

The Old Man and the Sea
Ernest Hemingway



The Blue Marlin

Largest caught by rod and reel: 1,282 pounds

Materials needed:

- A copy of the novel
- This study guide
- A dictionary

Assignments:

- Read the novel
- Complete blank portions of this study guide
 - Define vocabulary
 - Respond to themes
 - Write a personal response

Background:

Author: Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961) was born in Oak Park, IL. As a boy, he began his love for hunting and fishing. One of his first jobs was as an ambulance driver in Italy during WWI. After the war, he continued to live in Europe and experienced the life of an expatriate. One of his most famous novels, *The Sun Also Rises*, is about the "Lost Generation's" experiences following the war. Hemingway hunted bear in Wyoming and lions in Africa. He also lived in Key West, FL and loved deep sea fishing. His experiences there helped him write *The Old Man and The Sea*. This novel was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1953. His life included much strife. He was wounded by shrapnel in WWI, some of which was never able to be removed. He was married four times. One of the main themes in his books is what it means to be a man. He is known for his Code Hero, a man who is stoic and stays strong against sometimes unbeatable odds.

Setting: A small fishing village near Havana, Cuba; the waters of the Gulf of Mexico in the 1940's.

Characters: Santiago, the old man, and Manolin, his young friend. The sea (La Mar) is also an important character in the novel.

Conflicts:

- o An old man vs. the sea
- o Age vs. youth
- o Old man vs. sharks
- o Old man vs. himself (his mind and his hand)
- o The boy vs. his parents

Symbols:

- o Lions: strength
- o Coast of Africa: dreams of Santiago's youth
- o Turtles: strength, stoicism, not giving up
 - o Also for this one is Joe DiMaggio
- o Santiago as a Christ figure
 - o He's a poor fisherman
 - o He's poor
 - o He suffers for three days
 - o The cross imagery at the end

Sections:

The novel is divided into sections here to make your reading easier. These sections are not noted in the book. Your page numbers may vary.

- o Sec. 1 p. 9-28 He was an old man who fished alone. . . . the moon was below the hills.
- o Sec. 2 p. 28-45 Sometimes someone would speak in a boat. . . . The boat began to move slowly off toward the north-west.
- o Sec. 3 p. 45-63 The fish moved steadily. . . . as tight as the gripped claws of an eagle.
- o Sec. 4 p. 64-81 It will uncramp though. . . . putting all his weight onto his right hand, and he was asleep.
- o Sec. 5 p. 81-97 He did not dream of lions. . . . and half lying in the stern he sailed south-west.
- o Sec. 6 p. 97-end He did not need a compass. . . . to the end.

Vocabulary:

Part I: Spanish vocabulary in *The Old Man and the Sea* (defined for you)

salao	unlucky
guano	palm tree
bodega	grocery store/warehouse
brisa	breeze

calambre	cramp
fuegos	games
un espuela de hueso	a spur of the bone
El Campeon	the champion
dorado	golden
galanos	shovel-nosed sharks
San Pedro	Saint Peter
tiburon	Shark
Que va	Oh, no!
agua mala	bad water

Part II: Special words.

Havana	Capital of Cuba
Mosquito Coast	East coast of Nicaragua and Honduras
Virgin de Cobre	The patron saint of Cuba, Virgin of Copper. Hemingway left his Nobel prize at this shrine.
Joe DiMaggio	Played for NY Yankees in the 1940's
Dick Sisler	Played for the Philadelphia Phillies, St. Louis Cardinals and Cincinnati Reds in the 40's and 50's
John J. McGraw	Manager of the NY Giants in 1902-1932
Leo Durocher	Player, later manager of Dodgers in the 1950's
Canary Islands	Islands off the coast of Spain
Catalan	One from the Catalonia region in Spain
Cienfuegos	Town on the southern coast of Cuba
Rigel	Star in the constellation Orion

*Part III: These words are your responsibility to define. Use synonyms whenever possible.

sec. 1

1. skiff
2. gaff
3. benevolent

Sec. 2

4. phosphorescence
5. albacore
6. fathom
7. ineffectually
8. iridescent
9. myriad

Sec. 3

10. bitt
11. sounds (nautical term)
12. gunwale
13. undulation
14. ptomaine

Sec. 4

15. bone spur
16. cross trees
17. mast head
18. sustenance

Sec. 5

19. norther
20. interminable

***Themes:** Show how each of the following themes is shown in the novel. In your response, allude to specific parts of the novel, citing page numbers in parentheses.

1. Stoicism: Stoicism is defined as virtue (strength and moral virtue), endurance, and self-sufficiency. Look "stoicism" up in the dictionary if you need more of a definition. Another way to think of stoicism is that it means not giving up or giving in to pain, to hardship, or other adversity.

2. Compassion and love:

3. The attractiveness of youth:

4. The wisdom of old age:
