



GCSE

C700U20-1A



A17-C700U20-1A



ENGLISH LANGUAGE – Component 2
19th and 21st Century Non-Fiction Reading
and Transactional/Persuasive Writing

FRIDAY, 3 NOVEMBER 2017 – MORNING

RESOURCE MATERIAL FOR USE WITH SECTION A

Whales Under Threat Again

Dust down the slogan, 'Save The Whale', because it's needed once again. Thirty years on from the 1986 international agreement to stop commercial whaling, whales face renewed danger.

This year, in the biggest whale slaughter for a generation, more than 2,000 animals are likely to be directly hunted by the three countries continuing whale hunting in defiance of world opinion, Japan, Norway and Iceland.

Japan is leading the way. Its whaling fleet is firing harpoons right now in the Antarctic Ocean, hunting nearly a thousand minke whales, more than double the number it killed last year, all of them under the label of so-called 'scientific' whaling – allegedly killing the animals for research purposes. This label is a fiction which fools no one, as more whale meat and whale products end up in Japanese restaurants than in laboratories.

Norway, which is pursuing commercial whaling openly by simply refusing to sign up to the 1986 international agreement, is following close behind, with another leap in its planned kills in the coming year. The Norwegian government recently announced it would increase its whale hunting following a unanimous recommendation by the Norwegian parliament.

Iceland, which started whaling again three years ago, also under the 'scientific' label, killed a total of 155 endangered fin whales – the second largest animal on earth after the blue whale – and 39 minke whales last year and is expected to hunt a similar number in the coming year.

That all adds up to by far the bloodiest bout of whale slaughter since the days of full-scale commercial whaling and has greatly angered environmental campaigners.

"People should wake up to the scale of what is happening this year," said a spokesman for Greenpeace UK. "Politicians who are supposed to be anti-whaling especially need to wake up to it, and press their governments to put as much effort into saving the world's whale populations as the whaling countries are doing to exploit them."



Greenpeace has decided to take the fight directly to the Japanese, and has sent two of its large campaigning vessels, *Arctic Sunrise* and *Esperanza*, to the Antarctic Ocean to try to disrupt whaling operations directly. In the past 10 days there has been a series of extraordinary confrontations between Greenpeace and the Japanese whaling ships. In actions similar to those which first made the group famous in the 1970s, Greenpeace activists in small inflatable boats have been trying to block the harpooners' line of fire and, on a number of occasions, have succeeded – making the idea of 'Save The Whale' a reality.

Another marine conservation group, Sea Shepherd, has also been taking direct action to prevent the slaughter of whales in the Faroe Islands, a self-governing nation within the Kingdom of Denmark. Although whaling is illegal in Denmark, the annual killing of pilot whales is allowed in the Faroe Islands.

As many as 250 whales were reportedly massacred on two beaches in the Faroe Islands in July, where locals savagely killed all of the pilot whales. The horrific scenes were filmed by activists from Sea Shepherd and published on the internet. The film footage shows how the innocent whales were herded inshore by small boats and forced to swim towards the beaches.



The locals, many of whom were dressed in full wetsuits, waded into the water and violently dragged the distressed animals up the beach, where they were ruthlessly slaughtered. Five members of the Sea Shepherd group were arrested as they tried to stop the gruesome spectacle.

The captain of one of the Sea Shepherd boats said he believed two Danish naval vessels were in the area when the hunt took place. He said, "It was perfectly clear to me that the slaughter proceeded with the full consent of the Danish Navy."

How much longer can the government of Denmark continue its arrogant support of this bloody practice, which is in direct conflict with its commitments to international law? All decent people should see that the hunting of whales is cruel and unacceptable.