



**Ernest (Miller) Hemingway (1898 – 1961)**

### **Student's Worksheet**

#### **Task One**

**Now read the text about Hemingway's life:**

#### **HIS EARLY LIFE**

Ernest Hemingway was one of the greatest American writers of the 20th century. A novelist and short-story writer was born in Oak Park, Illinois, the second of six children. However, he spent much of his early life in the Great Lakes region, which provided the settings for his early stories. His family was strict and very religious. His father taught his children a love of nature and the outdoor life. Ernest caught his first fish at the age of three, and was given a shotgun for his twelfth birthday. His mother taught him a love of music and art. At school, he was good at English and wrote for the school newspaper. He graduated in 1917, but he didn't go to college. After graduating he worked as a reporter for *The Kansas City Star*. He learned a lot but six months later he volunteered for service in World War I.

#### **HEMINGWAY AND WAR**

Hemingway was fascinated by war. He had wanted to become a soldier, but couldn't because he had poor eyesight. Instead, he was sent to Italy to serve with an ambulance unit as a driver. He was wounded there in 1918. After the war he worked as a journalist in Chicago and Toronto. However, he went to live in Paris soon, where he was encouraged in his work by the American writer Gertrude Stein. In the 1930's, he became a war correspondent in the Spanish Civil War and World War II. Many of his books were about war. His most successful book, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, was written in 1940 and is about the Spanish Civil War. Another novel, *A Farewell to Arms*, is about the absurdity of war.

#### **HIS PERSONAL LIFE**

Hemingway's success in writing was not mirrored by similar success in his personal life. He married four times. His first wife divorced him in 1927. He immediately married again and moved to Key West, Florida, where he enjoyed hunting, fishing, and drinking, but he also suffered from depression. This wasn't helped when, in 1928, his father committed suicide. Hemingway's health was not good and he had many accidents. Two more marriages failed and he began to drink heavily. In 1954, he survived two plane crashes. In October of the same year he was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature, but he was too ill to receive it in person.

## **HIS FINAL YEARS**

His final years were taken up with health problems and alcohol. He began to lose his memory and he couldn't write any more. On Sunday, 2nd July, 1961, Hemingway killed himself with a shotgun, just as his father had done before him.

### **Task Two:**

**Answer the questions about Hemingway's life:**

1. Where and when was he born? When and how did he die?
2. Did he have a happy family life? How did his parents play a part in his career?
3. What do you think were the most important events in his early life?
4. When did he move to Paris? Who did he meet there?
5. How did war play a part in his life?
6. How many times was he married? Were his marriages happy?
7. What do these dates refer to?

1898 1917 1918 1927 1928 1940 1954 1961

### **Task Three**

#### **Hemingway's works**

**Match the titles of Hemingway's works and their characteristics.**

1. ***A Farewell to Arms*** (1929)
2. ***For Whom the Bell Tolls*** (1940)
3. ***The Old Man and the Sea*** (1952)

A. *a novel; a psychological picture of war, during the Spanish Civil War Robert Jordan, the main character in the novel, a capable, conscientious American, comes to Spain to help in the fight against fascism; facing certain death in a guerrilla action, he realizes, what a beautiful place the world really is, and how much it is worth fighting for.*

B. *a short novel; Hemingway shows the eternal fight between nature and man; the old Cuban fisherman, who struggles to catch a big fish and finally loses it, does not, however give up; the story also shows Hemingway's cordial feelings toward common people as well as his positive attitude to the problems of Cuban people.*

C. *a novel; an epic description of World War I, Hemingway presents a charming and moving love story of an American lieutenant in the Italian Ambulance Service and an English nurse.*

## Task Four

### **THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA (1952)**

*The Old Man and the Sea*, for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize, is one of his later works. The short novel appeared in 1952 and shows the eternal fight between nature and man, which man must lose if he fights alone, but he shouldn't give up.

Santiago, an old Cuban fisherman, faces another day without a catch. He goes further out to sea, hooks a giant marlin, and struggles to bring it home.

We are going to watch the Academy Award winning animated adaptation by Alexander Petrov of Ernest Hemingway's novel prize-winning novel.

### **BEFORE SHOWING** (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W5ih1IRIxI>)

- Imagine having eighty-four bad days in a row. Brainstorm how you might feel about yourself and the future.

### **AFTER SHOWING**

#### **Discussion Items and Questions:**

1. What is the relationship between Santiago and the boy? Why does the boy call Santiago "Old Man"?
2. What does Santiago hope that the fish doesn't know? What is similar about his battle with the fish and his arm wrestling in Casa Blanca?
3. How does Santiago feel about having to kill fish for a living? What are his feelings towards the fish?
4. How does Santiago conquer the fish? How was Santiago beat?
5. What does the Old Man bring home? What is the boy's response to Santiago's home coming?
6. How does the story end?
7. The following is an emerging theme in the novel: *A man must have endurance, determination, and perseverance to accomplish anything.* Do you agree with this sentence? Why yes/no?
8. Imagine you are psychologists, in groups of four give counseling to somebody who has gone through a situation similar to Santiago's one in order to help him/her to get over it. Present your ideas to the rest of the class.

## **TEACHER'S GUIDE**

- Show them video on The Lost Generation. Before watching the video, warm up whether they remember something on the topic as it was explained during one of the first classes (feeling of alienation, existentialism, etc)
- After the warming up and having shared ideas, watch video and answer questions.
- Divide the class into four groups and give to each of the groups a part of Hemingway's biography. They will have to present to the class their parts so that, at the end, they have got a whole biography of the author and they can answer the questions provided.
- Work briefly on three of the most outstanding books by Hemingway (matching exercise).
- *The Old Man and The Sea*. Introduction, show video, work on questions.