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## **The Breaking News English.com Resource Book**

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## **Whaling protester in near-miss harpooning**

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**16 January, 2006**

## **THE ARTICLE**

### **Whaling protester in near-miss harpooning**

A harpoon fired by a Japanese whaling ship sailed a meter above a Greenpeace dinghy in the Antarctic yesterday. The harpoon's rope hit the small boat and an activist fell into the icy sea. Texas Joe Constantine was unhurt but was angry that the harpoon had gone so close to his boat. The whalers were chasing a minke whale, which they eventually killed. Constantine said the whalers were taking greater risks because of Greenpeace's success in making hunting more difficult. He said this had increased tensions between the Japanese whalers, especially because of the cat and mouse tactics used by Greenpeace.

The near miss has led Greenpeace to rethink its human shield-style protest against Japanese whalers. Greenpeace spokesman Shane Rattenbury believes the whalers are becoming more and more angry with the protesters. He said: "Yesterday took it to a new level – we are very concerned about that....The harpooners are certainly starting to take shots that perhaps a week or two weeks ago they would not have taken." The whalers say Greenpeace is taking dangerous risks to get media attention. Mr. Rattenbury accused the whale hunt of being "commercial whaling in disguise".

## WARM-UPS

**1. I'M A WHALE:** You are a whale. Talk to the other “whales” in the class about ocean life. What do you do all day? Do you have any shark friends? What are your plans for the weekend? Have you heard about the humans killing whales for scientific research?

**2. GREENPEACE:** What protests by Greenpeace do you support most? In pairs / groups, rank the following in order of importance to you. Talk about how strongly you feel about each issue.

- Banning whaling
- Stopping climate change
- Protecting forests
- Banning genetic engineering
- Ending nuclear weapons
- Encouraging sustainable trade
- banning toxic chemicals
- Protecting Earth's oceans

**3. WHAT DO YOU KNOW?** Walk around the class ask other students, “What do you know about whales?” Return to your partner / group and share your findings. Walk around the class again, this time telling classmates about whales: “Did you know (that)...?” Repeat for “What do you know about Greenpeace?”

**4. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

*Harpoons / whaling / dinghies / icy seas / Antarctica / hunting / tensions / cats and mice / near misses / disguises / risks / new levels / media attention*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

**5. TWO-MINUTE WHALE DEBATES:** Face your partner and have the following fun 2-minute debates. Students A strongly believe in the first argument, students B the second. Change pairs often.

- a. Whales are best. vs. Sharks are best.
- b. Whale meat is delicious. vs. It's wrong to eat whale meat.
- c. I want to go whale watching. vs. How boring.
- d. Whaling should be banned. vs. Whaling for scientific research is OK.
- e. Whales should not be eaten. They are intelligent. vs. So are cows and pigs.
- f. Whale meat is a part of many cultural diets. vs. Those cultures must change.
- g. Whaling is cruel. vs. So are boxing and blood sports.
- h. Whaling is the same as fishing. vs. Whales are not fish.
- i. Whales talk to each other. vs. Birds talk to each other too.
- j. Japan should be punished for whaling. vs. No. Whaling is part of Japan's culture.

**6. WHALE:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word “whale”. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| a. A whaling protester fired a harpoon at another whaling ship.      | T / F |
| b. An anti-whaling activist started drinking because of stress.      | T / F |
| c. A minke whale killed a Greenpeace activist in Antarctica.         | T / F |
| d. Greenpeace is playing a cat and mouse game with Japanese whalers. | T / F |
| e. Greenpeace is rethinking its human shield-style of protests.      | T / F |
| f. Greenpeace said the whalers are taking things to a new level.     | T / F |
| g. The whalers said Greenpeace is not taking any serious risks.      | T / F |
| h. Greenpeace said the hunting is commercial whaling in disguise.    | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| a. ship       | definitely    |
| b. icy        | furious       |
| c. angry      | demonstration |
| d. increased  | campaign      |
| e. tactics    | worried       |
| f. near miss  | vessel        |
| g. protest    | business      |
| h. concerned  | escalated     |
| i. certainly  | close shave   |
| j. commercial | freezing      |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |                                  |                            |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. A harpoon fired               | minke whale                |
| b. an activist fell              | to get media attention     |
| c. The whalers were chasing a    | shield-style protest       |
| d. the whalers were taking       | and more angry             |
| e. the cat and mouse             | by a Japanese whaling ship |
| f. rethink its human             | greater risks              |
| g. the whalers are becoming more | disguise                   |
| h. we are very concerned         | into the icy sea           |
| i. taking dangerous risks        | tactics used by Greenpeace |
| j. commercial whaling in         | about that                 |

## **WHILE READING / LISTENING**

**ODD WORD OUT:** Delete the incorrect or least likely word from the groups in *italics*.

### **Whaling protester in near-miss harpooning**

A harpoon fired by a Japanese whaling *ship / vessel / cruise* sailed a meter above a Greenpeace *dinghy / dingy / boat* in the Antarctic yesterday. The harpoon's rope hit the small boat and an activist *fell / toppled / trampled* into the icy sea. Texas Joe Constantine was unhurt but was angry that the harpoon had gone so close to his boat. The whalers were *purchasing / following / chasing* a minke whale, which they eventually killed. Constantine said the whalers were taking *smaller / greater / bigger* risks because of Greenpeace's success in making hunting more difficult. He said this had increased tensions between the Japanese whalers, especially because of the cat and mouse *pets / campaign / tactics* used by Greenpeace.

The *near miss / close shave / almost there* has led Greenpeace to rethink its human shield-style *demonstration / examination / protest* against Japanese whalers. Greenpeace spokesman Shane Rattenbury believes the whalers are becoming *more and more / less and less / increasingly* angry with the protesters. He said: "Yesterday took it to a new level – we are very *cornered / worried / concerned* about that....The harpooners are *certainly / definitely / seldom* starting to take shots that perhaps a week or two weeks ago they would not have taken." The whalers say Greenpeace is taking dangerous risks to get media attention. Mr. Rattenbury accused the whale hunt of being "*advert / commercial / business* whaling in disguise".

## **LISTENING**

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### **Whaling protester in near-miss harpooning**

A \_\_\_\_\_ fired by a Japanese whaling ship sailed a meter above a Greenpeace dinghy in the Antarctic yesterday. The harpoon's rope hit the small boat and an \_\_\_\_\_ fell into the icy sea. Texas Joe Constantine was unhurt but was angry that the harpoon had gone so close to his boat. The whalers were \_\_\_\_\_ a minke whale, which they eventually killed. Constantine said the whalers were taking \_\_\_\_\_ risks because of Greenpeace's success in making hunting more difficult. He said this had \_\_\_\_\_ tensions between the Japanese whalers, especially because of the cat and mouse \_\_\_\_\_ used by Greenpeace.

The near miss has led Greenpeace to \_\_\_\_\_ its human shield-style protest against Japanese whalers. Greenpeace spokesman Shane Rattenbury believes the whalers are becoming more and more angry with the \_\_\_\_\_. He said: "Yesterday took it to a new level - we are very \_\_\_\_\_ about that....The harpooners are \_\_\_\_\_ starting to take shots that perhaps a week or two weeks ago they would not have taken." The whalers say Greenpeace is taking dangerous risks to get media \_\_\_\_\_. Mr. Rattenbury accused the whale hunt of being "commercial whaling in \_\_\_\_\_".

## **AFTER READING / LISTENING**

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'icy' and 'sea'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. ODD WORD OUT:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. STUDENT "WHALING" SURVEY:** In pairs / groups, write down questions about whaling.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

**6. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- |            |                 |
|------------|-----------------|
| • meter    | • miss          |
| • icy      | • more and more |
| • unhurt   | • new level     |
| • greater  | • shots         |
| • tensions | • media         |
| • mouse    | • disguise      |

## **DISCUSSION**

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. What adjectives describe your feelings about the article?
- c. What do you know about whaling?
- d. Do you think it's OK to kill whales for scientific research?
- e. What do you think of Greenpeace's actions?
- f. What would you be thinking right now if you were Mr. Constantine?
- g. Do you think what Greenpeace is doing is illegal?
- h. Would you like to try whale meat?
- i. Is eating whale meat OK if it is part of a cultural tradition?
- j. Have you ever played any cat and mouse games?

### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. Do you think whales are too intelligent to eat?
- d. If a whaler's harpoon killed a protester, would the whalers be guilty of murder?
- e. Why do so many countries in the world oppose whaling?
- f. Have you ever taken part in a protest?
- g. Would you ever become part of a human shield to protest against something?
- h. What scientific research do you think is necessary that requires killing thousands of whales each year?
- i. Should we stop hunting and killing all animals?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

**AFTER DISCUSSION:** Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b. Was there a question you didn't like?
- c. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d. What did you like talking about?
- e. Which was the most difficult question?



## **SPEAKING**

**ROLE PLAY:** Should all forms of whaling be banned? Team up with classmates who have the same role to develop your roles. Discuss ideas and “strategies” before the role play begins. Introduce yourself to the other role players.

Role A – Japanese whaler

You live in a very small coastal village. Your community has whaled for centuries. Without whaling the whole community would die an economic death. You hate Greenpeace. They don't understand the oceans and don't respect your culture.

Role B – Texas Joe Constantine

As a Greenpeace activist, you believe whaling is totally wrong. Whales are endangered and very intelligent mammals. There is no scientific reason to kill whales. You think whaling is cruel. You want to sue the whalers for putting your life in danger.

Role C – Whale Steak Inc. President

Your company sells whale meat. You believe whales are an important source of food. You believe that when the world's forests have disappeared, whales will become an important source of food. You think Japan's scientific research is essential to ensure the survival of whales. You hate Greenpeace.

Role D – Jo the whale

You are a whale with a family. You're trying to live your life in the ocean and avoid the killer humans with their deadly harpoons. You hate the sounds of pain other whales make for many hours as they die. They die very slowly after being harpooned. You think humans should stick to beef.

After the role play, discuss whether you really believed what you were saying in your role.

## **HOMEWORK**

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find more information on Japanese whaling. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

**3. WHALE POSTER:** Make a poster about one species of whale. Show your poster to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

**4. A DAY IN THE LIFE:** You are a whale. Write an account of one day in your life. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Did everyone have similar days?

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

a. F      b. F      c. F      d. T      e. T      f. T      g. F      h. T

### SYNONYM MATCH:

|               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| a. ship       | vessel        |
| b. icy        | freezing      |
| c. angry      | furious       |
| d. increased  | escalated     |
| e. tactics    | campaign      |
| f. near miss  | close shave   |
| g. protest    | demonstration |
| h. concerned  | worried       |
| i. certainly  | definitely    |
| j. commercial | business      |

### PHRASE MATCH:

|                                  |                            |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. A harpoon fired               | by a Japanese whaling ship |
| b. an activist fell              | into the icy sea           |
| c. The whalers were chasing a    | minke whale                |
| d. the whalers were taking       | greater risks              |
| e. the cat and mouse             | tactics used by Greenpeace |
| f. rethink its human             | shield-style protest       |
| g. the whalers are becoming more | and more angry             |
| h. we are very concerned         | about that                 |
| i. taking dangerous risks        | to get media attention     |
| j. commercial whaling in         | disguise                   |

### ODD WORD OUT:

#### Whaling protester in near-miss harpooning

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