

Teacher  
Notes



*And The Ocean  
Was Our Sky*

TEACHER NOTES

WRITTEN BY PATRICK NESS  
ILLUSTRATED BY ROVINA CAI  
TEACHER NOTES BY ISABEL GALEA

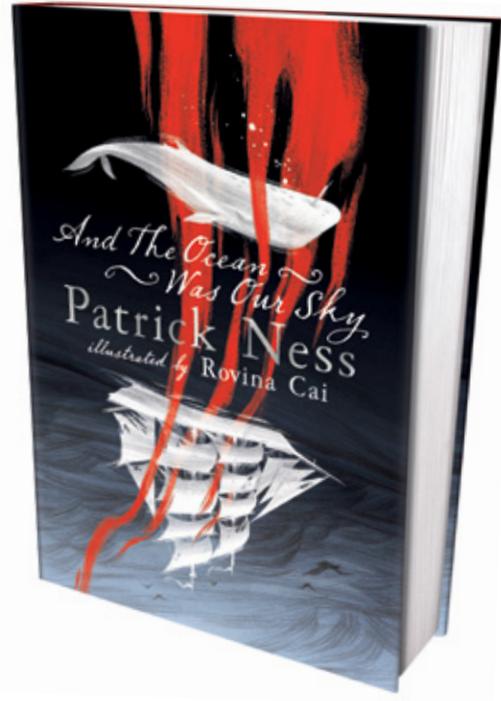
# And The Ocean Was Our Sky

“Call me Bathsheba.”

The whales of Bathsheba’s pod live for the hunt. Led by the formidable Captain Alexandra, they fight a never-ending war against men. Then the whales attack a man ship, and instead of easy prey they find the trail of a myth, a monster, perhaps the devil himself ...

With their relentless Captain leading the chase, they embark on the final hunt, one that will forever change the worlds of whales and men.

From Patrick Ness, the multi-award-winning author of *A Monster Calls*, and CBCA Crichton Award-winning Australian artist Rovina Cai comes a haunting tale of power and obsession that turns the story of Moby Dick upside down.



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## PATRICK NESS – AUTHOR

Patrick Ness is the award-winning and bestselling author of the Chaos Walking trilogy, *A Monster Calls*, *More Than This*, *The Rest of Us Just Live Here* and *Release*. He has won every major prize in children’s fiction, including the Carnegie Medal twice. He has also written the screenplay for the film of *A Monster Calls* and *Class*, the BBC Doctor Who drama. The first Chaos Walking film is slated for release in 2019. He lives in London.



## ROVINA CAI – ILLUSTRATOR

Rovina Cai draws in a studio in a nineteenth-century convent. Her work has been recognised by the Society of Illustrators, Spectrum Fantastic Art and the Children’s Book Council of Australia. She has illustrated the picture book *Tintinnabula* by Margo Lanagan. She lives in Melbourne, Australia.



## ISABEL GALEA – TEACHER NOTES AUTHOR

Isabel Galea is a High School English and Drama teacher in the South Western suburbs of Sydney. She studied English, music, theatre and film at the University of New South Wales where she developed her passion for the arts. She is proud to be part of the public education system and has been engaging teenagers with the joy of reading for over a decade. Isabel is an avid bibliophile and looks forward to watching her own two children’s imagination blossom as they explore the wide world of literature.



## Before Reading

### LOOKING AT THE COVER

Rovina Cai's illustrations are immediately striking and powerful due to their limited colour palette and ethereal line drawings.

- a. Describe what Cai has depicted on the cover.
- b. Explain why Cai has chosen this colour palette and design style. Consider the initial emotional response she wants to evoke from responders.
- c. Make a prediction about the text. What genre do you think the text is? What will happen? Consider how the image might connect with the title, *And The Ocean Was Our Sky*.

### UNDERSTANDING CONTEXT

Ness's text brings attention to the controversial practice of whaling by showing us a new perspective; the voice of the hunted whales, angry and vengeful. Bathsheba claims, "Who needs devils when you have men?" (59) and in turn explains why they hunt humans for the benefit of their community.

Students would benefit from understanding the historical and social context of the complex relationship between man and whale prior to reading the text to both understand Bathsheba's perspective but also Ness's motivation for challenging our pre-conceived notions about whales and whaling.

- a. Create an information report about whales (either general or species specific). Include basic biological information about physiology, diet, mating, habitation and behaviour (particularly echolocation). This will be useful later when considering how Ness has built a new fantastical world around them.
- b. Research and then debate the legitimacy of the practice of whaling. Students might like to research commercial uses for whales, the current laws about whaling and conservation efforts by organisations such as Greenpeace or the WWF.
- c. View the documentary *Black Fish* (Cowperthwaite, 2013), *The Cove* (Psihoyos, 2009) or *The Grind* (2015, Motherboard Documentaries, Youtube) to further students' understanding about man's treatment of marine life. Students then compose a reflection statement addressing how their opinions may have been challenged or strengthened after watching the film.

- d. Create a chronological reading list of famous texts that explore the relationship between humans and whales. Students could include a short synopsis of each text and consider if and how the "mythology" around whales has changed over time.

## While Reading

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES – CHAPTER BY CHAPTER

These questions are designed to both function as a study guide but also as extension questions. The first question for each chapter is easily deduced from the text whereas further questions require higher-order thinking. This will allow teachers to offer differentiated learning opportunities.

#### CHAPTER 1

- a. The story begins with Bathsheba's Grandmother's prophesy "You will hunt." (7) If you were given such a strong command as a child from your elder how would you respond? Would you resist or comply?
- b. Ness immediately creates a close relationship between the reader and Bathsheba. How does his use of language and Cai's first image work together to establish this bond?

#### CHAPTER 2

- a. "Look sharp," said Captain Alexandra." (9) This is the first time we meet Bathsheba's intimidating captain. What do we learn about her personality and reputation? Choose one sentence from the text that best captures her character as evidence.
- b. This is the first time we get a hint at Bathsheba's prowess for hunting. Describe what happens and how her peers respond to her. What does this suggest about the relationships between the apprentices and their captain?

#### CHAPTER 3

- a. "I hate the hunt, but I loved it then." (14) Why did Bathsheba and her people hunt man? Consider multiple reasons.
- b. We don't yet know "all that occurred," (14) to Bathsheba, but we know that it was significant enough to radically alter her understanding of the world

around her. How does Ness use foreshadowing to build reader tension and curiosity? Give examples to extend your answer.

#### CHAPTER 4

- a. "Every bit of prey would be used." (17) What happens to the bodies of the men killed and collected by the whales? Is this a reflection of the way humans utilise their prey? Give an example to extend your answer.
- b. Ness's depiction of the chase is thrilling. How does he use language forms and features to reflect the excitement of the hunt? Make detailed reference to the text.

#### CHAPTER 5

- a. How did Bathsheba know that the bodies in the water were drowned?
- b. "Men's teeth were valuable as a fake digestive and fetched a high price among the gullible rich."(22) Rare animal parts are often used as status symbols for the wealthy. Can you think of three examples of this that exist in our human society?

#### CHAPTER 6

- a. What did Bathsheba find?
- b. "The star-like spindle they used to such advantage,"(28) shows that Bathsheba is disgusted by the human hand. How does her description help us understand her perspective of humans?

#### CHAPTER 7

- a. "The hand held out a disk" (31) Draw a picture of the mysterious disk described on this page.
- b. How does the captain react to this item? What does it suggest to the reader about Captain Alexandria's past and relationship with Toby Wick?

#### CHAPTER 8

- a. "I named our devil." (34) What does Bathsheba refuse to do? Why?
- b. Whale society has built a terrifying myth around Toby Wick that evokes awe and fear. Find some lines of dialogue that demonstrate this. Does this

remind you of any other "terrifying names" that evoke a similar response either in fiction or reality?

#### CHAPTER 9

- a. This is a very short chapter that describes the initial torture and questioning of Demetrius. We are given a sequence of Cai's illustrations to help us understand what is happening and empathise with the characters. What happens to the orientation of the images? How does this affect the viewer's perspective?
- b. Evaluate Ness and Cai's choice to use a visual medium to convey this moment.

#### CHAPTER 10

- a. "We are proud, proud creatures of the ocean." (44) Make a list of the accomplishments made by Whale society.
- b. This is the beginning of the challenging and complex relationship between Bathsheba and Demetrius. What does their exchange at the end of the chapter reveal about their initial connection and relationship? Find evidence in the text to support your answer.

#### CHAPTER 11

- a. What was the message Demetrius was meant to give along with the coin?
- b. How does Treasure interpret his message? What does this suggest about Treasure's personality?
- c. The Captain accepts Treasure's interpretation over Bathsheba's accurate translation, yet Bathsheba complies with Treasure when the Captain "looked at me, warning in her eye, 'that was the message, wasn't it?' (48) What does this suggest about the Captain and Bathsheba's relationship? Predict how you think their relationship might change.

#### CHAPTER 12

- a. What information are we given about Toby Wick from Demetrius? Do you think he is only a myth, as Bathsheba claims, or does he really exist?
- b. "I looked at him for a moment longer... this enemy of mine." (53) What clues are we given that suggest Bathsheba cares for the man? Why will Demetrius challenge Bathsheba's understanding of "man?"

### CHAPTER 13

- a. Recount what happened to Bathsheba's mother.
- b. Ness uses evocative language when describing the death of the mother whale. Choose a line on page 58 and explain how Ness demonstrates Bathsheba's anger. Why has Ness chosen to put this flashback chapter here, rather than at the beginning of the text?

### CHAPTER 14

- a. What does Treasure think the coin signifies?
- b. "Prophesy of the purest sort, what does that mean?" (61) The reader can see that Bathsheba is struggling with the way the philosophy of her people conflicts with her own world view. What language devices does Ness use to show this? Give two examples as evidence.
- c. Summarise Bathsheba's exploration of the definition of prophesy. Do you agree?

### CHAPTER 15

- a. What is a "parlay?"
- b. Why and how does Captain Alexandria admonish Bathsheba? What does this tell us about both characters individually and as a pair?

### CHAPTER 16

- a. Demetrius is horrified by what he sees in the hull of the ship. The reader is expected to relate a similar response when they read Ness's grotesque imagery and imagine the gore he describes. Write down two or more lines that use this device and explain why Ness includes these descriptions in the text.
- b. "You are monsters," he whispered." (72) Ness purposely contrasts Man and Whale's treatment of their dead as a way to both show their similarities and their differences. Considering what we know about Bathsheba's history, do you believe that Whales are different to Men?

### CHAPTER 17

- a. Make a list of the rules of etiquette of a parlay between two hunting parties.
- b. "To what other purpose is a devil?" (72) As Bathsheba learns more about Toby Wick, Ness gives us more

unanswered questions and answers. Why does he do this? What is your answer to Demetrius' question?

### CHAPTER 18

- a. Describe the image created by Cai on pages 74 and 75. Explain how the visual devices used depict a change in Bathsheba and Demetrius's relationship.

### CHAPTER 19

- a. What new information does Demetrius give about Toby Wick?
- b. "For a moment, he troubled me." (79) How is Demetrius challenging Bathsheba's preconceived notions about humans? Give evidence for your answer.

### CHAPTER 20

- a. Why does Bathsheba's skin feel "hot and angry against the water?" (81) What does this smaller incident represent about how Bathsheba fits in with her hunting party and community as a whole?

### CHAPTER 21

- a. Find a line that demonstrates that other inhabitants of the oceans are not considered equal to Whales. Explain how Ness uses language to create a dismissive and conceited tone.
- b. This is the first time Cai has introduced red into the illustrations (84-88). Where has she used it and what might it symbolise?

### CHAPTER 22

- a. "It was as if something gave way under me." (90) The whales are angered and bewildered by this massacre but are generally able to perform the tasks assigned to them. However, Bathsheba finds something that significantly affects her. What does she find? How does it affect her perception of her role as a hunter? Give evidence from the text to prove your answer.
- b. How is the audience positioned to respond by both Ness's description and Cai's depiction?

### CHAPTER 23

- a. "I swim in the darkness and still know who I am." (99) What is Bathsheba trying to help Demetrius understand?

- b. “If you fight the devil, you become him.” (99) What is Demetrius saying about the consequences of violence and war? Do you agree? Why?

#### CHAPTER 24

- a. Demetrius’s question is echoed by Captain Alexandria who presents a different opinion about the effect of war on the soul. Why does she claim she fights?
- b. What is the “adult question” (102) Bathsheba asks? Why does Captain Alexandria call it “adult”?
- c. What does the dialogue exchange between Bathsheba and Captain Alexandria demonstrate about their evolving relationship? Give examples from the text as evidence.

#### CHAPTER 25

- a. Summarise Captain Alexandria’s story.
- b. What is the final line of the chapter? Why does Ness end the Captain’s story in this way?

#### CHAPTER 26

- a. Why does Captain Alexandria believe she is part of the prophecy to defeat Toby Wick?
- b. “It was only in my secret heart of hearts that I wondered how much truth lay in the prophesy.” (108) Why does Bathsheba doubt her captain?

#### CHAPTER 27

- a. What is the new message?
- b. Treasure is proud to serve her Captain as Ist apprentice, often to the point of foolishness. How do Treasure’s actions represent her values?

#### CHAPTER 28

- a. Explain how each whale’s reaction to Treasure’s death is revealed through their dialogue. Give at least one example for each character.

#### CHAPTER 29

- a. This fight scene is vividly described by Ness, allowing the audience to ride the tension along with the apprentices who enthusiastically await the winner. What language devices does he use to convey Captain

Alexandria’s attack and what affect does it have on the reader?

- b. Why do you think the Captain responds with such ferocity to Captain Arcturus? How is this related to what was revealed in previous chapters?

#### CHAPTER 30

- a. Why has Ness made this chapter so short?

#### CHAPTER 31

- a. There are several reasons why Bathsheba offers Demetrius mercy. One is explicit and explained on page 127, yet the other is implicit and more significant thematically. Explain both reasons and give evidence from the text to prove your answer.
- b. “The ocean felt all of a blackness around me” (127). Explain what this line suggests about Bathsheba’s mindset prior to meeting Toby Wick. Consider what has changed since Chapter 23 when she explained that the dark was where “a whale is taught to see herself”.

#### CHAPTER 32

- a. What decision is occupying Bathsheba’s mind? Find a line that shows her difficulty making this decision and explain why “It would be [her] death, if she does not solve it” (128).

#### CHAPTER 33

- a. “The night came seeping into the ocean like octopus ink.” (133) Ness uses darkness and the colour black as a motif throughout the novel. It has already represented Bathsheba’s sense of identity and then her confusion in Chapters 23 and 29. What does the blackness represent here? Consider why Toby Wick wanted to meet at sunset.

#### CHAPTER 34

- a. “Her eye was the eye of the true believer” (135). How and why does Willem ask whether death will hurt? What does this suggest about her faith and loyalty to Captain Alexandria?
- b. Cai’s image of the whales ascending is striking and evocative. How does it make you feel just before the battle begins?

## CHAPTER 35

- a. Summarise Captain Alexandria's plan. Do you think it is a good plan?
- b. "No! I heard Willem say, in horror." (I40) Ness does not immediately tell us who or what Toby Wick is, but instead demonstrates Willem and Bathsheba's terror at what they see. What must the reader infer about Toby Wick? How does this affect the building tension for the upcoming climax?

## CHAPTER 36

- a. "And then... and then..." (I41) What is Toby Wick? Describe both his physical appearance and his metaphorical significance. Consider how he was created and what he reflects.
- b. "I felt the same give inside me that I felt when I found the body of the child." (I43) Demetrius's death initiates another paradigm shift for Bathsheba. Why does she feel the same way about both deaths? How has her perspective changed?
- c. "Now I saw the truth." (I43) Bathsheba's first person narration has invited the reader into her thoughts and philosophy about the conflict of prophecy, faith and truth. What has her interaction with Toby Wick enabled her to understand?
- d. Which of Cai's images in this sequence is the most effective? How has she used visual devices to evoke an emotional response from the reader?

## CHAPTER 37

- a. Ness does not hold back when describing the brutality and violence of the battle between Captain Alexandria and Toby Wick. Symbolically and literally, the captain is entering "the belly of the whale" or the "the belly of the beast" as she attacks. Research the meaning of both idioms and explain why Ness chose to have the Captain defeat Toby Wick in this manner.
- b. Identify the line where Bathsheba makes a connection with Toby Wick (I53). How does Ness use language to convey her internal agony at her response to him? What does Toby Wick's mysterious attraction and control represent thematically? Consider that he represents the monstrosity of hate.

## CHAPTER 38

- a. How has the relationship between whales and humans changed after the defeat of Toby Wick?
- b. "Take the name Bathsheba and make it a story of peace." (I58) Until now, Bathsheba has been reluctant to connect her name to the Myth of Toby Wick. Why has she changed her mind and what is her message? Make reference to her earlier discussions with Demetrius and Captain Alexandria about the nature of war, evil and "the adult question" of becoming devils ourselves.

- c. Cai's final illustration depicts Bathsheba staring directly at the reader with a reflection of Toby Wick's ghastly hand. What warning does this final image make?

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

1. Cai's intriguing illustrations help bring understanding to each chapter and provoke emotional responses from the reader. Find a sentence for each image in the responding chapter that would act as a caption.
2. Compose a reading log. You can use the example attached or create your own. For each chapter include the following:
  - a. A rating from I-10, gauging the chapter's intensity or excitement level
  - b. A key quote that best captures the events or theme of the chapter
  - c. A one-sentence summary of the chapter
  - d. A prediction for the following chapter.
5. Chart the narrative structure of the plotline by creating a point graph. Use the intensity rating given in the reading log to plot the rising action towards the climax of the text by making the X-axis chapter numbers, and the Y-axis an intensity measure in increments of I-10. You can use the worksheet provided or create your own. Divide your graph into narrative sections (Orientation, complication, series of events, temporary resolution, climax, resolution) or a three-act structure.

Examples available on following page.

WORKSHEET DESIGN INSTRUCTIONS

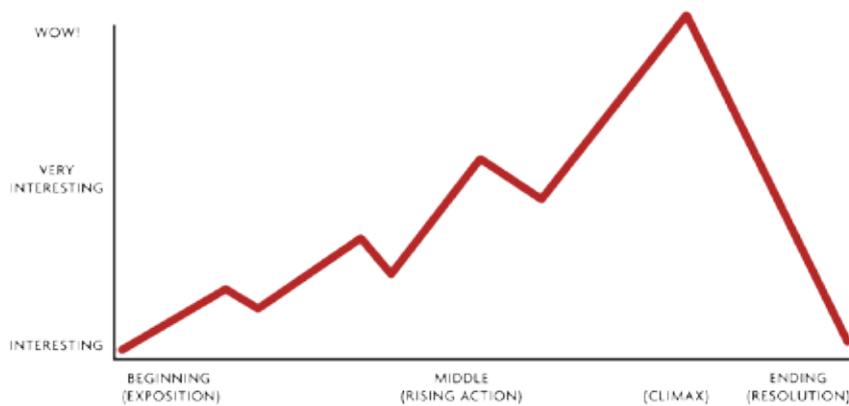
READING LOG

A simple table with chapter numbers in the first column; second column should be for the ranking. Then the next column should be subdivided into three (for summary, key quote and prediction). See below for example.

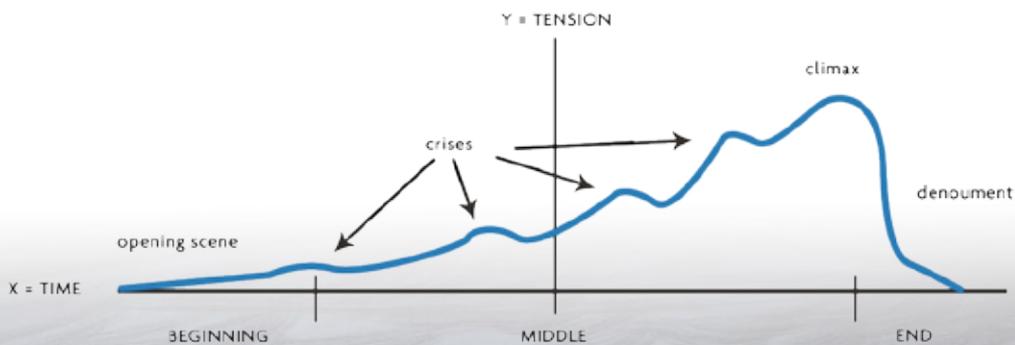
CHAPTER	RATING /10	SUMMARY / QUOTE / PREDICTION
1	3	Summary: Bathsheba introduces herself to the reader and suggests that she is part of a prophecy and that she must be a hunter. Something important and terrible has happened.
		Quote: "I, a lowly but eager 3 <sup>rd</sup> apprentice was about to begin the final hunt that ever was. The hunt for a legend, a myth, a devil." (9)
		Prediction: Bathsheba is going to catch an evil villain and save her world from destruction.
2	4	We are introduced to the hunting party (Captain Alexandria, Treasure and Willem). Bathsheba proves herself to be an excellent hunter because she echolocates a human ship.
		"Everyone knew about the short rusted end of a man's harpoon still sticking out of her great head. She was the captain who survived." (10)
		Bathsheba is going to become the captain's favourite and become 1 <sup>st</sup> apprentice.

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE CHART

A Graph with the X-axis labelled 1-38 (One for each chapter) and then the Y-axis labelled 1-10. You might like to include words as well like "boring" at the bottom to "wow" at the top as a suggested guide. See below for example.



**A TENSION GRAPH FOR THE 3 ACT STRUCTURE**



## After Reading

### CHARACTERS

- I. On a large sheet of paper or cardboard, construct a “character map” depicting a key character from the novel and the relationship they have with others. Create a visual representation of the character by drawing them, and include the following:
  - a. Adjectives to describe them
  - b. Summary of their role in text
  - c. Key quotes that reveal their personality (both from Bathsheba’s perspective and their own dialogue)
  - d. What they might represent thematically.

The following pages can be used as a starting point for each character:

Captain Alexandria – pages 10, 20, 45, 48, 62, 78, 80, 102, Chapter 25, 118, 120, 134, 152  
Willem – 9, 10, 48, 60, 70, 73, 129, 132, 135  
Demetrius – 46, 53, 67, 112, 126, 128, 143  
Treasure – 10, 11, 17, 47, 48, 60, 63, 112-113

2. In groups, do a “hot seat” activity for each character. In this activity, one student must take on the persona of one of the main characters and respond to questions in their persona’s voice. The chosen student will need to think about how their stance, body language, vocabulary or expression will communicate their chosen character. This can be done as part of an empathy task, or as a game where peers must guess who the student is performing.
3. Ness uses a first-person narration that deliberately only shows us Bathsheba’s perspective. Further, we know that Bathsheba is purposely curating her story with the attempt to encourage us to grasp her message of peace and unity. Does this put Bathsheba’s credibility in question? Is she a reliable narrator? Choose one of the following chapters and rewrite it from another character’s perspective. Try to explore alternative possibilities and motivations for characters’ actions and choices. For example, is Demetrius secretly working with Toby Wick all along? Is Bathsheba actually really irritating?
  - a. The discovery of the coin (Chapter 7)
  - b. The interpretation of Demetrius’s message (Chapter 11)
  - c. First parlay with Captain Arcturus (Chapter 17)
  - d. The Massacre (Chapter 22)
  - e. The “adult question” discussion with either Demetrius or Captain Alexandria (Chapters 23/24)
  - f. Treasure’s death (Chapters 27/28)

### THEMES

#### THE POWER OF WORDS

1. Deconstruct the title. What language devices has Ness used and what do they immediately suggest to the reader on first reading?
2. “The most powerful cultural control of all [is] rumour.” (157)
  - a. What does Bathsheba mean by this? Give examples where this has been proven true throughout the novel. Consider how this is evident through the fear of Toby Wick and the creation of his myth.
  - b. Do you think this is correct in your own life? Why? Give real-life examples and provide evidence for your answer.
3. “Call me Bathsheba” (1) and “Take the name Bathsheba and make it a story of peace” (158)
  - a. Throughout the text, Bathsheba has been cynical about the idea of prophecy or a “chosen one” and is reluctant to be connected to the myth of Toby Wick. However her ultimate choice to take part in the myth and commit to presenting her story and perspective as a means to challenge her society leads to a change in societal attitude. Research and write a short report on real-life examples of men or women who have become our “Bathsheba,” the heroes or legends we use to represent societal change or movements.
  - b. Alternatively, Bathsheba claims that “all men are Toby Wick, for who needs the devil when you have men?” (59) In an attempt to separate ourselves from the cruel and evil things humanity is capable of, we mythologise historical figures of tyranny as being “Evil” or “Other”. Research and write a short report on real life examples of men or women who have become our “Toby Wicks”, the scary monsters we use to teach morals and ethics.
4. The text begins and ends with a direct imperative to the reader, “Call me Bathsheba, it’s not my name, but the name I use for this story” (1), which immediately indicates that Bathsheba is purposely manipulating her story to achieve a purpose. Evaluate how Ness uses Bathsheba’s narration to explore how words have the power to manipulate perceptions of cultural history.
5. “A surprise. I understood the young man best when he spoke.” (47) Much is made of Bathsheba’s ability to understand and interpret Demetrius. The Captain and apprentices doubt her, and question her explanations.

It is also the basis for their evolving relationship and Bathsheba's epiphany regarding the relationship between man and whale. Using several examples from the text, identify and explain what Ness is saying about the importance of communication and understanding in functional relationships.

#### OBSESSION

1. "I begin to wonder if doubt is better than the wrong knowledge." (129) What do you think? Is it better to be confident and obsessed with incorrect information or always doubting and questioning your actions? How is this dichotomy represented by the loyal apprentices Treasure and Willem, and the introspective Bathsheba?
2. "Will the world end in darkness because it is foretold? Or because there will be those who believe it so strongly they will make it so." (61) Throughout the text, Bathsheba explores the concept of prophecy and questions her society's religious obsession with the prophecy of Toby Wick. Compile a list of relevant quotes regarding prophecies and use them to write a speech exploring the power of faith and prophecy over society. Use the following page references as a guide: 60-61, 72, 107-108, 118, 121, 143, 158-160.
3. Bathsheba comes to the realisation that obsession with evil will irrevocably change you after Demetrius states, "The way they use his name to do terrible things. If you fight the devil, you become him." (99) When she asks Captain Alexandria the same "adult" question, the captain responds with her personal story. Now that the story is complete, what is your answer to the question "What does it cost to kill the devil?" (101) Make reference to both the text's final battle and real-life examples about how obsession can be dangerous.
4. As soon as Captain Alexandria sees the mysterious coin and "T.W." initials, she becomes obsessed with fulfilling her own prophecy and being the whale to defeat Toby Wick. How does Ness show this obsession develop and how is the reader positioned to respond to her? Do we want her to win? Consider how the battle ends and what becomes of her. (Chapter 37)
5. Compose an extended response to the following question: Discuss the positive and negative consequences of obsession on the individual and their world.

#### THE POWER OF EMOTION

1. Throughout his ordeal, Demetrius remains stoic. Define this word and give examples of Demetrius's

stoicism in the text. Most people would not remain as strong as he does, yet he is an ordinary man. Compose a diary entry written from Demetrius's perspective evaluating his need for personal strength.

2. "For who needs devils when you have men?" (59)
  - a. Despite her lack of faith in the Toby Wick myth, Bathsheba clearly has a strong hatred for all mankind. Explain why Bathsheba's hatred is so strong and complex. Use the quotes found on the following pages to extend your answer: 30, 33, 58-60, 67, 128
  - b. "What might happen if a whale can learn the name of a man, and she can learn his? And she can mourn his passing? If this is possible, what else might be?" (160) Explore how Bathsheba's relationship with Demetrius challenges her hatred of man.
3. "He was a whale. A whale who was our reflection in monstrosity. And also a man who was a reflection of men's too. It's no wonder he slaughtered us" (142) Toby Wick is revealed to be a hideous creature brought to life by mutual fear and hatred. What is Ness suggesting about the nature of fear and hatred through the metaphor of Toby Wick? Make reference to his physical form, Bathsheba's uncontrollable connection with him and Cai's final illustration.
4. Ness begins his text with a quote from Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*. Find the quote and explain what it suggests about the nature of hatred. Compare this to the final line of the text. What is the power of hatred?
5. Ness acknowledges that his novels usually deal with dark themes like anger, hatred and violence; as evidenced in *And The Ocean Was Our Sky*. However he states, "My philosophy is that if you don't engage with the darkness in YA books, then you're abandoning them [teenagers] to face it by themselves."<sup>1</sup> Considering the personal angst and strong emotions experienced by his target audience, explain what Ness is saying about the power of hatred and how to overcome it. Students could do this through an essay response, or experiment with the interplay between words and images by exploring this question through a PechaKucha: A multimodal presentation where students use twenty images to explore a thesis statement, allowing twenty seconds of speech per image. Explore this new text type on the website <https://www.pechakucha.org/>

<sup>1</sup> <https://io9.gizmodo.com/patrick-ness-explains-the-secret-of-writing-an-unforget-1351030518?IR=T>

## CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

1. It is now a time of reconciliation and peace between the Whales and Humans, where each are invited to explore the other's world. Make a visitor's guide for humans to "The Great Abyss" (the whales' world). Include information gathered from the text about religion, hunting practices, education science and technology, etc.
2. The text requires the reader to suspend their disbelief and immerse themselves in a new and unusual world underneath the ocean. Ness does this by taking the time to carefully build credibility by including details about whale technology. Choose one of the following items used by the whales and create a "fact file" about it including quotes from the text and your own labelled diagram.
3. Create a collage or visual representation of the novel. Consider the themes, setting, characters and style. Think particularly about how colour, symbolism, framing, composition, juxtaposition and other visual devices can be used to show your understanding of the text.
4. Imagine that the text of *And The Ocean Was Our Sky* has been commissioned to become an animated film. Write your proposal to direct the film. Write a set of directors notes explaining how you will bring this text to life on the big screen. Make sure your notes include:
  - a. Voice actors
  - b. Animation style (Stop animation? CGI? Cartoon?)
  - c. Diagrams of each character's design
  - d. Motifs and Mise-en-scene
  - e. Sound and Music
  - f. A short script of a significant moment in the text.
5. This text is a retelling of Herman Melville's novel *Moby Dick*, written in 1851. It begins with the famous line "Call me Ishmael" and follows the story of a young man caught up in his Captain's obsession with catching a killer white whale called "Moby Dick". Read a summary of this text and hypothesise why Ness chose to subvert this particular tale as a vehicle for exploring his themes of obsession, the power of words and emotions.