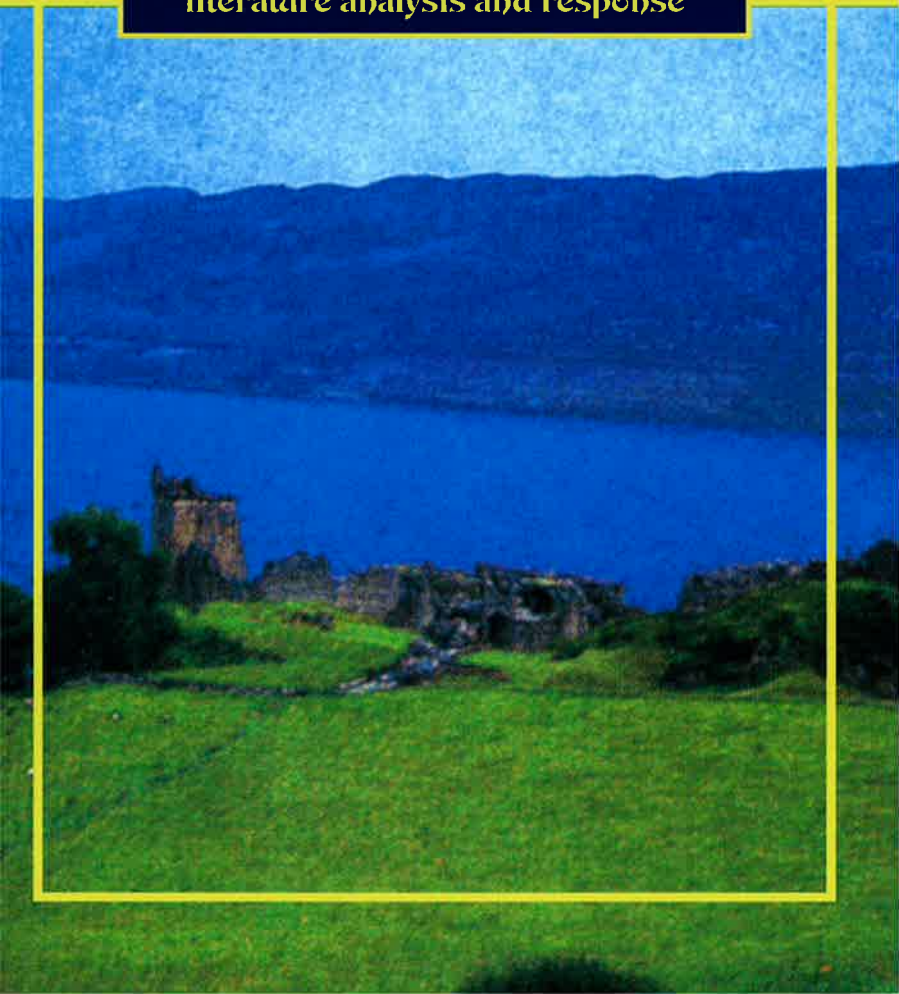


**Stanford House Classics - Elementary**

# **THE LOCH NESS MONSTER**

Jane Dolman

**literature analysis and response**



# The Loch Ness Monster

Jane Dolman

Many books have been written about the **Loch Ness Monster**.

This book gives a geographical and historical description of the lake, the legends surrounding it and a variety of eye witness accounts reported over the years. It describes the scientific experiments carried out and the various attempts to solve the mystery. But it gives no answer. The Loch Ness Monster still remains a mystery.



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## THE LOCH NESS MONSTER

The legend of the Loch Ness monster dates back 1,400 years. "Nessie" was, in fact, first seen by St. Columba in 565 A. D. <sup>1</sup>

However, worldwide fascination only began in 1933 when sightings <sup>2</sup> began to be officially recorded and the mass media began to report them.

Science has started to take an interest only recently, thanks to the sonar charts <sup>3</sup> and underwater photographs taken by research teams.

Yet despite so many eye witness <sup>4</sup> reports given by observant, intelligent people, the scientific world still prefers to find explanations such as shadows, branches, logs of wood, jumping salmon; which is like saying that those people are either drunk, insane, half-blind or mentally retarded!

The result of this is that there is no official financing for research. In fact, until now it has been carried out by dedicated amateurs, with limited funds that often come from places like the United States rather than the British scientific community.

The existence of a population of very large animals in Loch Ness certainly is very improbable, but it is also very improbable that all the people who say they have seen very large animals in the lake are victims of hallucinations or are just telling lies <sup>5</sup>.

The discovery of an unknown creature is not without precedents; there are sufficiently strange things in the world which we now accept but which, at one time, were considered dubious: the platypus, for example, or the tuatara <sup>6</sup> in New Zealand (descendant of the Triassic age), or the coelacanth <sup>7</sup>.

So it is that the Loch Ness Monster still remains a mystery.

### 1. Answer the questions.

- 1) When was the Loch Ness monster first seen and by whom?  
.....
- 2) Why did the general public begin to take interest only in 1933?  
.....
- 3) What does the scientific world think about the possible existence of a monster in the lake?  
.....
- 4) What is the result of the scientific community's scepticism?  
.....
- 5) Do YOU believe in Nessie? (Now read this book and then answer the question again!)  
.....

### 2. Match the definitions with the correct words from the text.

- 1) an important observation .....
- 2) newspapers, radio, television .....
- 3) groups of people who work (or play) together  
.....
- 4) accounts made by people who have observed something personally .....
- 5) money given to aid study or research  
.....
- 6) people who do things seriously but are not professionals  
.....
- 7) imaginary visions .....
- 8) things that have happened before .....

- 
1. A. D. : (Anno Domini) after the birth of Christ.
  2. sightings : observations.
  3. sonar charts : diagrams showing the presence and location of an underwater object, using special instruments that trace sound waves.
  4. eye witness : when the person who sees an object or event reports it personally.
  5. lies : untruths.
  6. tuatara : a reptile.
  7. coelacanth : a family of fish, mostly extinct.

## THE LAKE

Loch Ness is in Scotland, in the northern part of a long valley, the Great Glen, which runs from the Moray Firth to Loch Linnhe. It is connected to the other two lakes of the glen (Loch Oich and Loch Lochy) by a man-made canal - the Caledonian Canal - which forms a 60-mile-long waterway that joins the North Sea to the Atlantic Ocean. The canal, which took 19 years to build, was opened in 1822.

It is the largest fresh-water lake in Great Britain and the third deepest in Europe. On either side tree-covered mountains rise up to over 2,000 feet. The water is very dark giving the lake a moody <sup>1</sup> and secretive atmosphere.

Loch Ness was formed during the period of glacial action, from 25,000 to 10,000 years ago; it was gouged out <sup>2</sup> by glaciers of up to 4,000 feet in thickness. These glaciers created a narrow, steep-sided lake - 14,000 acres in surface area, 22 and  $\frac{1}{2}$  miles long and up to 1 and  $\frac{1}{2}$  miles wide. For much of its length, Loch Ness is over 700 feet deep and its maximum depth is thought to be 975 feet.

The water of the lake is fresh and unpolluted <sup>3</sup> and salmon and sea trout can be fished almost all the year round. The record <sup>4</sup> salmon caught in the lake weighed 52 lb <sup>5</sup>. There are also brown trout and an enormous quantity of eels. There is very little plantlife in the lake due to <sup>6</sup> the acidity of the water. The temperature of the water is low. The climate in this area is mild <sup>7</sup> and damp. (From 1921 to 1950, Fort Augustus, at the southern end of the lake, had the lowest annual amount of sunshine in Britain!) The lake never freezes, partly because of its great depth and its volume of water.

In this area we can find Britain's largest known

### 3. Say whether the following are TRUE (T) or FALSE (F).

- 1) The Loch Ness Monster is no longer a mystery. (.....)
- 2) Loch Ness is in Great Britain. (.....)
- 3) They began building the Caledonian Canal in 1803. (.....)
- 4) There are many European lakes that are deeper than Loch Ness. (.....)
- 5) The land around the lake is very flat. (.....)
- 6) Fishing is forbidden in Loch Ness. (.....)
- 7) Plants grow profusely in the lake. (.....)
- 8) The water has a high amount of acidity. (.....)

### Now rewrite the false statements.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

### 4. Write the following numbers and then explain what each refers to in the text.

e.g. 60 – *sixty*.

*The Caledonian Canal is sixty miles long.*

- 1) 19 – .....
- 2) 1822 – .....
- 3) 2,000 – .....
- 4) 14,000 – .....
- 5)  $22\frac{1}{2}$  – .....

- 
1. **moody** : gloomy, dark.
  2. **gouged out** : excavated.
  3. **unpolluted** : uncontaminated, clean.
  4. **record** : the heaviest fish caught until now.
  5. **lb.** : (libra) pound(s) in weight - 1lb = 0,454 kilogram.
  6. **due to** : because of.
  7. **mild** : neither hot nor cold.

animal, the red deer; the largest bird, the golden eagle; and the wildest animal, the wildcat.

In this part of Britain, the local people are still proudly independent in their habits and customs. Many older people continue to use the native language, Gaelic. The ancient traditions of the clan <sup>1</sup> are still respected and superstition is strong. It is not, therefore, surprising to find there is a legend about Loch Ness.

THE LEGEND

The legend says that once upon a time the great glen which lies <sup>2</sup> under the waters of Loch Ness was a beautiful valley, full of trees, and sweet-smelling herbs and flowers, and protected by high mountains. There was a spring <sup>3</sup> whose waters were able to cure every disease <sup>4</sup> because Dale the Druid had blessed <sup>5</sup> it. This holy well <sup>6</sup> was protected by a stone and Dale had stated that, every time water was taken, the stone should be immediately replaced. “The day my command is not obeyed,” he said, “a terrible desolation will overcome the land.”

One day, a woman left her baby near the fire and went to get water. While she was at the well, she heard the baby crying. Afraid that it had fallen into the fire, she hurried home, forgetting to cover the well. The waters rose and overflowed <sup>7</sup> the valley; the people ran away to the mountains, and the air was filled with their laments <sup>8</sup>: “Tha loch ‘nis ann, tha loch ‘nis ann!” (“there is a lake now, there is a lake now!”). And the lake remained and it is called Loch Nis.

5. Write your own description of Loch Ness using the following words:

valley - canal - mountains - water - climate

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

6. Find 6 superlative adjectives (ending in -est) in the paragraph THE LAKE (pages 6 and 8) and write them down with the noun they modify. Then find 6 adjectives in the text which describe the lake and write them down with their comparative and superlative forms.

.....

.....

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.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

- 1. clan : Scottish word for family.
- 2. lies : is situated.
- 3. spring : where water comes out from the ground.
- 4. disease : illness.
- 5. blessed : given his benediction.
- 6. well : (here) synonym of spring.
- 7. overflowed : flooded, filled with water.
- 8. laments : cries.