

### ***MOBY-DICK- QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER***

After you have read the novel, answer each of the following questions in a paragraph or two. Your answers should be turned in on the first day of school.

1. Moby-Dick begins with one of the most famous lines in American literature: "Call me Ishmael." Why does the narrator begin with this line? What is its significance?
2. The white whale is a well-known and culturally recognizable symbol. What is the significance of this symbol in the story?
3. There are numerous biblical (as well as mythical and literary) allusions throughout the novel. Consider the significance of some of the following: Lazarus (chapter 2), Jonah (chapter 3), Elijah (chapter 19), Job (chapter 24), Gabriel (chapter 71), and King Ahab and his wife Jezebel (1 Kings). What is the meaning of these allusions, and how do they contribute to the story?
4. Some readers have pointed out that, although Ishmael introduces himself immediately as the first-person narrator, he is not, by definition, the narrator. They point out that a first person narrator can only express what he himself sees, hears, and experiences. Ishmael, they say, reports on much that he could not have heard or seen. Do you agree or disagree? How do you support your stance?
5. What worldview is presented in this novel? What view of good vs. evil do we see in the story?