

Pandora's Box

(Adapted from Greek mythology)

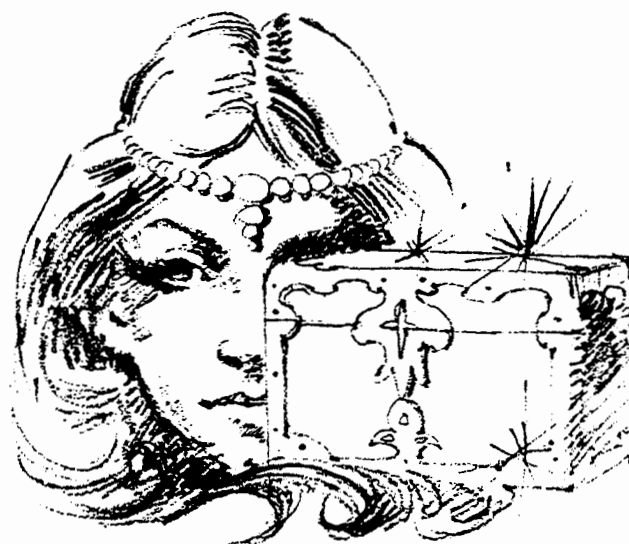
In Greek mythology, the beautiful Pandora was the first woman on earth. Zeus, the head of the gods, ordered his son Hephaetus to create her. Hephaetus was the god of crafts. He had built palaces for each of the gods. He had also made Zeus' famous thunderbolts and wonderful armor for the warrior Achilles. Creating a woman was a big task. Hephaetus molded earth and water into a lovely woman to send to earth.

This woman was named Pandora, meaning "all-gifts." She was given this name because the gods and goddesses gave her many gifts. One gave her beauty. Another gave her knowledge. Still others gave her beautiful clothes. Zeus gave her the most interesting gift of all. It was a small, black box. The box was tightly locked. The other gods warned Pandora never to open Zeus' box.

Many men on earth fell in love with Pandora, but she chose to marry one named Epimetheus. Pandora began to enjoy life and forgot all about the black box. Then one day, when her husband was away, Pandora was feeling bored. She came across the box. It was half hidden in the corner of a room. She looked at it carefully. There did not seem to be anything special about it. She wondered why the gods had told her not to open it.

Finally, Pandora decided to find out what was in the box. She broke the lock and began to pry off the lid. She worked around the edges until the lid was loose. Gently she lifted the lid. Whoosh! She screamed and jumped back.

Out of the box flew all the horrors of the world — sickness, anger, envy, war, and poverty. They were all the things that make life difficult. Pandora realized her mistake and slammed the lid. But she was too late. She tried to catch the horrors, but they swirled through the window and out into the world forever. The only thing lying in the bottom of the box was Hope. It was all that was left to help troubled people during difficult times.



Main Idea

1. The most important thing about this story is
 - a. the beauty of Pandora.
 - b. the opening of the black box.
 - c. Zeus' famous thunderbolt.

Significant Details

2. Who actually created Pandora?
 - a. Hephaetus
 - b. Zeus
 - c. Achilles

Context Clues

3. They *swirled* through the window.
 - a. twisted and turned
 - b. crept and crawled
 - c. blew

Following Through

4. Do you think Hope was the best thing that could have been left for future people? Would something else have been better? Explain.

Moby Dick

(Adapted from Herman Melville's novel)

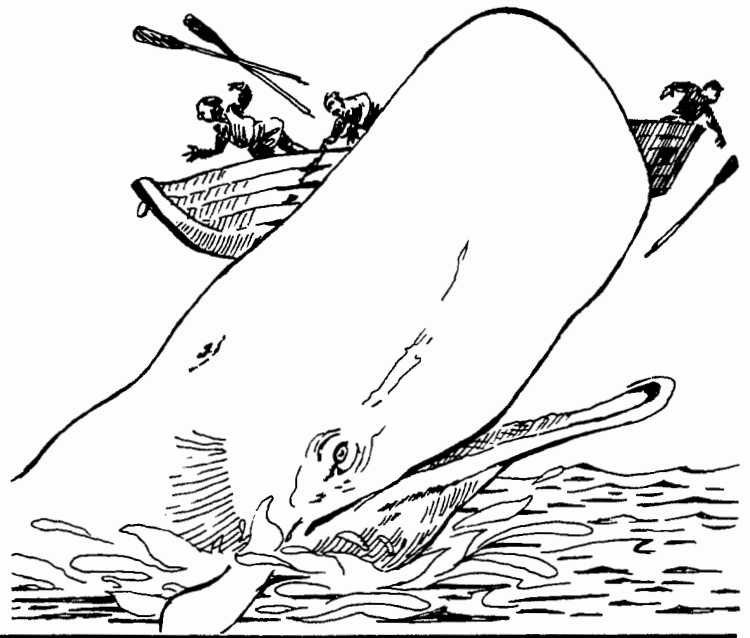
One cold, Christmas morning the ship *Pequod* set sail from Nantucket. The crew, which included several harpooners, had not been told their ship's destination. Nor had the captain appeared. Later, when the ship reached warmer waters, the captain, Ahab, was seen standing on the deck, his peg leg anchored into a hole bored into the floor.

The captain then ordered the crew to assemble. He told them that the sole purpose of the journey was to hunt for the Great White Whale, Moby Dick. The captain had a deep desire for revenge on the whale that had taken his leg. Ahab called on the crew to help him find this vicious beast. The crew accepted the challenge and drank a pledge. In fact, they drank, shouted, and sang for the rest of the night.

The ship continued south and Ahab pored over his charts. He constantly asked passing ships for news of the whale. Then one day, a typhoon struck the ship with terrible force. Thunder and lightning raged and huge waves washed over the deck. In the midst of the storm, the sailors saw a strange glow on the tips of the three masts. The men were frightened by the eerie light, but the captain saw it as a sign of success.

And, shortly after the storm blew over, Ahab saw the whale at last.

For three days, the harpooners drove their weapons into the great animal. Moby Dick just shook them off and grew more and more angry. At last, Ahab, alone in his boat, harpooned the whale. But he got entangled in the rope. The captain, and finally all of the crew, were lost, except for one man, Ishmael, the storyteller, who was left to tell the tale.



Main Idea

1. The story tells about
 - a. a peg leg.
 - b. a search for a whale.
 - c. the many voyages of the *Pequod*.

Significant Details

2. The storyteller of this sea story is
 - a. Ishmael.
 - b. Moby Dick.
 - c. Ahab.

Context Clues

3. Which word in paragraph two means about the same as *getting even*?
 - a. revenge
 - b. vicious
 - c. assemble

Inference

4. Reread the story *St. Elmo's Fire*, page 13. What event in this story describes the phenomenon of St. Elmo's Fire?
 - a. A typhoon struck with terrible force.
 - b. A strange glow of light was seen on the tips of the three masts.
 - c. The harpooners drove their weapons into the whale.

Drawing Conclusions

5. In the end,
 - a. Ahab got his revenge.
 - b. Moby Dick got away.
 - c. only three sailors survived.

Following Through

6. Read the novel *Moby Dick* by Herman Melville. Describe another adventure the crew encountered on the trip.

The Smallest Warrior

(A retold Jataka tale)

Long ago in India there lived a small man who was a very skilled archer. He was probably the best bowman in India, but no one noticed him because he was so small. More than anything the small man wanted to join the king's army and use his archery skills to defend the king. But he thought that because of his small size he had no chance of being chosen by the king.

He decided to look for a large man to be his partner. The two would join the army as a team. The little man went to the city and found a big, strong man digging a ditch. The bowman explained his idea. The large man agreed to join him and divide a soldier's pay equally.

The king liked the large man and his little helper and hired them at once. He sent them off to battle on his biggest war elephant. Things worked well for a while. The king would send the large man out to battle, and the little man would go along to do his shooting. All the praise and rewards were given to the large man

because everyone thought he had done the work.

Then one day during a very fierce battle the large man lost his nerve. He was so afraid that he jumped from the war elephant and ran home. The little man had to go on alone. He charged into the battle, riding his war elephant, and began shooting at the enemy. Eventually, the enemy had enough of the little bowman and retreated. News of the victory was sent quickly to the king. When the small man returned, the king was waiting for him with praise and gifts. He received his greatest honor when the king made him the new chief of the army.



Main Idea

1. The little man in the story was successful because he
 - a. deceived the king.
 - b. used his skills.
 - c. tamed a war elephant.

Significant Details

2. The story takes place in
 - a. India.
 - b. mountains.
 - c. Egypt.
3. Who did the fighting in the story?
 - a. the king
 - b. the little man
 - c. the large man

Context Clues

4. A skilled *archer*
 - a. shoots a gun.
 - b. trains elephants.
 - c. shoots a bow and arrow.

Inference

5. The king will probably make different judgments in the future because he
 - a. needs more bowmen in his army.
 - b. lost the war.
 - c. learned to judge a man by his skill.

Drawing Conclusions

6. Skill and courage do not depend on size and strength. This was proven when
 - a. the king sent the large man to fight.
 - b. the large man ran from the battle.
 - c. the big elephant was no help.