

Stardiving

By Andrew Plant

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Picture Book of
the Month

Dive with young whale Fluke into a sparkling deep-sea adventure. Fluke is a young sperm whale with big dreams of seeing the stars. But when you've got a whale-sized head in the way, looking up isn't easy. So when wise old Cachalot advises him to look for the stars that shine below, Fluke sets off on an adventure that he never imagined possible.



Teacher Notes have been based on those supplied by the publisher. A full version is available on our website.

Themes:

- Self-esteem
- Acceptance of difference
- Determination and resilience

Discussion Questions:

- The opening words 'In the heart of a rolling ocean . . .' set the scene without any reference to land, such as 'Far away in a distant ocean . . .' Why do you think the author did this?
- What is the 'silver plume' that Amber makes. Why did the author describe her breath this way, rather than just use 'mist', for example?
- How is the dolphin's personality established when it speaks? What does 'chittering' make you think of? Is it calm and quiet, quick and flighty, or perhaps something else?
- Why does Fluke whisper the name 'Cachalot' rather than just say it? What does this indicate about how Fluke feels about the enormous old whale?
- Cachalot 'rumbled' and 'boomed' and his voice vibrated 'like soft thunder' when he spoke. What does this suggest about his size? He speaks in a very calm and deliberate manner. What does this suggest about his personality and age?
- When Fluke returns to the surface, he lets out his breath in a great 'plume'. Amber lies 'silver' in the moonlight. Where are these words used earlier in the story? What is the effect of using the same uncommon words near the start and end of the story?
- There is no such word as 'stardiving'. What combinations of words does it remind you of? What ideas or pictures does it create? Is it a good description of what Fluke does? Are there other words that could have been used to give the same idea?

Activities:

- Find synonyms and antonyms for the following words: lazed, nestled, exhaled, streaked, chittering, snorted, boomed, gleaming, glimmering, shimmering. If you are unfamiliar with any of the words, can you deduce their meaning from their context?
- Alliteration is used when Fluke encounters the deep-sea creatures. Identify the phrases with alliteration.
- Pick one of the deep-sea creatures and write about it meeting Fluke from its point of view. Remember how enormous Fluke is compared to all the other creatures, and how he comes from a very alien place – the surface.
- *For older students* - Rewrite Stardiving as a chapter book with no illustrations. You will need to describe everything; the look of the creatures, the feel of the ocean, and how the characters feel about each other and themselves.