

Set text for OCR GCSE English and English Literature
The Old Man and the Sea
Ernest Hemingway

Author/Context

Ernest Hemingway was born in Oak Park, Illinois, in 1899. His father, Ernest Miller, was a doctor and also an avid hunter and fisherman. Ernest Senior introduced his son to the outdoors and took him to the Michigan woods on summer vacations. Hemingway was educated in the public schools and never continued his education past the high school level. At age 17, after he finished high school, Hemingway took a job as a reporter for the *Kansas City Star*.

Hemingway wanted to enlist in the army, but was rejected due to an eye injury he suffered when he was younger. Despite his rejection, Ernest still wanted to go to war and decided to travel overseas as a Red Cross ambulance driver. Hemingway was wounded in Italy during his duties with the Red Cross, just before he turned 19 years old. He was honored by the Italians for his bravery.

When Hemingway returned to the United States, he spent time in the Michigan woods, recovering from his war wounds, and later ended up in Toronto, where he worked as a reporter for the *Toronto Star*. Hemingway soon became dissatisfied with North American life and moved to Paris as a foreign correspondent for the *Star*. In Paris, he was taken under the wing of fellow Americans Gertrude Stein and Ezra Pound. Under their influence, Hemingway focused his attention on creative writing rather than reporting. It was during his time in France that he wrote his first published collection of short stories, *In Our Time* (1925), and his first novel, *The Sun Also Rises* (1926). He was only 27 when he published the novel and achieved fame.

After his first success in the literary world, Hemingway married and divorced three times. His fourth wife was Mary Welsh. During the 1930s he spent time in Spain and Africa and resided in Key West, Florida, where he gained a reputation as a sportsman and athlete. He fought bulls in Spain, hunted in Africa and fished in Florida. The main character of Santiago in *Old Man and the Sea* was based on someone he encountered during his fishing adventures on the Gulf Stream. While on his boat, he and his friend Carlos Gutierrez (the first skipper of his boat the *Pilar*) encountered a fisherman and a boy being dragged through the sea in a rickety boat, struggling against a big fish. The old man refused any help from Hemingway and his skipper. The story first appeared as an anecdote in an article in *Esquire* called "On the Blue Water," in April 1936.

The tale of the old, courageous fisherman is also said by critics to reflect the author himself. Gary Brenner described Santiago as the

aging author Hemingway and the Marlin as his noble and beautiful published works. Others recognize Hemingway's love of gallantry. Sean O' Faolain is quoted by Carlos Baker as saying that Hemingway trotted the globe "in search of the flame of the spirit in men and beasts." In *Old Man and the Sea*, this flame is a characteristic of both Santiago and the Marlin.

In 1942, Hemingway volunteered himself and his fishing boat for Navy projects off the west coast of Cuba - a suicide mission to destroy U-Boats there for two years. He was also a correspondent on the loyalist side in the Spanish Civil War. In 1944 he went to England, where he worked as a correspondent and went on missions with the RAF (Royal Air Force). After D-Day, he joined the First Army. He suffered several injuries during World War II.

After the War, Hemingway lived in Havana until Fidel Castro's revolution forced him out of the country. *Old Man and the Sea* (1952) was Hemingway's last published work, and he received the Nobel Prize in 1954. After being kicked out of Cuba, he returned to Spain for one last rendezvous at the bullfights. Towards the end of his life, Hemingway suffered a lot of pain - high blood pressure, enlarged liver and faintness, depression and withdrawal. He bought a house in Ketchum, Idaho in 1961 where he planned to finally settle down. Ultimately, he was unable to endure his pain. Ernest Hemingway was driven to suicide on July 2, 1961.

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Plot Summary

In a small fishing village in Cuba, Santiago, an old, weathered fisherman has just gone 84 days without catching a fish. On the 85th day, he is determined to catch a big, impressive fish.

For years, Santiago has been fishing with a young boy named Manolin. Manolin started fishing with the old man when he was only 5 years old. Santiago is like Manolin's second father, and has taught the young boy everything about fishing. Manolin is extremely loyal to Santiago and makes sure that the old man is always safe, fed and healthy. Manolin's parents, however, force the boy to leave Santiago and fish on a more lucrative fishing boat.

Manolin does not want to leave Santiago, but must honor his duty to his parents. On the new boat, Manolin catches several fish within the first few days. Santiago, meanwhile, decides to head out on the Gulf Stream alone. He feels the 85th day will be lucky for him. He sets out on his old, rickety skiff. Alone on the water, Santiago sets up his fishing lines with the utmost precision, a skill that other fishermen lack.

Finally, he feels something heavy tugging at one of his lines. A huge Marlin has found Santiago's bait and this sets off a very long struggle between the two. The Marlin is so huge that it drags Santiago beyond all other boats and people - he can no longer see land from where the fish drags him. The struggle takes its toll on Santiago. His hands become badly cramped and he is cut and bruised from the force of the fish.

Santiago and the Marlin become united out at sea. They are attached to each other physically, and in Santiago's case, emotionally. He respects and loves the Marlin and admires its beauty and greatness. He sees the fish as his brother. Despite this, Santiago has to kill it. He feels guilty killing a brother, but after an intense struggle in which the fish drags the skiff around in circles, Santiago harpoons the very large fish and hangs it on the side of his boat. He feels brave, like his hero Joe DiMaggio, who accomplished great feats despite obstacles, injuries or adversities.

After enjoying a few moments of pride, a pack of sharks detects the blood in the water and follow the trail to Santiago's skiff. Santiago has to fend off each shark that goes after his prized catch. Each shark takes a huge bite out of the Marlin, but the old man fends them off, himself now bruised, but alive. He sails back to shore with the carcass of his Marlin. He is barely able to walk and slowly staggers back to his hut, where he falls into bed.

The next morning, the boy finds his mentor and cries when he looks at Santiago's bruised hands. He promises he will reject his parents' wishes and vows to fish with Santiago again.

Major Characters

Santiago: The hero of the story. He is an old Cuban fisherman who is a perfectionist when it comes to fishing. Despite his precise methods, he has no luck at sea. Santiago wants to be unique: a greater and stranger person than his peers out at sea. He loves baseball and dreams of lions. He is alone, except for the company of Manolin. He is determined to catch one big fish.

Manolin: The young boy who is a disciple of Santiago and who takes care of him. His parents prefer that he work with more successful fishermen, but as he becomes his own man, he chooses to be loyal to Santiago.

Marlin: The Marlin is the big fish that Santiago desperately wants and needs to catch. It is an awesome fish that impresses the old man. Because of the fish's greatness, he becomes like a brother to Santiago

Minor Characters

Manolin's Parents: The parents of the young boy. They want their son to abandon Santiago and fish with fishermen who are more successful and will earn more money. Manolin is torn between his duty to them and his loyalty to the old man.

Local Fishermen: The fishermen in town who either laugh at or pity Santiago. They are not as precise in technique as the old man, but they catch more fish.

Objects/Places

Skiff : The old, rickety boat on which Santiago sails.

Joe DiMaggio: Santiago's idol. A New York Yankee (whose father was a fisherman) who always performed his best, despite injuries and obstacles.

lions: The great creatures on the beaches of Africa about which Santiago dreams. Santiago loves great and majestic animals and considers them as his peers.

sea: Santiago thinks of the sea as a feminine creature because it is temperamental and emotional. Santiago is at one with nature.

sharks: Creatures that attack Santiago, his skiff and the Marlin as they head back towards the shore. They tear up the flesh of the Marlin and take some of the glory of victory away from the old man.

Really Useful Quotes

Quote 1: "Everything about him was old except his eyes and they were the same color as the sea and were cheerful and undefeated." Page 5

Quote 2: "There are many good fishermen and some great ones. But there is only one you." Page 15

Quote 3: "He no longer dreamed of storms, nor of women, nor of great occurrences, nor of great fish, nor fights, nor contests of strength, nor of his wife. He only dreamed of places now and of the lions on the beach. They played like young cats in the dusk and he loved them as he loved the boy." Page 17

Quote 4: "But the old man always thought of her as feminine and as something that gave or withheld great favors, and if she did wild or wicked things it was because she could not help them. The moon affects her as it does a woman, he thought." Page 20/21

Quote 5: "Now is the time to think of only one thing. That which I was born for." Page 28

Quote 6: "I wish I had the boy." Page 34

Quote 7: "He is wonderful and strange and who knows how old he is, he thought. Never have I had such a strong fish nor one who acted so strangely... He cannot know that it is only one man against him, nor that it is an old man. But what a great fish he is and what will he bring in the market if the flesh is good." Page 34

Quote 8: "My choice was to go there and find him beyond all people. Beyond all people in the world. Now we are joined together and have been since noon. And no one to help either of us." Page 36

Quote 9: "Fish, I love you and respect you very much. But I will kill you dead before this day ends." Page 38

Quote 10: "But I must have the confidence and I must be worthy of the great DiMaggio who does all things perfectly even with the pain of the bone spur in his heel." Page 49

Quote 11: "The fish is my friend too. I have never seen or heard of such a fish. But I must kill him. I'm glad we do not have to kill the stars." Page 54

Quote 12: "A man is never lost at sea..." page 65

Quote 13: "You are killing me, fish, the old man thought. But you have a right to. Never have I seen a greater, or more beautiful, or a calmer or more noble thing than you, brother. Come on and kill me. I do not care who kills who." Page 67

Quote 14: "I think the great DiMaggio would be proud of me today." Page 70

Quote 15: "But a man is not made for defeat. A man can be destroyed but not defeated." Page 75

Quote 16: "You did not kill the fish only to keep alive and to sell for food, he thought. You killed him for pride and because you are a fisherman. You loved him when he was alive and you loved him after. If you love him, it is not a sin to kill him. Or is it more?" Page 76

Quote 17: "To hell with luck. I'll bring the luck with me." Page 90

Topic Tracking: Fraternalism

Fraternalism 1: Santiago sees the sea as having human characteristics. His relationship with the sea is as deep as brotherhood.

Fraternalism 2: Santiago and the fish are equal adversaries. They have been tied together - both literally and figuratively. They are both alone, with no one to help them, out in the middle of the Gulf.

Fraternalism 3: Santiago feels guilty about killing the fish. He thinks of the fish as a fellow brother out at sea and has to convince himself to kill a brother.

Fraternalism 4: In its last moments of life, the marlin looks majestic. The old man appreciates the fish's greatness and majesty. Santiago feels sad about killing his brother.

Fraternalism 5: Santiago contemplates why he killed the marlin, whom he loved and respected. This troubles him throughout his struggle and throughout his journey back to land.

Topic Tracking: Paternalism

Paternalism 1: Santiago is a father figure to Manolin. Manolin is very loyal to Santiago, despite his bad luck. He recognizes the old man's knowledge and skill and wishes to learn from him, regardless of his success.

Paternalism 2: Santiago feels sorry for the Marlin and has almost father's sympathy for the fish after it attacked by sharks. He has been through so much with the fish that the sharks' attack on it is like an attack on his own child.

Paternalism 3: Manolin finds Santiago face down on his bed and starts to cry when he sees the old man's hands. He cares for Santiago like a father cares for a young son. Their roles are reversed.

Paternalism 4: The old man has recaptured his role as the boy's tutor and role model. The boy is eager to learn from the old man again. He ignores his biological father's wishes and pledges his loyalty, trust and admiration to Santiago.

Topic Tracking: Pride

Pride 1: Manolin makes sure that Santiago's pride is never wounded. An old man who has been fishing all of his life, and who believes his destiny is to fish, Santiago's pride in his ability and skill as a fisherman is all he has. The boy knows this and tries to protect the old man's pride.

Pride 2: Santiago always thinks of his hero Joe DiMaggio because of his greatness. Santiago would like to believe that he stands out like his hero. The boy points out that Santiago is not necessarily great, but is definitely unique.

Pride 3: One way that Santiago stands out from other fisherman is his attention to detail. He has a thorough method he uses for fishing and though he doesn't have the same success rate as other fishermen, he sticks to methodology.

Pride 4: Santiago takes his boat beyond all the others. He wishes to separate himself from everyone else and be unique.

Pride 5: Santiago relies on his former glory to give himself the self-esteem and feeling of greatness necessary to endure his struggle with the Marlin. As *El Campeon*, Santiago feels that there is no way he can be defeated, despite all the obstacles.

Pride 6: When Santiago and the Marlin head back to shore, the fish hangs towering on the side of the skiff. Santiago is proud of his victory as he looks at his catch.

Pride 7: Santiago's pride is wounded when the sharks tear into his Marlin. It is as if the sharks have wounded him.

Pride 8: Once again, Santiago feels guilty about killing the fish. He wonders if he was motivated by pride or love to kill the fish that he had so much respect for.

**Quiz from www.gradesaver.com
Answers on the web site.**

1: Where does the story take place?

- (a): Puerto Rico
- (b): Canary Islands
- (c): Marshall Island
- (d): Cuba

2: When the novel opens, how many days had it been since Santiago last caught a fish?

- (a): 84
- (b): 48
- (c): 77
- (d): 3

3: Hemingway says everything about Santiago is old except what?

- (a): his mouth
- (b): his hands
- (c): his neck
- (d): his eyes

4: Why does Manolin no longer fish with Santiago?

- (a): he dislikes Santiago
- (b): his parents have told him to fish with others
- (c): Santiago no longer needs him
- (d): Manolin has left for the city

5: Which of the following is not hanging on Santiago's wall?

- (a): picture of Sacred heart of Jesus
- (b): picture of the Virgin of Cobre
- (c): picture of Fidel Castro
- (d): tinted photograph of his wife

: Who is Santiago's favorite baseball player?

- (a): Babe Ruth
- (b): Joe DiMaggio
- (c): Lou Gehrig

(d): Jackie Robinson

7: In what month does the story take place?

- (a): September
- (b): May
- (c): October
- (d): July

8: Of what did Santiago always dream?

- (a): His wife
- (b): Manolin
- (c): Fish
- (d): Lions

9: Where is Santiago originally from?

- (a): Morocco
- (b): Mexico
- (c): Canary Islands
- (d): Cuba

10: What does Santiago call the sea?

- (a): la mar
- (b): el mar
- (c): salao
- (d): dorado

11: What did Manolin give Santiago two of before he left?

- (a): hooks
- (b): shoes
- (c): sardines
- (d): water bottles

12: What does Santiago refer to as aqua mala, the whore?

- (a): the sea
- (b): Portuguese man-of-war
- (c): A dolphin
- (d): an eel

13: In his youth, on what kind of ship did he work?

- (a): turtling
- (b): fishing
- (c): trading
- (d): sailing

14: Fisherman called all fish what?

- (a): sardines
- (b): pescado
- (c): tuna
- (d): mackerel

15: How deep was the line on which the marlin bit?

- (a): 100 fathoms
- (b): 200 fathoms
- (c): 300 fathoms
- (d): 400 fathoms

16: Santiago thought the light of what city would guide him home?

- (a): Cardenas
- (b): San Juan
- (c): Bautista
- (d): Havana

17: Why does Santiago hope the marlin will jump?

- (a): it will fill its air sacks and not be able to dive deep
- (b): it will be close enough to drive a harpoon into
- (c): it will see his strength and become frightened
- (d): it will let him see its size

18: What humiliating thing happens to Santiago's left hand while he is tracking the marlin?

- (a): it is badly cut
- (b): sensation in it dies
- (c): it cramps
- (d): it is stung by a Portuguese man-of-war

19: What does Santiago see that makes him realize "no man was ever alone on the sea" (61)?

- (a): porpoises
- (b): a flock of ducks
- (c): another boat
- (d): the stars

20: How many feet longer than Santiago's skiff is the marlin?

- (a): 2
- (b): 5
- (c): 10
- (d): 15

21: What injury does Joe DiMaggio have that Santiago obsesses about?

- (a): tendonitis
- (b): pulled hamstring
- (c): bone spur
- (d): broken finger

22: Where was the great "Negro" from against whom Santiago arm-wrestled in his youth?

- (a): Havana
- (b): Ghana
- (c): Cardenas
- (d): Cienfuegos

23: How long did Santiago's arm-wrestling match last?

- (a): all day
- (b): all night
- (c): all day and all night
- (d): 3 days

24: What was Santiago called after his arm-wrestling match

- (a): The Champion
- (b): The Great Santiago
- (c): St. Santiago
- (d): The Rock

25: What does Santiago do to increase drag on the boat?

- (a): drops anchor
- (b): ties two oars together across the stern
- (c): lowers his legs into the water
- (d): paddles the opposite way

26: When Santiago sleeps on his boat, what does he not dream about?

- (a): lions
- (b): porpoises
- (c): his bed
- (d): Manolin

27: How does Santiago kill the marlin?

- (a): with a club
- (b): with a gun
- (c): with a harpoon
- (d): with a knife

28: How does Santiago intend to transport the marlin back to land?

- (a): put it inside the skiff

- (b): tie it on the side of the skiff
- (c): drag it behind the skiff
- (d): wait for help

29: After killing the marlin, in what direction does Santiago travel to return home?

- (a): south-west
- (b): north-east
- (c): north-west
- (d): south-east

30: What type of shark was the first to attack the marlin carcass?

- (a): tiger
- (b): shovel-nosed
- (c): mako
- (d): thrasher

31: With what did Santiago kill the first shark?

- (a): bare hands
- (b): oar
- (c): knife
- (d): harpoon

32: How many pounds of flesh did the first shark take from the marlin carcass?

- (a): 20
- (b): 40
- (c): 60
- (d): 80

33: What type of shark struck the marlin second?

- (a): tiger
- (b): mako
- (c): thrasher
- (d): shovel-nosed

34: What percentage of the marlin's meat was left when Santiago reached shore?

- (a): 75%
- (b): 50%
- (c): 25%
- (d): 0%

35: What was Manolin's first reaction when he saw the returned Santiago?

- (a): To laugh
- (b): To cry

- (c): To ask about his voyage
- (d): To go home and wait for him to awake

36: How long was the marlin when measured on shore?

- (a): 18 ft
- (b): 14 ft
- (c): 10 ft
- (d): 6 ft

37: What does Santiago say to do with the marlin's head?

- (a): mount it for his wall
- (b): give it to Pedrico for fish traps
- (c): throw it out to sea
- (d): burn it

38: What does Manolin decide to do after speaking to Santiago at the end of the book?

- (a): leave the shore for the city
- (b): take over fishing for Santiago
- (c): join Santiago to fish with him
- (d): catch his own marlin

39: What does the tourist woman mistake the skeleton of the marlin for at the end of the book?

- (a): a shark skeleton
- (b): a dilapidated boat
- (c): a piece of bleached driftwood
- (d): a live marlin

40: What is the old man dreaming of at the end of the book?

- (a): the marlin
- (b): the boy
- (c): his wife
- (d): lions