



**The Grammar Dog Guide to  
Moby Dick  
by Herman Melville**

**All quizzes use sentences from the novel.  
Includes over 250 multiple choice questions.**

## About Gramwardog

Gramwardog was founded in 2001 by Mary Jane McKinney, a high school English teacher and dedicated grammarian. She and other experienced English teachers in both high school and college regard grammar and style as the key to unlocking the essence of an author.

Their philosophy, that grammar and literature are best understood when learned together, led to the formation of Gramwardog.com, a means of sharing knowledge about the structure and patterns of language unique to specific authors. These patterns are what make a great book *a great book*. The arduous task of analyzing works for grammar and style has yielded a unique product, guaranteed to enlighten the reader of literary classics.

Gramwardog's strategy is to put the author's words under the microscope. The result yields an increased appreciation of the art of writing and awareness of the importance and power of language.



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**SAMPLE EXERCISES - MOBY DICK by Herman Melville**

**EXERCISE 5            COMPLEMENTS**

Identify the complements in each of the following sentences. Label the underlined words:  
*d.o.* = direct object      *i.o.* = indirect object      *p.n.* = predicate nominative      *p.a.* = predicate adjective  
*o.p.* = object of preposition

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1.      Such a portentous and mysterious monster roused all my curiosity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2.      Abominable are the tumblers into which he pours his poison.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3.      For all his tattooings he was on the whole a clean, comely looking cannibal.

**EXERCISE 6            PHRASES**

Identify the phrases in each of the following sentences. Label the underlined words:  
*par* = participial      *ger* = gerund      *inf* = infinitive      *appos* = appositive      *prep* = prepositional

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1.      I love to sail forbidden seas, and land on barbarous coasts.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2.      Quitting the good city of old Manhatto, I duly arrived in New Bedford.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3.      I learnt that there were three ships up for three-years' voyages – The Devil-dam, the Tit-bit, and the Pequod.

**EXERCISE 9            STYLE: FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE**

Identify the figurative language in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:  
*p* = personification      *s* = simile      *m* = metaphor      *o* = onomatopoeia

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1.      Posted like silver sentinels all around the town, stand thousands upon thousands of mortal men fixed in ocean reveries.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2.      The chaplain had not yet arrived; and there these silent islands of men and women sat steadfastly eyeing several marble tablets, with black borders, masoned into the wall on either side the pulpit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3.      Yes, the world's a ship on its passage out, and not a voyage complete; and the pulpit is its prow.

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**EXERCISE 12      STYLE: ALLUSIONS**

Identify the type of allusion used in the following sentences. Label the underlined words:  
*a. historical    b. mythological    c. religious    d. geographical    e. literary*

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1.      With a philosophical flourish Cato throws himself upon his sword;  
I quietly take to the ship.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2.      The counterpane was of patchwork . . . and this arm of his tattooed all over  
with an interminable Cretan labyrinth of a figure . . .
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3.      “But what is this lesson that the book of Jonah teaches? Shipmates, it is a  
two-stranded lesson . . .”

**EXERCISE 13      STYLE: LITERARY ANALYSIS – SELECTED PASSAGE 1**

Read the following passage the first time through for meaning. (From Chapter XXIX  
Enter Ahab; to Him, Stubb)

Some days elapsed, and ice and icebergs all astern, the Pequod now went rolling through the bright Quito spring, which, at sea, almost perpetually reigns on the threshold of the eternal August of the Tropic. The warmly cool, clear, ringing, perfumed, overflowing, redundant days, were as crystal goblets of Persian sherbet, heaped up – flaked up, with rose-water snow. The starred and stately nights seemed haughty dames in jeweled velvets, nursing at home in lonely pride, the memory of their absent conquering Earls, the golden helmeted suns! For sleeping man, ‘twas hard to choose between such winsome days and such seducing nights. But all the witcheries of that unwaning weather did not merely lend new spells and potencies to the outward world. Inward they turned upon the soul, especially when the still mild hours of eve came on; then, memory shot her crystals as clear ice most forms of noiseless twilights. And all these subtle agencies, more and more they wrought on Ahab’s texture.

Old age is always wakeful; as if, the longer linked with life, the less man has to do with aught that looks like death. Among sea-commanders, the old graybeards will oftenest leave their berths to visit the night-cloaked deck. It was so with Ahab, only that now, of late, he seemed so much to live in the open air, that truly speaking, his visits were more to the cabin, than from the cabin to the planks. “It feels like going down into one’s tomb,” – he would mutter to himself, -- “for an old captain like me to be descending this narrow scuttle, to go to my grave-dug berth.”

Read the passage a second time, marking figurative language, sensory imagery, poetic devices, and any other patterns of diction and rhetoric, then answer the questions below.

- 1 Some days elapsed, and ice and icebergs all astern, the Pequod now went rolling through the bright
- 2 Quito spring, which, at sea, almost perpetually reigns on the threshold of the eternal August of the
- 3 Tropic. The warmly cool, clear, ringing, perfumed, overflowing, redundant days, were as crystal
- 4 goblets of Persian sherbet, heaped up – flaked up, with rose-water snow. The starred and stately
- 5 nights seemed haughty dames in jeweled velvets, nursing at home in lonely pride, the memory of

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9 upon the soul, especially when the still mild hours of eve came on; then, memory shot her crystals  
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11 wrought on Ahab's texture.

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14 the night-cloaked deck. It was so with Ahab; only that now, of late, he seemed so much to live in the  
15 open air, that truly speaking, his visits were more to the cabin, than from the cabin to the planks.  
16 "It feels like going down into one's tomb," – he would mutter to himself, -- "for an old captain like  
17 me to be descending this narrow scuttle, to go to my grave-dug berth."

- \_\_\_ 1. Lines 3 and 4 contain an example of . . .  
a. metaphor      b. simile      c. personification
- \_\_\_ 2. Lines 4 through 6 contain an example of . . .  
a. metaphor      b. simile      c. personification
- \_\_\_ 3. Lines 9 and 10 contain an example of . . .  
a. metaphor      b. simile      c. personification

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