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# Activity Pack

## THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA

BY ERNEST HEMINGWAY



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Item No. 201004

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pages 9 – 27****Characterization**

**Objectives:** Understanding how character is developed in the novel  
Discussing the relationship between characters in the novel

**Activity**

An author develops character by:

- what a character says
- what characters do
- what other people say about the character, or
- the information the narrator presents.

Hemingway presents the reader with incidents involving the old man and the boy. Through these incidents, he gives the reader insight into the relationship between these two characters.

In small groups, read the seven excerpts. Discuss and take notes on what each excerpt reveals about the relationship between the old man and the boy. Then, decide the method used by Hemingway to show the relationship.

Each group should then fill in the **Student Response Sheet**.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pages 9 – 27****Setting**

**Objective:** Visualizing the setting and understanding its importance to other elements in the novel

**Activity**

Draw a picture of the fishing village that the old man lives in. Include

- the beach
- skiff, fishing boats
- the old man's shack
- the boy's house
- the terrace
- coal rocks, ice house

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pages 9 – 30****Style II**

**Objective:** Identifying character traits from actions or quotations

**Activity**

Perhaps the boy's admiration for the old man is contagious; as you read, you will probably find yourself developing a feeling of respect for Santiago. Fill in the following chart that illustrates the old man's character. We have done the first one for you.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pages 28 – 43****Voice**

**Objectives:** Reading with attention to detail  
Recognizing a character's attitude

**Activity**

Imagine that Santiago has come to your biology class as a guest speaker. He is giving a lecture on the sea and the creatures of the sea. Based on your reading of the novel, take notes on what you think Santiago will say about the following topics:

- Flying fish
- The Nature of the Sea
- Man-of-war birds
- Dolphins
- Seaweed/plankton
- Portuguese man-of-war
- Turtles

Use your notes to plan Santiago's lecture. Try to imitate the simple, unadorned way he would say things and adopt his attitude of intense interest in the creatures of the sea. Remember, though, that Santiago understands his world through his work, not through books or studying science. Your final lecture should be written as an informative essay.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pages 28 – 43****Characterization II**

**Objectives:** Relating literature to life  
Weighing the truth and/or significance of a character's assertions

**Activity**

When people reflect having experienced success or failure, the question of luck surfaces. Is success the result of good luck and failure the result of bad luck? One way the old man passes time is to reflect on luck. Hemingway writes,

“Only I have no luck any more. But who knows? Maybe today. Every day is a new day. It is better to be lucky. But I would rather be exact. Then when luck comes you are ready.”

In small groups, discuss your views on the old man's luck. Use the **Luck versus Skill** chart to take notes on whether it is luck or skill the old man depends on. Find supporting examples from the book to make your conclusions stronger.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Pages 9 – 62

Figurative Language

**Objective:** Understanding how figurative language enhances meaning

**Activity**

Hemingway's style of writing is to use both concrete images and figurative language to communicate his ideas. For example, in his description of the old man's hands, he says,

“...his hands had the deep-creased scars from handling heavy fish on the cords. But none of these scars were fresh. They were as old as erosions in a fishless desert.”

The *topic* of this simile is the *deep scars* on the man's hands. The image Hemingway uses to make the reader understand how the scars look is “erosions in a fishless desert.” The scars are *similar* to erosions in a desert; they are deep cracks in a dry surface, and they are very old scars. The *impression* the reader gets is one of old age, work, fights with fish, and an understanding that the old man has not battled a fish for a very long time.

Work in pairs to complete the **Figurative Language Chart** for each example of figurative language.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pages 45 – 62****Writing****Objective:** Relating literature to life**Activity**

Work in small groups to discuss and complete any two of the following writing assignments:

1. You are a member of a local group that believes in the spiritual unity or oneness of all things. Plan and write an editorial comment (two paragraphs) that gives your perspective on the old man's thought that the porpoises are his brothers. Your editorial would be used in a magazine devoted to the preservation of animals.
2. You are a member of an animal protection group called PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals). Plan and write a two-paragraph editorial comment on the old man killing a female marlin.
3. You are a Coast Guard official. Plan and write a commentary of two paragraphs about the old man's position and safety in the sea.
4. You are a fishing expert. Plan and write a two-paragraph commentary on the old man's skill and his chances of catching the marlin.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pages 48 – End****Emotion**

**Objective:** Understanding a protagonist's relationship with his or her antagonist

**Activity**

Santiago frequently expresses a feeling, either positive or negative, for creatures around him. Previously, it had been turtles, birds, jellyfish, and the sea itself. However, he begins to speak of a comradeship with the marlin. Record at least ten quotations that show this on the following chart from now until the end of the book. This activity will help you understand how Santiago and the fish are connected. Sometimes, your answers in the "Significance" column will be repeated or similar to others. Remember that the quotations should include both the old man and the fish. We have done one for you as an example.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pages 45 – 52****Theme**

**Objectives:** Recognizing emerging themes  
Relating literature to life

**Activity**

The following is an emerging theme in the novel:

A man must have endurance, determination, and perseverance to accomplish anything.

Complete the **Theme Chart** on the next page. Give an example of both how the theme is shown in the novel and a person you know of who demonstrates this theme in his or her life.