



5. The Story of Sindbad the Sailor

The story of Sindbad and his seven fantastic voyages appears in the huge collection of stories – ‘The Book of One Thousand and One Nights’ or ‘The Arabian Nights’. The story tells us that Sindbad was a famous sailor who lived in Baghdad. He was honest, generous and brave. He had many adventures on each of his voyages. He never lost heart and hope in dangerous situations. He overcame great dangers and returned home safely from each of his voyages. Here’s the story of his first voyage.

The First Voyage

Sindbad set sail with a company of merchants on a big ship. From time to time, they stopped at various ports. There they sold their merchandise and bought new things to trade.

One day, when their ship was sailing smoothly across the sea, they spotted a small island at a distance. They had not seen land for many days and felt both surprised and happy to see the island. They sailed close to the island. The Captain of the ship allowed them to go there for a picnic. Everyone was excited. On the island, they strolled around, sang and danced. Some people began to wash clothes. Some lit fires to cook meals.

Soon, a breeze sprang up. The fires began to blaze. Suddenly, the land began to shake and move. With a shock, the picnic party realized that the island was not an island at all. They were on the back of a huge sea-monster, and it had started moving. People began to scream. They left their pots and pans, their clothes – both washed and unwashed, and rushed back to the ship. The Captain ordered his men to set sail immediately in order to move away from the monster.



The sea-monster plunged deep into the sea. Many of the people managed to climb aboard the ship, but many sank into the sea with the so called island. Sindbad alone did not drown in the sea. But he could not reach the ship. He saw it sailing far, far away. He was now at the mercy of the waves, being tossed here and there. He clung to a piece of wood and somehow managed to keep afloat. He spent the night alone at sea.

When the next day dawned, Sindbad was happy to see that he had floated near an island – a real, big island. He could see hills and woods and trees at a distance. Though he was extremely tired, he swam to the shore with all the strength that he could muster. Exhausted and hungry, he lay on the sand for some time. Then again, he made an effort and began to walk inland towards the shady fruit trees that he could see at a distance.

Luckily, this was the time when the King of that island sent his horses to the seashore with the grooms. The grooms saw Sindbad and gave him food and drink. Then they took him to the King. The King

was impressed by the way Sindbad told him about what had happened. He asked Sindbad to stay with him, and work as an officer of the King at the port.

Sindbad stayed there for a few days, learning a lot from the King and the people on the island and in turn telling them about the other cities and ports that he had visited. At the port, Sindbad often made enquiries about any ships coming from or going to Baghdad but no such ship ever came to that port.

Then one day, a ship arrived at the island with a lot of merchandise. Sindbad was at the quay when the cargo from that ship was being unloaded. He was surprised to see that his own name was marked on some of the boxes. Then he went to see the Captain of the ship. At first, the Captain could not believe that it was the same Sindbad that they had seen drowning in the sea. But when Sindbad spoke to him face to face, he recognised him. He was overjoyed to see Sindbad alive. He gave him back all his merchandise.



From the goods that he thus got back, Sindbad presented the most valuable items to the King of the island saying, “Please accept this, Your Majesty. You have been very kind and very generous to me.” The King was pleased. He, too, gave Sindbad many valuable gifts when Sindbad left the island with the merchant ship.

If you want to know what happened to Sindbad afterwards, you have to read the rest of the story of his fantastic voyages.

- **merchandise** : goods or things for sale. ● **trade** : give in return for something, sell.
- **strolled** : walked here and there, without hurrying.
- **sprang up** : developed or began to blow suddenly. ● **blaze** : burn strongly.
- **afloat** : floating. ● **all the strength that he could muster** : all the strength that he could use at that time.
- **inland** : towards an area of land away from the seashore. ● **grooms** : persons who take care of horses.
- **quay** : a platform in a port or harbour where boats come to load or unload their luggage. ● **cargo** : load of goods or things carried in a ship (or an aeroplane).

Things to do :

- Write at least one or two lines about the following with the help of the story.
(a) Sindbad, (b) The sea-monster, (c) The King of the island.
- Imagine what the people there might have said on the following occasions. Write it down. You may write it in one or two lines or you may write a long speech, if you like.
 - People on the ship saw a small island at a distance.
 - The island began to shake and move.
 - Some people managed to climb aboard the ship.
 - The grooms saw Sindbad on the shore.
 - The Captain of the ship recognised Sindbad.
 - Sindbad said goodbye to the King.
- Use the letters in the following words to make new and meaningful words.
(At least 5 each.)
(a) merchandise (b) immediately (c) exhausted (d) valuable (e) generous
Example – island : is, in, land, and, sand, lid.
- From the lesson, find and list all the words that begin with –
(a) the letter 's', (b) the letter 'i'.
Try to frame as many meaningful sentences as possible, using only the words listed under (a).
Now try to frame a meaningful sentence using only the words listed under (b).
Is it possible to frame a sentence ?
- Try to find more information about merchant ships, ports and how the cargo is loaded or unloaded from ships today.



For the Teacher : Get the children to read and share story-books on a regular basis. If possible, set up a 'Class Library' with the help of the parents.