





Talk About It

What are some words that come to mind when you think about whales? How many different kinds of whales do you know about?



Find out more about whales at www.macmillanmh.com

WHALES

Vocabulary

ventured	inquire
emerged	discussions
unreasonable	sprawled
attraction	focused

Word Parts

Words can have roots from other languages. For example, *attraction* has the **Latin Root** *tract*, which means “to draw or pull.” The root can help you figure out that *attraction* means “the act of drawing or pulling something near.”



A Song for Makaio

by Tamira Jackson

Long ago, near the islands now called Hawaii, lived a young girl named Makaio. She loved to swim and listen to the whales sing. The ocean could be dangerous, but Makaio did not mind the challenge. During the winter months, she bravely **ventured** into the water. Every day Makaio would float for hours, listening to the whale songs.

She always looked wiser when she **emerged** from the waves and walked onto the beach.

Though others could see her, Makaio could not see them. She was blind. Her other senses were unusually strong as a result. In fact, Makaio was the only one who could hear the whales sing.

Makaio said she could recognize each whale by his voice. She did not think it was strange or **unreasonable** to spend so much time listening to whales.

Whenever a new whale joined the group, Makaio would know. The newcomer would sing a different song. Gradually over several winters, the other males would start singing the new whale's song. The **attraction** that pulled Makaio towards the whales had to do with how they respected each other and the kindness they showed each other.

Makaio lived a long life. During her lifetime many of her whale friends died. Each time this happened, Makaio would have a sad look in her eyes. The islanders would **inquire** about what had happened. Makaio would answer simply, "One of my whale friends has died. I miss his voice."

She never wanted to have long **discussions** about it.

One night during her eightieth winter, Makaio did not return to the village. The islanders searched the beach. There they found a whale **sprawled** out on the shore. Next to him was Makaio. Her eyes seemed to be **focused** on the whale's long body spread awkwardly on the sand.

When the villagers reached her, Makaio spoke softly. "The voice of my very first whale friend has gone. It is time for me to go now, too. Do not be sad. Remember the whales' lessons: Learn from others. Always accept newcomers." With those words, Makaio died.

To this day people still try to understand the mystery of whale songs. Perhaps Makaio told us their secret many centuries ago.

Reread for Comprehension



Generate Questions Summarize

A Summary Chart helps you answer questions about what happens at the beginning, middle, and end of a story. Use your Summary Chart as you reread "A Song for Makaio" to summarize the important ideas in the selection.

