

NAME: _____



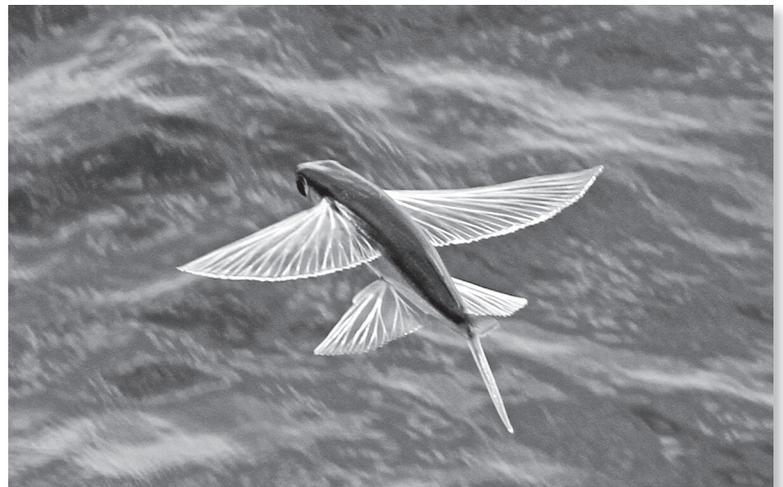
Activity One

Fishing off the Cuban Coast



Besides the marlin, several types of marine life are mentioned in the story. How many types of fish are caught off the coast of Cuba? How much of the fishing is commercial and how much for sport?

Put together a scrapbook combining images of fish that are caught around Cuba and some details of how many are caught each year, by whom (sport anglers, commercial operations, etc.), how much each type of fish is worth and in what countries they are consumed.



Top: Marlin

Right: Flying fish



Activity Two



Fishing in the 40s and 50s

They sat on the Terrace and many of the fishermen made fun of the old man and he was not angry. Others, of the older fishermen, looked at him and were sad. But they did not show it and they spoke politely about the current and the depths they had drifted their lines at and the steady good weather and of what they had seen. The successful fishermen of that day were already in and had butchered their marlin out and carried them laid full length across two planks, with two men staggering at the end of each plank, to the fish house where they waited for the ice truck to carry them to the market in Havana. Those who had caught sharks had taken them to the shark factory on the other side of the cove where they were hoisted on a block and tackle, their livers removed, their fins cut off and their hides skinned out and their flesh cut into strips for salting.

When the wind was in the east a smell came across the harbour from the shark factory; but today there (11) was only the faint edge of the odour because the wind had backed into the north and then dropped off and it was pleasant and sunny on the Terrace.

Ernest Hemingway presents a fairly detailed account of one small fishing village in Cuba in the years preceding the communist takeover of the country. How accurate was it, though?

Research and write a report on the life of a typical fishing village in Cuba in the 1940s.

Ernest Hemingway with a marlin in Havana Harbor, 1934



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Activity Three

Baseball

"Yes. I have yesterday's paper and I will read the baseball." The boy did not know whether yesterday's paper was a fiction too. But the old man brought it out from under the bed.

"Perico gave it to me at the bodega," he explained.

"I'll be back when I have the sardines. I'll keep yours and mine together on ice and we can share them in the morning. When I come back you can tell me about the baseball."

"The Yankees cannot lose."

"But I fear the Indians of Cleveland."

"Have faith in the Yankees my son. Think of the great DiMaggio."

"I fear both the Tigers of Detroit and the Indians of Cleveland."

"Be careful or you will fear even the Reds of Cincinnati and the White Sox of Chicago."

"You study it and tell me when I come back."

Besides fishing, the old man and the boy seem to love nothing so much as professional baseball.

Write a conversation between Santiago and Manolin where they discuss an actual game from the period of the novel.



Joe DiMaggio of the New York Yankees (1936-1942, 1946-1951)"



Activity Four

Hemingway and Cuba

"In 1940 Hemingway, with his new wife Martha, purchased a home outside Havana, Cuba. He would live there for the next twenty years. The Hemingways named the site Finca Vigia, or "lookout farm." They shared their home with dozens of Hemingway's beloved cats, as well as trophies from many successful hunts and fishing expeditions."

(From The Ernest Hemingway Collection (<http://www.ernesthemingwaycollection.com>))

Though he spent time living all over the world, Ernest Hemingway owned a home in Cuba from 1940 to 1960 and was a fixture in Havana well after Castro's takeover.

Write a biography of Hemingway's time in Cuba, focusing on the writing he did from his home there.



Hemingway in La Florida, Havana, Cuba, 1955



Activity Five

Hunter and Hunted

"Fish," he said, "I love you and respect you very much. But I will kill you dead before this day ends."

I wish I could feed the fish, he thought. He is my brother. But I must kill him and keep strong to do it.

...they are not as intelligent as we who kill them; although they are more noble and more able.

I wish I was the fish, he thought, with everything he has against only my will and my intelligence.

Then he added, "Blessed Virgin, pray for the death of this fish. Wonderful though he is."

"I'll kill him though," he said. "In all his greatness and his glory."

"The fish is my friend too," he said aloud. "I have never seen or heard of such a fish. But I must kill him..."

Then he was sorry for the great fish that had nothing to eat and his determination to kill him never relaxed in his sorrow for him. How many people will he feed, he thought. But are they worthy to eat him? No, of course not. There is no one worthy of eating him from the manner of his behaviour and his great dignity.

I do not understand these things, he thought. But it is good that we do not have to try to kill the sun or the moon or the stars. It is enough to live on the sea and kill our true brothers.

Through Santiago's dialogue with himself and with the fish he is trying to kill, we learn that he feels a deep familial bond with the sea, the life in it, and especially with the marlin on the end of his line. Can hunting (and fishing is just a form of hunting) be a spiritual pursuit?

Research and write an essay on the spirituality of hunting. Other than the obvious (food, clothing, etc.) how can the killing of an animal be a positive thing?

An old cave drawing depicting hunting.





Activity Six

The Tale from Below the Waterline

He remembered the time he had hooked one of a pair of marlin. The male fish always let the female fish feed first and the hooked fish, the female, made a wild, panic-stricken, despairing fight that soon exhausted her, and all the time the male had stayed with her, crossing the line and circling with her on the surface. He had stayed so close that the old man was afraid he would cut the line with his tail which was sharp as a scythe and almost of that size and shape. When the old man had gaffed her and clubbed her, holding the rapier bill with its sandpaper edge and dubbing her across the top of her head until her colour turned to a colour almost like the backing of mirrors, and then, with the boy's aid, hoisted her aboard, the male fish had stayed by the side of the boat. Then, while the old man was clearing the lines and preparing the harpoon, (49) the male fish jumped high into the air beside the boat to see where the female was and then went down deep, his lavender wings, that were his pectoral fins, spread wide and all his wide lavender stripes showing. He was beautiful, the old man remembered, and he had stayed.

That was the saddest thing I ever saw with them, the old man thought. The boy was sad too and we begged her pardon and butchered her promptly.

The story tells us much about Santiago's feelings for the fish he is trying to catch. The old man anthropomorphizes the marlin (as well as the moon, stars, and the sea among others).

Imagine the marlin is part of a culture as rich as that of the old man. Write the story of the marlin from its point of view as it is hooked and finally caught.

