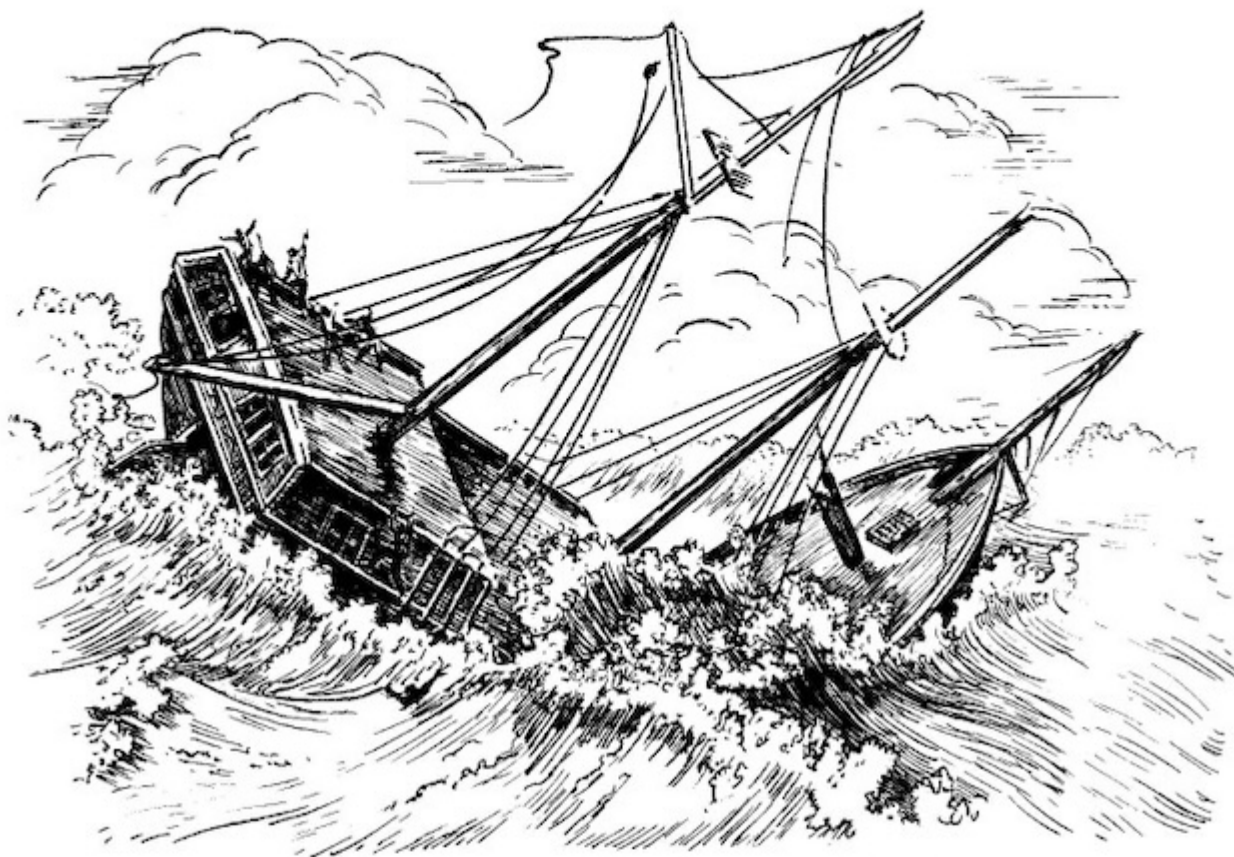


In Search of a Monster



The mysterious "monster" was a great threat to all ships that sailed the seas.

- Preview:**
1. Read the name of the story.
 2. Look at the picture.
 3. Read the sentence under the picture.
 4. Read the first three paragraphs of the story.
 5. Then answer the following question.

You learned from your preview that the mysterious events taking place at sea were happening

- a. in Europe.
- b. in America.
- c. in Europe and America.
- d. all over the world.

Turn to the Comprehension Check on page 10 for the right answer.

Now read the story.

Read to find out about the great monster that puzzled scientists around the world.

In Search of a Monster

The year 1866 was noted for mysterious events. These events were taking place on the high seas. It was a problem for captains, sailors and navy officers from all over the world.

These events became a worry for the governments of two continents. They were Europe and America.

For some time, ships were vanishing at sea. They had been met by an "enormous thing." It was a long object. It was much larger than a whale. Some ships were never heard from again. They just disappeared into the ocean.

Many stories were written about the great "monster" of the deep. The object was the talk of everyone on many continents. Everyone had their own opinion about the mysterious monster. It was a threat to all ships that sailed the seas. This was no ordinary sea legend. It was real. Some people called the monster "Moby Dick."

The great creature became a puzzle to scientists around the world. This was no ordinary object to be taken lightly.

Ships were met at sea by the creature. Large ships were being struck by the object and almost split apart. No one had any answers to the mystery.

In the year 1867, something strange happened. A large ship called the Moravian was hit. Had it not been for the great strength of the ship, it would have gone down. There were 237 people on board. The Moravian was brought in to be looked over by an engineer.

Shortly after, another ship was hit. It was called the Scotia. The ship was put into dry dock when it reached shore.

The Scotia was looked over by an engineer. He was most sur-

prised by what he found. He noted that something out of the ordinary and of great strength had left a strange mark on the ship. These findings led him to believe that the object could go backwards.

People were angry. They wanted the seas to be rid of the monster. They wanted an end to the mystery.

One day Professor Aronnax, of the Paris Museum, visited the United States. He was an expert in several fields. He read and re-read all the papers and news of the monster. He had no answers. The mystery puzzled him deeply.

Professor Aronnax had two opinions. The first one was that it was an enormous monster of great strength. His second opinion was that it was some sort of ship with enormous power.

The last idea brought many questions to his mind. Who could own such a machine? How could it be such a kept secret? Did some government own it? And for what reason? There were so many questions the professor could not answer.

When Professor Aronnax came to New York, people questioned him. He had written a book called "Mysteries of the Great Submarine Grounds." The professor was famous for being an expert in this field.

More and more people asked the professor for his opinion. He gave them this answer.

"The ocean deep is not known to us. We do not know of all the creatures that live there. I can only say that there must be a living creature in the sea that is at the bottom of this. It could be as long as sixty feet. With all its power and strength, the creature is doing much harm in our waters."

The professor's opinion was talked about widely. Because of his knowledge, his opinion was respected by many people.

The United States made plans to send out a large ship to find the creature. It was called the Abraham Lincoln. The Abraham Lincoln had been carefully picked for the voyage. It was a ship of great speed and great strength. The captain of the ship was Commander Farragut.

For two months no one heard of anything bad happening at sea. All was quiet. It was as if the monster knew it was being watched.

The Abraham Lincoln was set for its journey. But it did not know in which direction it should go. The monster could be anywhere in the world.

Three hours before the Abraham Lincoln was set to sail, Professor Aronnax received a letter. It was worded as follows:

Sir:

Will you join the Abraham Lincoln in our search for the great creature? The government of the United States will be happy to have you on our voyage. A cabin will be ready for you.

Up until he received the letter, Professor Aronnax longed to go home to France. He wanted to see his home, his country and his friends. But after reading the letter, all Professor Aronnax could think about was finding the sea creature. Finding it was to become his biggest wish in life.

So Professor Aronnax, with his trusted servant, Conseil, boarded the Abraham Lincoln. The ship set sail for the high seas. They were now in search of a great monster.

In Search of a Monster

COMPREHENSION CHECK

Choose the best answer.

Preview Answer:

d. all over the world.

1. The mysterious events taking place on the high seas began in the year
 - a. 1688.
 - b. 1751.
 - c. 1866.
 - d. 1966.
2. The vanishing ships were a big worry for
 - a. Europe and Asia.
 - b. Europe and America.
 - c. England and America.
 - d. America and Asia.
3. The great creature spoken of became a puzzle to
 - a. Moby Dick.
 - b. everyone in America.
 - c. everyone in France.
 - d. scientists around the world.
4. A large ship called the Moravian had been 'hit' but it didn't sink because
 - a. of its great strength.
 - b. there were 237 people on board.
 - c. it wasn't in deep water.
 - d. an engineer was on board.
5. Professor Aronnax was a famous writer and an expert in
 - a. the art of French cooking.
 - b. water sports.
 - c. the field of medicine.
 - d. several fields of science.
6. Professor Aronnax was invited to help search for the creature because
 - a. he was tired and needed a vacation.
 - b. he knew exactly where to find the monster.
 - c. he had a great knowledge of the sea.
 - d. Captain Farragut wanted his company.
7. The ship that had been picked to search for the monster was
 - a. the Scotia.
 - b. the Moravian.
 - c. the Abraham Lincoln.
 - d. the George Washington.
8. Commander Farragut
 - a. was the captain of the Abraham Lincoln.
 - b. was the professor's best friend.
 - c. was an engineer.
 - d. was a medical doctor.
9. Another name for this story could be
 - a. "Whale of a Tale."
 - b. "Sailing in America."
 - c. "Captains and Scientists."
 - d. "Hunting for the Unknown."
10. This story is mainly about
 - a. a kind and gentle professor.
 - b. searching for a lost submarine.
 - c. the beginning of a search that will end the mystery of terror on the high seas.
 - d. government secrets.

Check your answers with the key on page 67.

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