

# Faces™

## Sea Monsters

More than 80 percent of the ocean has never been mapped, explored, or even seen by humans. Freezing temperatures, crushing pressure, and complete darkness add to the mystery of the sea. This issue of FACES examines the fantastical creatures and legends surrounding this largely unknown habitat.

### CONVERSATION QUESTION

Why did humans create legends of sea monsters?

### TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about the significance of mermaids throughout history.
- Students will learn about the proven existence of the legendary Kraken.
- Students will learn about the Scottish legends of the sea kelpies.
- Students will examine the cultural influence of a mythological being.
- Students will distinguish between facts and opinions.
- Students will compare different accounts of the same event.
- Students will write a fictitious journal entry.
- Students will create a classroom map.
- Students will create a travel brochure for a Loch Ness, Scotland tour.



In addition to supplemental materials focused on core Social Studies skills, this flexible teaching tool offers vocabulary-building activities, questions for discussion, and cross-curricular activities.

### SELECTIONS

- **Fatal Enchantment**  
Expository Nonfiction
- **Monsters or Not? The Legend of the Kraken**  
Expository Nonfiction
- **Meet Nessie**  
Expository Nonfiction

## Fatal Enchantment

pp. 12–15, Expository Nonfiction

Preying upon travelers, and luring them to their death, tales of the Sirens of the sea are as old as time. This article examines the origins and details of each region's version of the enchanting, and sometimes terrifying, mermaid.



## RESOURCES

- Cultural Influence:  
Traveling Treachery

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about the significance of mermaids throughout history.
- Students will examine the cultural influence of a mythological being.
- Students will write a fictitious journal entry.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **hybrid** (p. 13) a thing made by combining two different elements; mixture
- **banished** (p. 13) sent someone away from a country or place as an official punishment

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** Why did man create legends of sea monsters?

Create a word web on the board, placing the word *mermaid* in the center. Give the class five minutes to add words and ideas to the web, reading each contribution aloud. Note if the modern idea of mermaids has positive or negative connotations. Display the title and the cover page of the article, “Fatal Enchantment,” and have the students predict the tone and content of the article.

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Post the key words and discuss the meanings of the terms. Then display the following prompts and have students discuss responses with a partner.

- Discuss creatures from books and movies that are a **hybrid** of at least two different creatures. (ex: centaur)
- Discuss other book or movie characters that were **banished**. Where were they banished to and what was the reason?

## READ & DISCUSS

Read the article aloud with the class. Have students reread the text in small groups to answer the questions below. Discuss responses.

1. What tales did the Greeks tell about the Sirens of the sea?
2. Explain the multifaceted personalities of Mer-people throughout history.
3. What did the Catholic Church claim mermaids represented?
4. Why did historical records include descriptive accounts of merfolk?
5. Despite their dangerous reputation, how did mermaids capture human hearts and imaginations?

## CONCEPT/SKILL FOCUS: Cultural Influence

**INSTRUCT:** The article presents the reader with detailed information regarding the irresistible enchantresses of the sea. Sirens and mermaids have been portrayed both positively and negatively throughout time. Distribute the *Traveling Treachery* graphic organizer and tell students that they will be recording how the stories influenced many different cultures and groups of people.

**ASSESS:** Review the chart. Have students discuss the duality of other mythological/imaginary beings.

## EXTEND

**Language Arts:** The article states that historical records included descriptive accounts of mermaids and mermen by well-known explorers and their crews. Students will imagine that they are a crew member of a ship on an expedition. Instruct them to write a week of journal entries detailing their encounters/sightings of Mer-people. First-person writings should include: where/when the Mer-people were observed; sights, sounds and actions of the creatures; the emotions of the writer.

## Traveling Treachery

**Cultural Influence** Consult the article and record how the belief in mythical beings (sirens and mermaids) is significant to people all over the world.

Element	Description
<p><b>Mermaids &amp; Sirens Appearance</b></p>	
<p><b>Historical Significance</b></p>	
<p><b>Associations</b></p>	
<p><b>Folklore &amp; Traditions</b></p>	
<p><b>Pop Culture Emergence</b></p>	

## Monsters or Not?

### The Legend of the Kraken

p. 22–25, Expository Nonfiction

Having the ability to crush ships with its giant tentacled arms and create massive whirlpools that sunk ships, the mythical Kraken was greatly feared. However, in 1835, scientists discovered a giant cephalopod washed up on a beach in Norway—and the narrative of this giant creature quickly changed.



## RESOURCES

- Distinguishing Facts and Opinions: “Kraken” the Case

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about the proven existence of the legendary Kraken.
- Students will distinguish between fact and opinion.
- Students will create a classroom map.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **manuscripts** (p. 22) old documents or books written by hand in the times before printing was invented
- **cephalopod** (p. 24) any of a class of mollusks that have a group of muscular sucker-bearing arms, highly developed head and eyes and usually a bag of inky fluid that can be released as a defense

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** Why did man create legends of sea monsters?

Guide a class discussion about mythical creatures found in books and movies. Have students consider whether these characters are more often “good” or “evil.” Pose the questions: *What is the purpose of inserting such a character into a story? Why do legends continue to circulate even when the legend has been debunked?*

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Post and read aloud the vocabulary words. Tell students that many scientific terms have Greek and Latin roots. Break apart the terms and show the root meanings. Then compare to actual definitions.

**manu** (manus) = hand / **script** (scriptos) = writing

**cephalo** = head / **pod** = foot

Ask: “How does knowing the meaning of Greek and Latin roots help to give meaning to unfamiliar words?”

## READ & DISCUSS

Reinforce comprehension of the concepts presented in the article by using the following questions to direct discussion.

1. Why did ancient mapmakers often put images of mythical creatures at the edges of their maps?
2. Describe the appearance of the legendary Kraken.
3. Where did the legend of the Kraken originate?
4. According to legend, what was the Kraken capable of doing?
5. What happened in 1835 that changed the belief in the Kraken’s existence from legendary to real?

## CONCEPT/SKILL FOCUS: Fact and Opinion

**INSTRUCT:** Review with the class that it is important to be able to make distinctions between fact and opinion, in order to determine the credibility of information. (**Facts:** can be proven, true for everyone.

**Opinions:** can’t be proven, personal judgment.) Instruct students to review the article and to classify each statement on the “*Kraken*” the Case worksheet as a fact or opinion.

**ASSESS:** After reviewing answers, have students choose one fact statement and one opinion statement and explain WHY it is a fact or opinion.

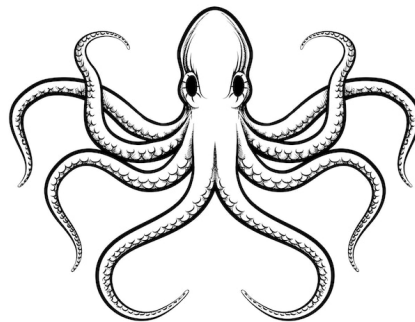
## EXTEND

**Making Maps:** Have students create a map of the classroom—with one catch—everything beyond the classroom walls is “unknown.” Remind students that the article states (p. 22) that mapmakers often put images of mythical creatures at the edge of their maps to show places that were unexplored or unknown. The classroom map should be otherwise as accurate as possible, with the edges of the maps adorned with mythical creatures. Emphasize neatness, creativity, and the use of color.

## “Kraken” the Case

**Distinguishing Facts and Opinions** Locate and underline each of the sentences below in the article. Then, mark each statement as FACT (F) or OPINION (O). *Helpful Hint:* Facts can be proven; opinions are personal judgments.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Ancient mapmakers put images of mythical creatures at the edges of their maps to show places that were unexplored.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The Kraken was the most terrifying creature in sea legends.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The *Architeuthis dux* can see in the darkest depths of the ocean.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Mermaids and dragons were created by people who were very fearful.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Although we now know that the giant squid is real, it is still the most mysterious creature in the sea.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The *Architeuthis dux* has only one natural predator—the sperm whale.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The legend of the Kraken has its origins in the seas from Norway to Iceland to Greenland.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. The Kraken was able to crush an entire ship and its crew.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. The giant squid can float underwater due to pockets in its muscles.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. We now know that the giant squid is real and not just the legend of the Kraken.



## Meet Nessie

pp. 30–33, Expository Nonfiction

Numerous eyewitness accounts, photographs, and scientific surveys have failed to prove Nessie's existence. Readers will learn how the lack of positive identification has only heightened the mystery of the Loch Ness Monster.



## RESOURCES

- Compare Accounts: Monster Madness

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about the Scottish legends of sea kelpies.
- Students will compare different accounts of the same event.
- Students will create a travel brochure for a Loch Ness, Scotland tour.

## KEY VOCABULARY

- **loch** (p. 30) an arm of the sea, especially when narrow or partially landlocked
- **unwary** (p. 30) not cautious, not aware of possible dangers or problems

## ENGAGE

**Conversation Question:** Why did man create legends of sea monsters?

Certain myths are as beloved to us today as they were to ancient civilizations. Have students discuss the appeal of legends containing monsters. (Ex: Big Foot, Yeti, Loch Ness Monster, etc.) Suggest that people long ago may have seen mythical creatures instead of real animals because they were trying to explain the world around them in a time before scientific knowledge was widely available. Why do stories about mythical creatures still exist today?

## INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Post and review the three vocabulary words and definitions. Allow students to roll a die for vocabulary activities.

- 1 = Use the word in a sentence.
- 2 = Draw a picture illustrating the word.
- 3 = List two antonyms for the word.
- 4 = List two synonyms for the word.
- 5 = Break the word into syllables and list the part of speech.
- 6 = Make a connection between the word and your life, a book, or a movie.

## READ & DISCUSS

Pose the following questions to prompt meaningful discussion.

1. What do parents warn their children not to do in order to avoid the kelpies?
2. Why was Loch Ness no longer a remote location after the 1930s?
3. How has the lack of positive identification heightened the mystery surrounding Nessie?
4. Why do cryptozoologists dismiss the plesiosaur theory?
5. How is Nessie of economic importance to tourism in the Scottish Highlands?

## SKILL FOCUS: Compare Accounts

**INSTRUCT:** The article presents the reader with detailed information regarding various accounts of the Loch Ness Monster. This legend is deeply rooted in ancient times and is still thriving today. Distribute the *Monster Madness* graphic organizer and tell students that they will be recording differing opinions about Scotland's most famous monster.

**ASSESS:** Review the chart. Have students explain why different accounts of the same event are to be expected.

## EXTEND

**Social Studies:** Have students locate Loch Ness on a map of Scotland. Instruct them to fold a piece of paper into thirds and to create a travel brochure. Alternatively, many computer programs will have easy-to-use templates. Using information from the various resources, students should include the following: location, climate, land features, plant/animal life, recreation, and interesting facts...and of course, the opportunity to spot the Loch Ness Monster!

# Monster Madness

**Compare Accounts** Review the article and highlight information regarding the viewpoints of the investigators of the Loch Ness Monster listed below. Record their opinions, their supporting evidence, and important details.

<b>Town Folk &amp; Photographers</b>	<b>Institution and University Teams</b>
<b>Cryptozoologists</b>	<b>Biologists</b>

**Meet  
Nessie**