

Bigfoot and the Giant Squid

The fact and the fiction behind these famous creatures

About the Story

Lexile: 930L (combined)

For qualitative complexity factors, go to Scope Online.

Learning Objective:

to synthesize information from two nonfiction articles

Key Skills:

author's craft, key ideas and details, tone, synthesis

Essential Questions:

- Where do stories about mythological creatures come from?
- What is the appeal of imaginary creatures?
- How do myths help explain the world?

Standards:

The articles and lesson support these Common Core anchor standards: **R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.5, R.7, R.9, W.2, SL.1, SL.2, L.4, L.5, L.6.** For more standards information—including TEKS—go to Scope Online.



Your Teaching Support Package

Find your full suite of materials at scope.scholastic.com.

Audio:

- The articles
- Vocabulary

Literature Connections: ideas for connecting to curricular texts

Activities to print or project:

- Vocabulary
- Synthesis
- Close Reading and Critical Thinking
- **Core Skills Workout:** Text Evidence*
- Quiz*
- Contest Entry Form

* Available on two levels

Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Skill Building

1 Preparing to Read

Do-Now: Make a prediction.

(3 minutes)

Project the cover of the magazine, which poses the question “Which monster is real?” Give students one minute to study the illustration and then predict which creature actually exists. Take a quick poll. Invite students to share why they chose the monster they did.

Preview vocabulary.

(10 minutes, activity sheet online)

Project or distribute the **Vocabulary Words and Definitions**. Complete the activity as a class or assign it as homework. Highlighted words: *deduced, elude, enthusiasts, fantastical, figment, lair, outlandish, scat, sinewy, specimen*

2 Reading and Discussing

“Hunting a Monster”

(30 minutes, activity sheets online)

- Invite a student to read aloud the As You Read box on page 21.
- Read the article as a class. (Be sure to read the captions as well.) Optionally, play the audio from Scope Online while students follow along in their printed magazines.
- Invite students to share any reactions.
- Break students into groups to discuss the following questions.

Close-Reading Questions

▶ **Consider the story that author Mackenzie Carro tells in the introduction. Why might she have started her article this way?** (author’s craft) *The author likely chose to begin her article with this story because it is exciting and suspenseful. By describing an encounter with a mysterious creature in the woods without*

explaining what the creature was, Carro creates suspense and makes the reader want to continue reading. The last line of the section reveals that the creature was allegedly Bigfoot, which is likely meant to surprise and further intrigue the reader.

▶ **In the section “Bigfoot Mania,” how does Carro support the idea that Bigfoot is not real?** (key ideas and details) *Carro supports the idea that Bigfoot isn’t real by providing explanations for several of the Bigfoot stories that have been told over the years. For example, she explains that the footprints found in Bluff Creek were fake. Carro also points out that the idea of Bigfoot does not make sense scientifically. For example, she explains that if Bigfoot creatures were real but were extremely few in number, the species wouldn’t be able to breed and keep going.*

▶ **On page 22, Carro writes that on Bigfoot hunts, “groups are led through the woods by a Bigfoot-hunting ‘expert’ to search for evidence of the creature.” What does the author’s use of quotes around the word *expert* suggest about her attitude toward Bigfoot hunts?** (tone) *The fact that the author puts the word expert in quotes suggests that she finds the idea of a Bigfoot hunting expert—and the idea of Bigfoot hunts in general—to be silly and unscientific.*

“Monster of the Deep”

(30 minutes, activity sheets online)

- Reconvene the class to read the second article. (Be sure to read the captions too.)
- Then break students into groups to discuss the following question.

Close-Reading Question

▶ **Why are giant squid so difficult to find and study?** (key ideas and details) *Giant squid are difficult to find and study because they live in ocean depths that humans cannot easily explore.*

Giant squid also have large eyes and highly developed nerves. These features help the squid spot threats and then retreat quickly. This makes it difficult for humans to get close enough to catch the squid.

- Reconvene as a class to discuss the following critical-thinking questions, which draw on both articles.

Critical-Thinking Questions

▶ **Carro suggests that fascination with Bigfoot continues—even though there is no evidence that Bigfoot is real—because people simply want to believe in fantastical creatures. Do you agree with her? Explain.** *Answers will vary. Some will say yes, because if we know there's no scientific proof of Bigfoot, then the explanation for people's belief must go beyond logical reasoning. Others may say that no, some people believe Bigfoot is out there because many sightings have been reported and*

because other amazing creatures, like giant squid, have turned out to be real.

▶ **Consider the illustrations that appear in both articles. What do the illustrations and captions suggest about the origin of fantastical creatures?** *The illustrations and captions suggest that many fantastical creatures are likely based on real animals. For example, mermaid stories were actually based on manatees or dugongs, and dragons could actually have been Nile crocodiles. However, the origins of other creatures, like the Loch Ness monster, are more difficult to explain.*

3 Skill Building

Featured Skill: Synthesis

(15 minutes, activity sheet online)

Have students work in groups to complete the **Synthesis** activity. This activity will prepare them to respond to the writing prompt on page 25. *For alternate culminating tasks, go to Scope Online.*

Scope's Tools for Differentiation

We know that you have learners at all different levels in your classroom. We're here to help! These offerings make it easy to support all your students:

- Quizzes and activity sheets offered on two levels—one with more modeling and scaffolding and one with less
- Audio versions of articles
- Lower-Lexile versions of our narrative nonfiction features
- Vocabulary slideshows that support definitions with images and videos
- Writing prompts for struggling readers, on-level readers, and advanced readers in every lesson plan
- Customized performance tasks that offer a range of creative ways to respond to *Scope* stories

