



Summary

Events in American History: Yankee Whalers intertwines the history of whaling through key events in American history and describes the life and experiences of the men who hunted whales. The text explains the many uses of whale oil, the golden age of Yankee whaling, and the decline of this commerce.

Vocabulary		Comprehension Strategy	Genre Study	Text Features	
ambergris	baleen	Asking questions, Determining main idea and supporting details	Text Structure: Description Identify main idea, Determine supporting details	table of contents	headings
blockade	blubber			photographs	maps
colony	forecastle			labeled photograph	captions
harbor	logbook			sidebars	text boxes
maritime	mutiny			timelines	glossary
scrimshaw	Yankee			index	

Standards: Social Studies

- Understands how labor systems and natural resources and relations with other countries shaped the economic system in the colonies and the Americas
 - Understands how relations with the home country shaped the economic system in the colonies and the Americas
 - Understands economic life and the work people did in the New England colonies
 - Understands environmental factors and human factors contributing to economic life in the colonies
 - Knows about the New England merchants trading triangle
 - Knows about the relocation of enslaved Africans to North America and the slave trade
 - Understands the events that contributed to the outbreak of the American Revolution
 - Knows about the earliest armed conflict and major developments of the Revolutionary War
 - Understands the importance of slavery as a principal cause of the Civil War
- Kendall, J. S., & Marzano, R. J. (2004). *Content knowledge: A compendium of standards and benchmarks for K-12 education*. Aurora, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL). Online database: www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/

Discussion Prompts Prior to Independent Reading

Vocabulary Building and Background Knowledge:
Read the title as students look at the cover. Ask students to talk about what they observe on the cover and what they already know about the practice of whaling. Scaffold a discussion that builds on the background knowledge of students. Introduce students to the vocabulary words as they examine the glossary on page 47.

Discussion questions:

- Who is a *Yankee*? In what other ways have you heard the word *Yankee*?
- What words specifically refer to a whale?
- *Scrimshaw* is the art of carving on whale teeth or bones. What images do you think sailors designed on whale teeth and bones? Why do you think sailors created this beautiful artwork?

Genre Study and Text Features:
State that **Events in American History: Yankee Whalers** is an informational text. Ask students to examine the table of contents and decide how the information is organized. Explain to students that the text

is written as a description which means that it opens with a main idea and then gives supporting details that provide additional information. Highlight genre characteristics and text features that will support students in reading the text.

Highlight prompts:

- Ask students to examine the table of contents and write down at least 3 questions they would like to know about the chapter titles. After reading the text, ask students to record answers to these questions.
- Examine the text boxes in Chapter 1. Ask students what kind of information they find in the text boxes. Explain to the students that reading the text boxes gives the reader important information that helps to better understand the text.
- Examine the timeline on page 46. What kind of information do you find on the timeline?

Reading the Book:
Have students read the book independently or with a partner.

Comprehension Questions

After students have completed reading **Events in American History: Yankee Whalers** gather students together for a discussion based on the questions below or assign students to answer the questions independently or with a partner.

- What was the process used by crew members to make a whale into oil?
- How did early Yankee Whaling begin in the United States? Where did this practice begin?
- How did the Revolutionary War impact Yankee whaling?
- What does the author mean by the golden age of Yankee Whaling?
- How were whaling ships involved in the slave trade? How was whaling part of the movement to end slavery?

BLM: Extension Activity

Students may use the graphic organizer on the next page to record the benefits and the drawbacks of Yankee Whaling.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Events in American History: Yankee Whalers

Name: _____

Date: _____

Directions: Complete the T-chart by recording the benefits and drawbacks of Yankee Whaling.

Benefits	Drawbacks