



Big stories, fewer barriers.



EASIER CLASSICS

MOBY DICK

Teaching and Learning Resources

Summary

Moby Dick is a famous story written by Herman Melville. The story follows Ishmael as he joins a whale hunting ship. The crew on the ship come from different countries around the world and are all looking for the big white whale, called Moby Dick. Moby Dick is a difficult whale to catch and often fights back. It attacks boats, injures crew and even hurts the captains of the hunting ships. Captain Ahab sets out on a mission to hunt Moby Dick. But as the hunt goes on, he puts himself and his crew in a lot of danger.

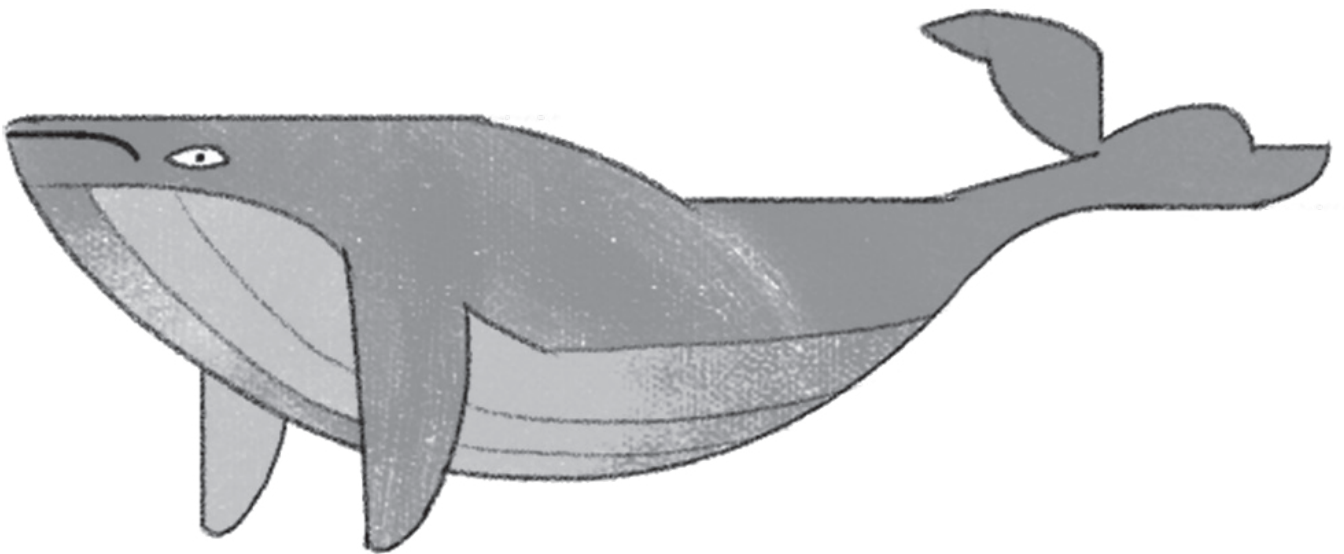
Context

The author, Herman Melville wrote the story of *Moby Dick* after his own time on a whale hunting ship, but it is not a true story. When the story was written, whale hunting happened a lot. Melville had heard of sailors being hurt when hunting and this helped him write his book.

1. Pre-read discussion

Activity 1: Draw, paint or craft a whale. Add labels around the whale about what you know. Or verbally record some facts about whales. You could watch documentaries online to learn more.

Activity 2: Think about how you feel knowing that they are hunting whales. Think about creative ways to express this emotion. You could paint, create a dance or movement piece or create a piece of music expressing your feelings.



Challenge: PSHE: What is whale hunting? Do you think that it was good or bad to hunt and kill whales? Give reasons for your opinion.

2. Questions based on the book cover

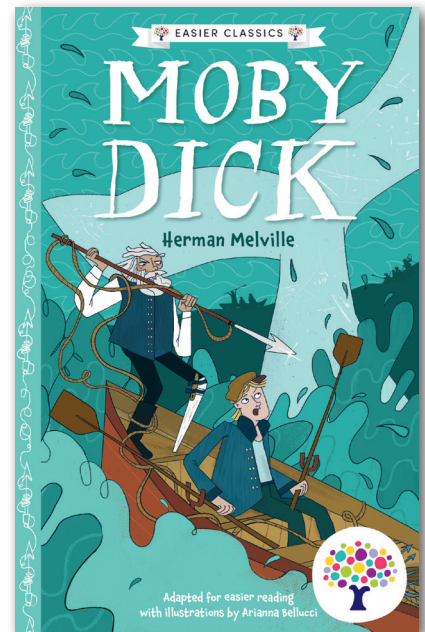
Activity 1: Front Cover Analysis

Label the book cover, looking for:

- Its main features
- Genre clues

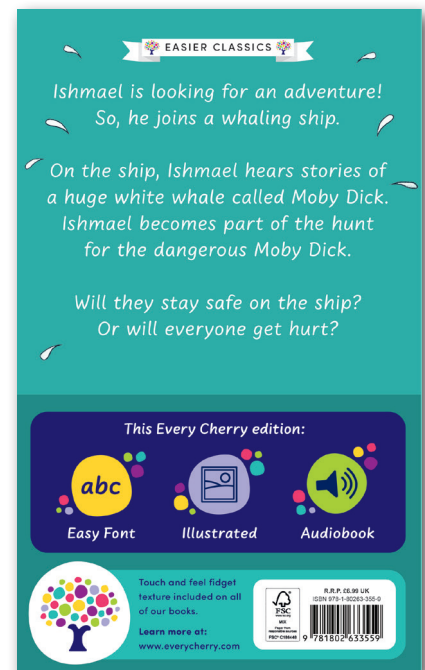
Discussion questions:

- What does the book cover tell us about the book?
- Who do you think Moby Dick is? Discuss that it is the name of the whale.
- Who wrote the book?
- How do you think the two characters on the cover feel? Do they feel the same as each other?



Activity 2: Back Cover Analysis

- What have you learned already about the story?
- What do you think will happen to Ishmael and the Captain? You could have a discussion or draw a picture. You could also provide drawn images with two different outcomes. Which one do the pupils think will happen?
- Do you want to read this story? Why/why not? Have a voting station for children to cast their vote.



Challenge: : Think about your friend. Why are you good friends? What do you like to do together?

Activity options:

Using a grid with each theme at the top, create a tally chart when you come across some text which links to each theme. Which theme have you noticed the most?

Friendship

Ishmael and Queequeg come from different countries, look different and speak different languages, but they are good friends.

Revenge and Obsession

When Captain Ahab was hurt by Moby Dick he decides that he wanted to hurt him too. But, he makes some bad choices and gets his shipmates hurt. He will do anything to hurt the whale and can't stop thinking about it.

Fate

Throughout the story, Captain Ahab tells the ships crew that he knows he will be ok because he has seen into his future. The crew do what the captain says even though they are scared. They all look for signs that make them believe that everything will be ok.

Glossary

Revenge	When someone wants to hurt someone else because that person hurt them.
Obsession	When you cannot stop thinking about something or doing something.
Fate	Things that could happen in the future.
protect	To look after.
shipmates	Sailors who work together on the same ship.



Using the information from the text below create a word bank followed by a character profile about Captain Ahab.

The captain walked towards everyone. He had one leg. He used a wooden stick as his left leg.

'Hunting Moby Dick made me lose my leg! I will find Moby Dick and hurt him too.'

Word bank

Draw a picture

Character description

Challenge: Can you create a character spotlight for Ishmael?



- Who tells the story? Why do you think the author chose to do this?
- Page 14-16 - How do you think Ishmael felt when he first saw Queequeg?
- What did Queequeg do to get himself and Ishmael a job on the ship?
- How do you think Ishmael felt when he heard this:
I asked him if he had met the captain. 'No,' he said. 'People say he got hurt trying to catch a whale!'
- What does Captain Ahab nail to the side of the ship to motivate his crew?
- Why does Captain Ahab want to catch Moby Dick?
- Why did Captain Ahab choose Fedallah to be his new harpoonist?
- Why did they hunt for whales?
- Page 62 - What did the young boy on the other ship tell them about Moby Dick?
- What strange things happened that made the crew scared?
- Ishmael survived to tell the story of Moby Dick. Do you think he would go whale hunting again?

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A young boy **appeared** on the other ship.


'Beware of the white whale!' the boy shouted. 'Those who hunt the white whale are **cursed**!'

The other ship's captain explained that the young boy believed he could see into the future.

The crew of the *Pequod* looked worried.

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appeared - When something is seen that wasn't there before.
cursed - When something bad will happen to someone because of their actions.

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Activities

Activity 1: Create a story map or story mountain for the story- verbally retell the story to a friend.

Activity 2: PSHE: Think of a time when you have been scared. What happened? How did you get past this?

Activity 3: Do you think it was ok that Captain Ahab wanted to hurt Moby Dick?



*This Teaching and Learning Resource has been written by
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