

Name: _____

Date: _____

Period: _____

Life of Pi

Discussion Questions

Directions: You will be expected to answer these discussion questions from the book. I suggest that you complete a few each day as you read. However, I understand that you each have other classes and extracurricular commitments. Therefore, you can manage your time and complete them as you wish. However, they will be collected at the end of our unit. If you have questions or do not understand something, please ask. It will save your time and your grade.

1. Do you agree with Pi's contention that animals in a zoo are no worse off than animals in the wild? Why or why not? Explain your answer thoroughly.
2. What are the three religions that Pi considers himself to be a convert of? Do you think it is possible for Pi to practice all three convictions faithfully?
3. What reasons does Pi give for not choosing one faith?
4. What is Pi's full name? Where did it come from? Explore and discuss the significance of Pi's name to the novel.
5. Explain the story of how Richard Parker got his name.
6. What does Richard Parker symbolize?
7. Describe the floating islands. What are the inhabitants? Explain the significance of the islands.
8. What does Pi find inside the fruit of the tree on the island?
9. Who or what ends up on the lifeboat with Pi? What does each of them symbolize?
10. Is Life of Pi a tragedy, a romance, or a comedy? Explain.
11. What was the name of the ship Pi was on that sank?
12. Where was the ship taking Pi and his family?
13. What are the different settings of the novel?
14. Who is the protagonist?
15. Who is the antagonist?
16. What is the mood of the novel?
17. What point of view is the novel written in?
18. When does the climax occur?
19. Where is the author when he first hears about Pi?
20. Who is narrating the italicized chapters?
21. Why does Pi hesitate in killing the fly fish?
22. What does Pi wish he had besides salvation?
23. Why couldn't Pi see the other castaway?
24. Where did Pi's lifeboat come ashore?

25. Where did they end up finding Richard Parker?
26. What does the book say is the most dangerous animal to man?
27. What does the book say is the most dangerous animal to zoo animals?
28. Besides the loss of his family and possessions, what else did Pi lose when the ship sank? What did he gain?
29. How does Mr. Patel's zoo helping ability compare to his parenting skills?
30. Discuss the scene in which Mr. Patel arranges for his children to watch a tiger devour a goat.
31. What is his purpose? Did this in any way help to prepare Pi for the most difficult journey of his life?
32. Part one of the book begins twenty years after Pi's ordeal. What words does Part one end with? Do you agree? Why or why not?
33. Do you agree with the claim from the book that this is a story "that will make you believe in God"? Explain.
34. Which story do you believe: the one with or without the animals? Why?
35. In his introductory note Yann Martel says, "This book was born as I was hungry." What does he mean in this statement?
36. Pondicherry, India is described as an anomaly; the former capital of what was once French India. In terms of storytelling, what makes this place an appropriate place for Pi to grow up.
37. How might the story have changed if the hyena, zebra, or the orangutan would have been the sole survivor with Pi?
38. Discuss some of Pi's strategies for dealing with Richard Parker. What do some of these strategies teach you about dealing with fear in your own life?
39. Why did Pi try so hard to save Richard Parker at the beginning?
40. Compare and contrast the grown up version of Pi to the little boy version.
41. Chapters 21 and 22 are very short, yet the author says they are at the core of the novel. Explain this.
42. Was Pi a convincing storyteller? Why or why not?
43. Does knowing Pi survives affect your reading of his survival account? Why or why not?
44. Discuss some of Pi's survival techniques.
45. How does Pi train Richard Parker?