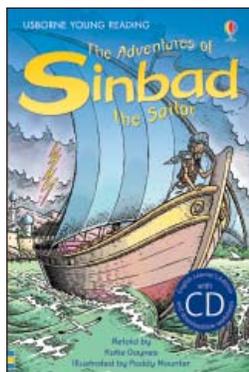


The Adventures of Sinbad the Sailor • Teacher's notes



Author: From the Arabian Nights, adapted by Katie Daynes

Reader level: Upper Intermediate

Word count: 2182

Lexile level: 600L

Text type: Fairy tale/folk tale

About the story

After squandering his father's fortune, Sinbad tries his luck as a merchant, getting a taste for adventure on the high seas. Each chapter in the book leads him into life-threatening situations, from monster whales and giant birds of prey to storms and waterfalls. Each time, miraculously, he lives to tell the tale. But when he reaches the safety of home, he soon gets bored and finds a way to go to sea again... until his final voyage, in which he is rescued by an old man and falls in love with his daughter. They marry and sail to Baghdad, where the story ends; but we are left wondering if Sinbad can ever really settle down.

About the Arabian Nights

Sinbad is one of the best-known stories from a collection of Middle Eastern and South Asian folk tales, known as the Arabian Nights or the Thousand and One Nights. Other tales in the collection include Aladdin and his Wonderful Lamp and Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves. They were gathered together over hundreds of years by authors, translators and scholars.

The premise for the stories is that a cruel Sultan has threatened to kill his new wife, Scheherazade, the day after their marriage. To save herself, Scheherazade starts telling a wonderful story. She doesn't finish it, but keeps the Sultan in suspense, and he postpones her execution in order to find out what happens next. When she does finish a story, she quickly begins another before her husband can act on his threat. Finally, a thousand and one nights and hundreds of stories later, the Sultan decides to let his wife go free.

Key words

Your students might not be familiar with some of these words in the story.

p3	voyage	shady	p16	charged	p23	gazed	p32	swept	p38	craggy	
	merchant	panic	p18	ambushed	p24	herds		paused		flowing	
	fortune	p12	gigantic	overboard	p25	gale		troll	p39	sparkled	
p5	spices		unwound	miserable		mast		grip		glided	
	loading		turban	p19	shore	p26	feast	p33	exhausted	hurtling	
p6	tremble	p13	stretched	courtyard		gobbled		flask		whoosh	
	flung		soared	blink		slurping		sip	p40	bank	
	flipped		dangling	roasted		guzzling		snatched		[meaning	
p7	drowned		gulp	p20	exit	p27	fled	glugged		"slope"]	
	clung	p13	claws		raft		grounds	swaying		local	
	distant		squirming		vines	p28	grazing	burps	p41	content	
	ruler		slithered	p21	pelting	p29	revenge	toppled	p42	jaws	
p8	stranded		studded		survived	p30	hired	p34	bald	p43	exotic
	amazed		stuffing		clinging		eager		palms	p44	waterfall
p9	drifted		vicious		noon		curious		chattered	p46	blessing
p10	delighted	p15	ducked		fainted	p31	massive	p36	risking	p47	gorgeous
	trade		grabbed	p22	swallowed		boulder		envy		
p11	deserted		trailing		skinny		perished	p37	gloom		



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Key phrases

p4	everything's on me	p11	to head for	p21	to push off	p37	off course
p5	follow in his father's footsteps [to do something] for a living on board	p12	This is the life! to settle down to creep up to	p22	to smash... to pieces the next thing they knew	p38	from top to bottom one by one
p8	I'll look after you on duty	p15	in no time	p24	it didn't take long	p39	Had his luck... run out?
p9	to belong to to set sail	p16	Bother! [exclamation]	p25	to whip up	p41	guess what?
p10	itchy feet	p18	in return for bound for	p26	To his horror	p44	to dry off open-mouthed
			How dare you...	p27	to round up		to fall in love
				p31	all but [literary, = "everyone except"]	p47	they found themselves
				p32	Yet again		

Before reading

Ask students if they've ever had an exciting adventure. It doesn't have to be a trip to an exotic place, it could just as easily be a weekend camping in a field. Did anything go wrong? Were they scared at any point? Did it make them want to do it again? Write the name "Sinbad" on the board and ask the students if they recognize it, then find out if they know anything about him and his adventures.

Reading or listening

You can listen to the story on CD or read it aloud to the students, take turns to read or read together silently. Each double page spread in the book is one track on the CD, so that you can pause between tracks or repeat tracks if your students need it. The first reading is in a British English accent, and it is followed by an American English reading. The words are exactly the same. After the story, there is a short selection of key phrases that can be used for pronunciation practice.

During reading: you might like to ask some of these questions.

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|-----|---|-----|--|
| p4 | Which words could be used to describe Sinbad? [Generous, foolish, greedy...] | p23 | How does Sinbad feel when he recognizes the captain? How does the captain feel? |
| p6 | There is sand on the whale... it must have been still for a very long time. What do you think disturbed it? | p28 | Do you think Sinbad should have tried to help the others? What could he have done? |
| p10 | Why do merchants take silks and spices to other countries to trade? [The goods will be seen as exotic and unusual, and fetch a higher price.] | p30 | How is Sinbad different from the other men? [cleverer, more sensible...] |
| p16 | How do you think the dead sheep got into the valley? | p36 | What do you think Sinbad misses about his travels? |
| | | p38 | Why is it strange that the river is flowing into the cave? |
| | | p47 | Do you think Sinbad will stay in Baghdad? |

After reading

Ask your class: why was Sinbad so lucky? Was it just luck, or was there something special about him?

Tell your students a little about the Arabian Nights stories (see previous page). Explain how Scheherazade was relying on her skill as a storyteller to save her own life, and how she had to dream up unexpected, dramatic events so that her husband would keep her alive to finish the story. Can you see how she did that in Sinbad's story? If you were Scheherazade, where would you pause the story?

Ask your students to come up with their own incredible scenarios. They could take it in turns to complete the sentence: "Sinbad's journey was going well, until..." [a gigantic octopus emerged from under the waves/a flying saucer full of scary aliens landed on the deck/the ship crashed into an erupting volcano]. Encourage each student to be more inventive and dramatic than the last.