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<b>LESSON</b>	<b>History and Traditions</b>
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In this lesson, you will read three texts about history and traditions. Then, you will answer questions and complete a task to show your understanding of the texts.

<b>TEXT 1</b>	<b>Pearl Diving: A National Tradition</b>
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The pearling industry, which created a period of wealth for the United Arab Emirates from the late 19th century to the second decade of the 20th century, relied on expertise, from shipbuilding to sailing. But the most complex process of all was the pearl diving **voyage**, which lasted four months in the middle of summer.

The shallow Arabian Gulf waters provided an ideal environment for pearling because oyster beds were shallow enough for divers to reach without modern scuba equipment. However, this could be extremely dangerous.

While the diver himself was the centre of activity, an entire team supported this effort – including crew that managed the ship, fed and entertained sailors and supported the diver.

The main pearling season, called Ghou Al Kabir (The Big Dive), occurred between 1<sup>st</sup> June and 30<sup>th</sup> September. The weather, though hot, was generally clear and calm and ideal for diving. Smaller one-month seasons occurred in October and November.

On the first day, crews would be **seen off** in a ceremony called Hiraat (Oyster Bed), that took place on the beach. The crews would stand next to their **vessels**, while their families and others not going to sea would stand at the edge of the beach and bid them **farewell**. The captain of the entire fleet would then officially announce the start of the season.

On the last day of the season, a cannon would be fired from shore, with preparations for the return of the sailors. Houses were **adorned** with cloth flags, called Al Bayraq or Al Bandira. Special food as prepared, including sweets, juices and nuts. As the pearling vessels arrived on the sand, the crews would receive songs of welcome, and reply with their own songs.

**VOCABULARY**

**voyage:** a long journey, especially by ship

**seen off:** to go to the place where someone is leaving to say goodbye

**vessels:** a ship or large boat

**farewell:** goodbye

**adorned:** to decorate with something



*Pearls in the ocean*

**Instructions:** Use the information in **TEXT 1** to answer the questions below. Read the questions, and choose the correct answer, **A**, **B**, or **C**.

<b>1</b>	The main pearling season lasted for _____ months. <b>A</b> three <b>B</b> four <b>C</b> five	<b>B</b>
<b>2</b>	Why do you think houses were adorned on the last day of the season? <b>A</b> to officially announce the start of the season <b>B</b> to bid farewell to the sailors <b>C</b> to welcome the return of the sailors	<b>C</b>

**TEXT 2**    **The Pearl Diver: Extract**

Already he could swim like a fish, and he had been secretly practising holding his breath and slowly blowing out a stream of bubbles under the water. He wanted his father, Abdullah, to be proud of him! It was said that Abdullah was one of the best divers. Saeed had heard the stories of how long his father could stay under the water, of how many oysters he could harvest, and of how deep he could dive.

Only one man in twenty, it was said, could go deeper than 96 feet. Saeed knew his father was hoping to find a really special pearl. Those found in deeper water were supposed to have a finer **lustre**. The crew, too, would celebrate in a valuable catch, for they would receive a share of the profits.

“But aren’t you ever afraid, Father?” Saeed had asked.

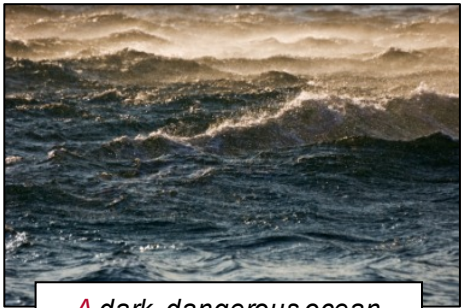
“You must learn the ways of the sea, my son, and know its secrets.” Abdullah had replied. Saeed had wondered what he meant.

“And I have Ahmed to look out for me,” he added.

“He is a good hauler and I trust him as if he were my brother.”

Every diver had a hauler, and Saeed knew that the relationship between them was a very close one. The diver depended on his hauler to pull him from the sea as fast as possible when he tugged on the rope to let him know that he was ready to surface.

Saeed turned now to see the men raising the huge white sails. The wind filled them, and the **sambuk** gathered speed. All around him other boats flew over the sea. Saeed thought they looked like a great flock of big white birds. And in their shadow dolphins leapt and dived. This was a sign of good fortune. Saeed felt happy.



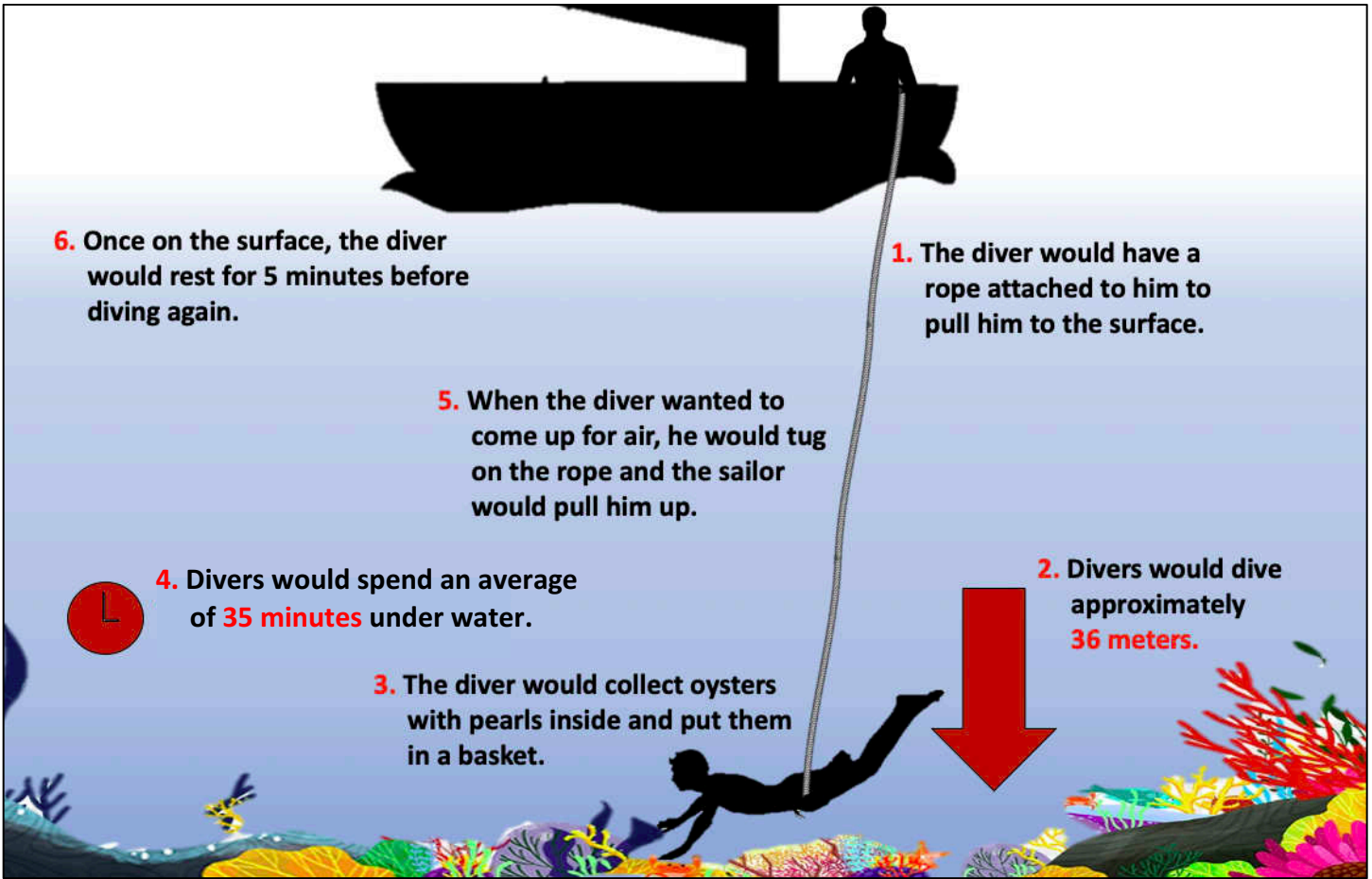
**A** dark, dangerous ocean

**VOCABULARY**  
**lustre:** the brightness that a shiny surface has  
**sambuk:** a type of dhow with a single, triangular sail

**Instructions:** Use the information in **TEXT 2** to answer the questions below. Read the questions, and choose the correct answer, **A**, **B**, or **C**.

<b>3</b>	Why did Abdullah trust Ahmed? <b>A</b> because he was a good brother <b>B</b> because he was a good son <b>C</b> because he was a good hauler	<b>C</b>
<b>4</b>	What did Saeed think looked like a great flock of white birds? <b>A</b> the boats <b>B</b> the waves <b>C</b> the dolphins	<b>A</b>

**TEXT 3** **Arabian Gulf Pearl Diving Map**



**Instructions:** Use the information in **TEXT 3** to answer the questions below. Read the questions, and choose the correct answer, **A**, **B**, or **C**.

5	If a diver completed the same diving process four times in one day, on average how much time would the diver spend under water? <b>A</b> 12.5 minutes <b>B</b> 14 minutes <b>C</b> 3.5 minutes	A
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**Instructions:** Use the information in **TEXTS 1, 2 and 3** to answer the questions below. Read the questions, and choose the correct answer, **A**, **B**, or **C**.

6	Why do you think pearl diving was such a popular industry during this time? <b>A</b> diving was a traditional sport <b>B</b> it created wealth for the local regions <b>C</b> all of the above	C
7	What is the authors primary intent in <b>TEXTS 1, 2 &amp; 3</b> ? <b>A</b> to explain the history of pearl diving <b>B</b> to discuss facts about pearls <b>C</b> to explain the dangers of sailing out at sea	A

**Instructions:** Use the information in **TEXTS 1, 2 and 3** to complete the task below.

Imagine it is your first experience as a pearl diver in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Write a diary entry giving a recount of your experience. Use the questions below to guide you.

- 8**
- Where are you going?
  - Why did you choose to go here?
  - Who is with you?
  - What is the weather like?
  - What time of year did you go?
  - What does your boat look like?