

Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> May

LO: Comprehension

## Why the Whales Came by Michael Morpurgo

### 2 Island of Ghosts

TEA WHEN I WAS A CHILD WAS ALWAYS FISH, FISH and potatoes; and that evening it was mullet, a great pink fish that stared up at me with glazed eyes from the platter. I had no appetite for it. All I could think of were those two letters in the sand on Rushy Bay. I had to know one way or the other – I had to be sure it was the Birdman.

I forced myself to eat the fish for I knew mother and father would suspect something if I did not, for mullet was known to be my favourite fish. We ate in silence, busying ourselves over the fish, so I had the whole meal to work out how best to ask them about the initials in the sand, without incriminating myself.

'Saw the Birdman today,' I said at last, as casually as I could.

'Hope you kept your distance,' said Father, pushing his plate away. 'With young Daniel Pender again were you? Always with him aren't you?' And it was true I suppose. Daniel Pender and Gracie Jenkins were a pair, inseparable. We always had been. He lived just across the way from our front gate at Veronica Farm. Whatever we did, we did together. Father went on. 'Proper young scallywag his father says he is and I can believe it. You be sure he doesn't lead you into any trouble, my girl. Always looks like a big puppy that one with his arms and legs too long for the rest of him. Hair's always stood up on his head like he's just got out of bed. Proper scallywag he looks.'

'Looks aren't everything,' said mother quietly; and then she smiled and added, 'they can't be, can they, else how would I ever have come to pick you?'

'My beard, perhaps, Clemmie,' father laughed, and he stroked his beard and smoothed his moustache. He always called her 'Clemmie' when he was happy. It was 'Clem' when he was angry.

'You leave Daniel be,' said Mother. 'He's a clever boy, clever with his hands. You seen those boats he makes?'

'I help him,' I insisted. 'I paint them and I make the sails.'

### Retrieval

- 1) What sort of fish did Gracie have for tea that evening ?
- 2) What did father call Gracie's mother when he was happy ?

### Words in context

- 3) Tick the definition which means 'inseparable'.

- easily separated
- really annoying
- unable to be separated

- 4) Find and copy a word which shows Gracie is trying to find out about the Birdman without her parents suspecting anything.

### Inference

- 5) What do Gracie's mother and father think of Daniel ? Use the text to explain your answer.

	Father	Mother
Opinion of Daniel		
Evidence from text		