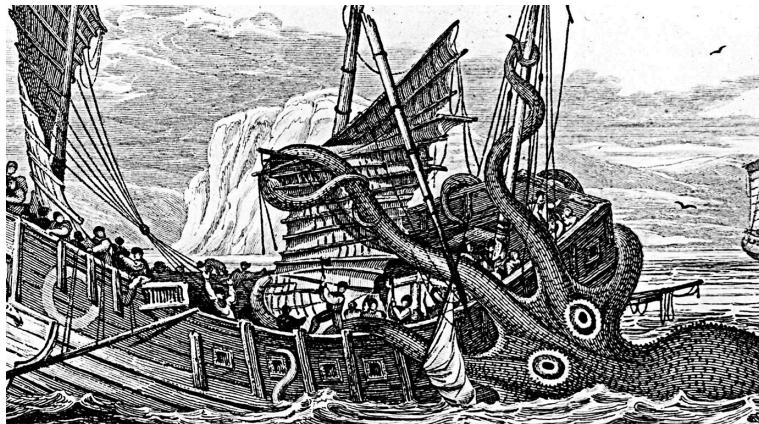


The Kraken

Name _____



In the Age of Exploration, the world's oceans were mysterious and endless. Sailors told stories of boiling salt water near the equator and fearsome sea life. As these stories were told again and again, the subjects became even more terrible and unimaginable. One such legend came from the wide bays and icy waters of Scandinavia. It is a legend that still lives among our movies, novels, video games, and maybe even in our deepest fears of the open ocean - the legend of the kraken.

The legend of this colossal, crew-eating, ship-sinking, monster was likely based on a real creature - the giant squid. It was first described as such in Erik Pontoppidan's *The First Attempt at a Natural History of Norway* (1752). Here, however, Pontoppidan claims the Kraken was so large that it was sometimes mistaken for an island. He further writes that the Kraken was less dangerous as a predator of sailors than as a hazard that generated a frothing whirlpool in its wake that could sink ships. Pontoppidan does, however, concede that given the length of the Kraken's arms, it could easily force the largest war ships down to the bottom of the ocean.

Pontoppidan's description of the kraken undoubtedly inspired a new generation of authors to craft hyperbolic scenes involving the kraken. In the classic ocean tale, *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, the author, Jules Verne, describes a scene where Captain Nemo must save his submarine from an attacking kraken. In the story he describes the kraken as a monster that "could entangle a ship of five thousand tons and bury it into the abyss of the ocean." In *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest*, the kraken is an agent for Davy Jones, ruler of the sea. Jones would summon the kraken by using a giant hammer that would send shockwaves through the ocean. The kraken would overtake ships ensuring that Jones had a steady supply of sailors to use as slaves aboard his own vessel.

1. Which question is not answered in the story?

- A. How has the kraken been depicted in literature?
- B. When was the first time a real kraken was captured?
- C. Where did the legend of the kraken originate?
- D. What are ways in which the kraken could supposedly prove dangerous to ships and sailors?

2. Which of the following best describes how the kraken came to be such a terrible sea monster?

- A. It was portrayed as such in movies and novels
- B. It was discovered that the beast could sink gigantic ships to the bottom of the ocean
- C. As stories were retold over generations, the kraken became more and more terrible
- D. The ocean was thought of as mysterious, endless, and full of dangers

3. Why was *The First Attempt at a Natural History of Norway (1752)* important in the history of the kraken?

- A. It influenced depictions of the kraken in literature and movies
- B. It made people realize that there are sea monsters lurking under the surface
- C. It made people realize that the ocean is a dangerous place
- D. It made people realize that, in deed, the kraken was a figment of a sailor's imagination

4. Which is NOT true about the kraken?

- A. It could produce a deadly whirlpool according to Erik Pontoppidan.
- B. In *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest*, the kraken gains control of Davy Jones.
- C. In *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, the kraken attacks a submarine and is described as a monster that could bring a large ship to the "abyss" of the ocean.
- D. Its legend seems to have originated in Scandinavia.

5. What word could replace "hyperbolic" in the following sentence?

Pontoppidan's description of the kraken undoubtedly inspired a new generation of authors to craft hyperbolic scenes involving the kraken.

- A. impossible
- B. aggressive
- C. interesting
- D. exaggerated

6. Why does the author claim that the legend of the kraken still exists today?

- A. Probably because krakens are still sighted in the ocean.
- B. Probably because the kraken still appears in modern video games and movies
- C. Probably because people constantly imagine what a kraken looks like
- D. Probably because the oceans are still very dangerous today

7. What could be a title for the second paragraph?

- A. The Kraken Through the Eyes of Erik Pontoppidan
- B. The History of the Kraken in Pop Culture
- C. A Biography on Erik Pontoppidan
- D. A Complete History of the Kraken