



## Reading 350

*Read the text and decide whether the statements are TRUE or FALSE. Write T or F in the gaps.*

Everyone knows that the giant squid is, well, giant. It's extremely large, up to fourteen meters long. If it were swimming next to your boat, you'd definitely notice it. If it were swimming next to you in the ocean, you'd probably want to get out of the water as soon as possible. In any case, if there's a giant squid nearby, someone is going to see it, and obviously, people have reported first-hand accounts of giant squid sightings. The squid appears in all sorts of drawings and stories, dating back hundreds of years. It even appears in Herman Melville's classic, *Moby Dick*, published in 1851. However, even though it's easy to see when it shows up, it just doesn't seem to show up that often. This species has never been scientifically observed alive in nature. It has never been filmed, and there are no pictures of a full-grown specimen. Around fifteen dead ones are found every year, but there is not much we can learn from dead specimens. Several juveniles were caught near New Zealand in 2003, but very little was learned from them, since they all died soon after capture.

So, where are all the squid you may ask? They must be somewhere. After all, other animals eat them. They are common prey for sperm whales. Scientists have often found squid parts in the stomachs of sperm whales. Also, whales have been caught with scars on their bodies, which look like they were made by the suckers of squid tentacles. These suckers have rows of teeth, like oversized needles. If sperm whales often eat giant squid, then the squid must be fairly plentiful. In addition, the whales must know where the squid are. In fact, a recent attempt to find giant squid actually used sperm whales themselves. Scientists placed special video cameras on the whales. The scientists hoped that the whales would go looking for squid to eat, and in the process, would collect some useful video footage of the squid. This may have been a good idea. The whales did dive down to several hundred feet, so maybe this is where the squid live. Unfortunately, they found no squid, and the cameras only recorded black water.

What makes the giant squid so elusive? The most widely accepted theory is that the giant squid simply move around a lot. According to this hypothesis, the squid normally live about two thousand feet below the ocean's surface. This is where they do much of their feeding. We assume that these squid eat mostly fish. Fishparts, particularly lantern fish, have been found in the bellies of dissected giant squid corpses. Because they are so big, the giant squid must eat a lot of fish. This means they're going to have to spend much of their time looking for sufficient food supplies. They wouldn't stay in any one place for long. The animals are also going to be looking for food at different depths. This explains why squid have been seen on the surface of the ocean at certain times. It may even be that giant squid mate at higher depths. All of this makes finding giant squid very difficult. There are some problems with this theory that the squid are always moving around, though. The most important one is that the squid, as I stated before, are frequently eaten by sperm whales. There are clearly enough giant squid to provide the whales with a lot of food, and the whales know where to find these squid in large numbers. If the squid really moved around so much that even one is difficult to find, how can sperm whales find and eat them so easily? It may be that the squid move to certain places at regular times. Sperm whales may know where these places are, and when the giant squid will be easy to find there. For the time being, there is no clear answer.

- 1 It is impossible to detect giant squids.
- 2 Mature specimen have been recorded, captured on films and pictured countless times.
- 3 The experiment with sperm whales led to the discovery of squid accumulation.
- 4 There is the theory that the reason for squids' being evasive is their mobility.
- 5 Scientists are still to prove that squid motion systematically.

# Key

1. False
2. False
3. False
4. True
5. True