Kobee and Tess found poor Pablo, he was shell-less.

Hermit crabs live within "found" shells from other animals. And in some cases, they get pretty creative.

A Google image search for "creative hermit crab shells" will turn up some fun photographs of crabs living in broken glass bottles, bottle caps and even some man-made shells from Lego and hand-blown glass.

Research what kinds of shells are best for hermit crabs and design your own using what you learn. Get creative!

*Extra Challenge:* Present all of the class shells to an actual hermit crab and see which one he picks!

## **Social Studies**

### **Kobee Mana-TEAM**

Kobee and his friends work together as a team to safely find their way to the warmer waters of Florida. Have a class discussion and create a list of the many ways the Kobee, Tess and Pablo work as a team.

The following games can help students develop motor skills, good reflexes, hand-eye coordination, problem solving and language skills.

Cooperative games help promote collaborative skills and teach sportsmanship as kids play by helping each other. These games focus on fun and teamwork rather than winning.

### **Cooperative Hoops**

The game cooperative hoops is a twist on the game "musical chairs." Instead of having each player compete for themselves and excluding others to win as in "musical chairs," this version makes winning about cooperation.

Scatter hula hoops around the play area.

Play music and have the kids move around the hoops but not step inside them.

While the music is playing, the kids must not stop moving, but when it stops, they must have at least one foot inside a hula hoop and not touch the ground outside the hoop.

If any child is not in a hoop when the music stops, they must sit out. On each rotation, remove a ring so that the kids have to share hula hoops.

When the game is down to two hoops, the winners are the kids that got the most people inside one hoop. This game teaches kids to cooperate and help each other to win.

### Continuum

This cooperative game also lets even the shyest kids break the ice and get to know one another.

Divide the kids into groups of six to 10 people.

Pick a theme and have the kids arrange themselves in the correct order to create a continuum.

This could be favorite colors arranged in the order of the rainbow, birth month from first to last or dark color shirts to lightest. No team loses in this game, but you can applaud the team that got into the right order the fastest.

### Shark

The game of Shark is another fun game to teach kids the value of cooperation and teamwork.



Outline a large square on the floor.

Make teams of five kids each and have the kids link together by standing in a line with hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them.

When the music is playing, the team leader must guide the others to “swim” in the middle of the square.

When it stops, he must get them outside the square to a marked "island" to escape the "shark."

The leader of the team then goes to the end of the line and the person at the front becomes the new leader and must get the team quickly back into the "water" when the music starts again and to safety when it stops.

This game makes each child responsible for the safety of others and promotes teamwork as the kids work to stay together during this fast game.

### Keep it Up

Use a balloon or a large, light ball to play "Keep it Up."

In this game, divide the kids into two teams across a net or line.

As in volleyball, they must pass the balloon or ball back and forth without letting it touch the ground. However, the rule is that a different team member must hit the ball or balloon to the opposite team each time. Other team members can help their team players by passing to them.

### **Save the Manatees ACTION Plan**

Even kids can have a voice in helping manatees. No one is too young to get involved. Kobee and his friends would appreciate it.

- Write Letters or Send An E-mail to Your School or Local Paper. Tell them about manatees, why you think it is important to protect them, and how people in your school or community can help.
- Work with private organizations, including the Save the Manatee Club and its Adopt-A-Manatee program, to support unreleasable manatees who live in sanctuaries throughout Florida.
  - [www.savethemanatee.org](http://www.savethemanatee.org)
  - [www.defenders.org/florida-manatee/how-you-can-help](http://www.defenders.org/florida-manatee/how-you-can-help)
  - [www.wikihow.com/Help-Protect-Manatees](http://www.wikihow.com/Help-Protect-Manatees)
- Organize a bake sale or craft sale or other fundraiser for the manatees.
- Design posters to hang within the school, raising awareness about saving the manatees.



- Create a short documentary about manatees which encourages other kids to help save them.

In addition, there are always a number of issues affecting manatees and their habitat that involve local, state and federal governments. Visit the Take Action page of the Save the Manatee Club web site to find current information on these issues.

<http://www.savethemanatee.org/taactionkids>

