

ORTELIUS' HANDBOOK OF Sea Monsters

COMPLETED BY: _____



ABRAHAM ORTELIUS, 1595

INTRODUCTION

The map in this handbook was made by Abraham Ortelius, a mapmaker from the late 1500s. He was not an explorer or a scientist, so you might wonder where he got his information about sea monsters.

It so happens that Abraham used another mapmaker's information about sea monsters in order to make his map of Iceland. Olaus Magnus was a man from Sweden who moved to Rome several decades before Abraham began making maps. Olaus wrote a book about Scandinavia, the region around Sweden, and described many of the sea monsters that Swedish people believed in.

Even though believing in sea monsters may sound silly to us, sometimes the "monsters" people believed in were based on real animals, such as whales, sharks, seals, manatees, and narwhals.

DIRECTIONS: Read the paragraphs about the sea monsters that people during the Middle Ages and early Renaissance believed in. Find the creatures on Abraham's map (p. 4-5), and fill in each blank with the letter that Abraham assigned to that sea monster.

HEYNA D



The Heyna has three eyes on its side and is also called a "sea hog."

BURCHVALUR C



The Burchvalur is known for his big head, twice the size of its body. It has many long teeth, and is 60 cubits (90 feet) long.

ZIPHIUS E



The Ziphius is a frightening sea monster who likes to feed on sea calves.

WHALE H



Behold the whale, larger than all other sea monsters. When it is seen, it looks more like an island than a fish. Real whales look a little different, don't they?

STEIPEREIDUR L



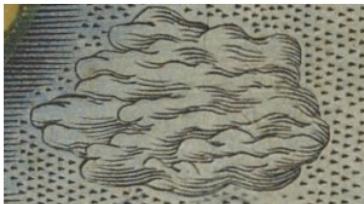
Steipereidur are very tame whales who defend themselves and fishermen against other whales. They are 100 cubits (about 150 feet) long.

SEENAUR K



Seenaur or gray sea oxen. Sometimes they leave the sea and enter into rivers. They travel together in packs.

HUALAMBUR O



This funny-looking cloud is not actually a sea creature, but it is made by one. Hualambur was used to make perfume during Abraham Ortelius' day. Even though it was very expensive and valuable, it is actually whale vomit!

ROSTUNGER N



Rostunger, also called Rosmarus, looks like a calf and walks on the sea bottom with its four short legs. He sleeps hanging from a rock by the two teeth on the top of his head. They are each a yard long.

HROSHVALUR G



Hroshvalur, or “sea horse,” has a mane like a horse and is dangerous to fishermen. Hroshvalur is much bigger than real sea horses.

BRITISH WHALE F



The British Whale is 30 yards long and toothless, but has a tongue that is seven yards long.

NAHUAL A



This fish is called Nahual. He has a tooth in the front of his mouth that is about 10 1/2 feet long, which was thought to be a cure for poison. Nahual is likely based on the narwhal, a real sea creature.

STAUKUL M



Staukul is known to stand on its tail for a whole day. Its name comes from its leaping ability. It is dangerous to small ships, and even eats people!

POLAR BEARS Q



Abraham included these bears on his map because people had seen them on large, floating chunks of ice. We know them today as polar bears.

ROIDER B



Meet Roider. He is 130 yards long and without teeth. His fat can cure many illnesses, and his meat is said to be tasty.

SKAUTAHVALUR I



Skautahvalur, a fish made of all cartilage (like the tops of your ears), resembles a mantaray, but often seems to take on the shape of an island.

PART TWO: CREATE YOUR OWN SEA MONSTERS

Invent two sea monster based on the monsters you just saw. Then create a map of them in the boxes provided. Make sure you fill out the information below before beginning to draw!



INFORMATION: CREATURE ONE

Name: _____

Diet: _____

Special Abilities: _____

Temperament (i.e. violent, calm, timid): _____

INFORMATION: CREATURE TWO

Name: _____

Diet: _____

Special Abilities: _____

Temperament (i.e. violent, calm, timid): _____

