

Shark Beneath the Reef
Questions

Chapter 1 - "A Round, Black Eye"

In the opening chapter you will meet Tomás Torres, a fourteen year old boy, who lives in Loreto, Mexico with his mother, grandparents, uncle, aunt, and an orphaned relative, Maria. Tomás loves the beauty and peace of his life on the Sea of Cortez, but soon must make some important decisions. As you read, keep in mind that Tomás is a boy who likes to daydream.

A. Before you begin reading the first chapter, look at these questions. They will help you to better understand Tomás and his surroundings.

1. What does Tomás's family do for a living? _____
2. What does Tomás believe tore Grandfather's net? _____
3. What does Tomás imagine himself doing when he kills the whale shark?

4. Who is Quetzalcoatl? _____
5. What legend does Tomás remember about Quetzalcoatl? _____
6. Who is the Lady of Guadalupe? _____
7. Why do tourists come to Loreto? _____

8. How do Tomás and his family view the sportfisherman? _____
9. What does Tomás ask Grandfather if he can climb? _____
10. What two loves does Tomás have? _____
11. What had happened to Tomás's father? _____
12. What does Tomás's Uncle Miguel tell him about the top of the volcano?

13. What important decision is Tomás facing? _____
14. Who are the *oficiales*? _____
15. What does Grandfather tell Tomás that makes him feel grown up? _____

B. Now read chapter 1. As you read, try to answer the questions to yourself. Write down the page number where each question is answered in the text.

Chapter 2 - "A Black Cross in the Sky"

Tomás climbs the volcano looking for a legendary ship in Chapter 2. Be sure to notice the discussion about the Japanese fishing boats. Pay attention to Tomás's dreams. Think about your own daydreams.

A. Before you begin reading the chapter, look at these questions. They will help you to better understand Tomás's climb up the volcano and his family's worries.

1. What interesting information does Tomás know about pelicans? _____
2. Why are Ramon and Miguel going to fish at the deep basin off Carmen Island rather than in the Shallows? _____
3. What seems to upset the food chain in the fishing grounds? _____
4. Why are the Japanese permitted to fish off the coast? _____
5. What shortcomings does Tomás see in the new Constitution of Mexico? _____
6. Why do the Torreses need to bring their own water to the island? _____
7. How does Tomás feel about the Baja California Mountains? _____
8. How does the land on Coronados Island compare with the underwater world around the island? _____

9. Describe the climb up the volcano. _____
10. What thought keeps Tomás climbing the volcano? _____
11. What does Tomás see when he looks into the crater? _____
12. How does Tomás feel when he sees the frigatebird? _____

B. Now read Chapter 2. As you read, try to answer the questions to yourself. Write down the page number where each question is answered in the text.

Name _____

Chapter 3 - "The Reef Sends Warning"

A. Before you begin reading the chapter, look at these questions. This chapter helps us to imagine the beautiful underwater world where Tomás does his diving.

1. What decision does Tomás make about the ship? _____
2. What is different about the tides along the Sea of Cortez compared to the tides along U.S. coasts? _____
3. What does Tomás wonder about the white coral sand? _____
4. What funny encounter does Tomás have with a four-inch damsel fish? _____
5. Why does Tomás dive with rocks? _____
6. What does Tomás see in the darkness of the cavern? _____
7. What happens to sharks when they get caught in nets? _____
8. What warning does Tomás miss? _____
9. What do Miguel and Ramon catch? _____
10. What interesting fact about rows of shark teeth did Tomás think about when he looked into the baby hammerhead's mouth? _____

11. What part of the shark does Tomás want? _____

12. What does Grandfather say that surprises Tomás and Miguel? _____

B. Now read Chapter 3. As you read, try to answer the questions to yourself. Write down the page number where each question is answered in the text.

Chapter 4 - "Griselda"

A. Before you begin reading this chapter, read these questions. Chapter 4 finds the trio of fishermen, Tomás, Ramon, and Miguel returning to the village of Loreto for the Christmas celebration.

1. What often comes to the Shallows and why? _____
2. Despite the fact that there was no Spanish galleon, Tomás still believes that what awaits him? _____
3. What does Tomás know about the mission bell tower? _____
4. What good omen does Tomás see that he believes cancels the bad omen of the black cross? _____
5. Who is Victorio? _____
6. Who is Griselda? _____
7. How does Griselda feel about life in Loreto? _____
8. What dreams did Tomás share with Griselda? _____
9. What does the author say is a national pastime in Mexico? _____

10. Who is Zoro? _____
11. What does Zoro think of the *oficiales*? _____
12. Why is Maria so excited? _____
13. Why isn't there any electricity in the Torres's *casa*? _____
14. What had the wholesaler seen aboard the Japanese factory boat? _____
15. What does Tomás read when he gets into his bed? _____

B. Now read Chapter 4. As you read, try to answer the questions to yourself. Write down the page number where each question is answered in the text.

Chapter 5 - "Ships and Sharks and Factory Boats"

A. Before you begin reading this chapter, read these questions. We see many contrasts in Chapter 5. As you read, think about how Tomás's world is different from your own.

1. What is Tomás's alarm clock? _____
2. Why does Grandmother tell Tomás he cannot take the *ponga* that morning?

3. What upsets Tomás about Grandfather? _____
4. Why is Tomás looking for a straight tree? _____
5. How does Tomás know where to look for a straight tree? _____
6. What is the national emblem of Mexico? _____
7. What do you learn about the store hours in Loreto? _____
8. What is *Stereolandia*? _____
9. How is *Stereolandia* different from the *palapa* next door? _____
10. What does Victorio's fishing camp look like? _____

11. Why is Tomás surprised to see Griselda? _____
12. What surprising news does Griselda give Tomás about the *oficiales*? _____
13. What amazes Tomás about Griselda's family? _____
14. What advice does Griselda give to Tomás? _____
15. What does Griselda say about Loreto? _____

B. Now read Chapter 5. As you read, try to answer the questions to yourself. Write down the page number where each question is answered in the text.

Chapter 6 - "The Whizbang Flare"

A. Before you begin reading this chapter, read these questions. Keep in mind that this chapter shows you the joy the people of Loreto feel when they hear about the departure of the Japanese fishing boats.

1. What bothers Tomás about Griselda's remark concerning Loreto? _____
2. How does Tomás know that his grandfather must be feeling better? _____
3. How does Grandfather react when he hears the news about the Japanese fishing boats? _____
4. What sound does Tomás hear that tells him that others must know about the fishing boats? _____
5. What is a whizbang? _____
6. How do you know that Tomás and José respect the materials from which fireworks are made? _____
7. What are gill nets? _____
8. Why does Ramon disapprove of gill nets? _____
9. Who is Jesús? _____

10. How is the scene at the beach different today than from most days? _____
11. How do the boys know that darkness is a few minutes away? _____
12. How does the crowd react to the whizbang? _____
13. What does Tomás think about when the other boys lift José to their shoulders? _____

B. Now read Chapter 6. As you read, try to answer the questions to yourself. Write down each page number where the question is answered in the text.

Chapter 7 - "Under the Overhang"

A. Before you begin reading this chapter, read these questions. You will read incredible descriptions of the undersea world and its life in this chapter. Be alert for the many species of fish you will encounter and notice the verbs the author uses to describe their movements. Remember to watch for the way Tomás thinks about good and evil!

1. Why do you think Tomás thinks that this day will be important? _____
2. Why does Tomás think his mother is "a mestizo woman through and through?"

3. What do you learn about the government of Mexico? _____
4. What does Tomás realize he will have to do on the day he carries the shark through the plaza? _____
5. Why do you think Tomás mixes up his father and Quetzalcoatl? _____
6. What does Tomás learn about inflation? _____
7. Why does José's father want him to go to high school? _____
8. Who is Uncle Diaz? _____

9. Why do you think Uncle Diaz is Tomás's living hero? _____
10. What do you learn about the harvesting of black coral? _____
11. Why is Uncle Diaz now nearly deaf? _____
12. Why doesn't Uncle Diaz give Tomás his diving mask? _____
13. What do you think is the most incredible sight that Tomás sees during his dive? _____
14. What does Tomás realize about giant mantas? _____
15. What cooperative relationship does Tomás observe? _____
16. Why does Tomás want to kill the grouper? _____
17. What does Tomás fail to see when he finally glimpses the shark? _____

B. Now read Chapter 6. As you read, try to answer the questions to yourself. Write down each page number where the question is answered in the text.

Chapter 8 - "A Warning From A Fish and A Bird"

A. Before you begin reading this chapter, read these questions. This chapter gives us information about sharks and the ocean food chain. Be aware of the differences in Tomás's and Zoro's feelings about the *oficiales*.

1. Why does Tomás want to catch a spiny lobster? _____
2. What is fascinating about the sea worm that Tomás sees? _____
3. What do you think happened to the grouper? _____
4. Why does Tomás change his plans about how to kill the whale shark? _____
5. What did Tomás learn about the jaws of a shark? _____
6. What fascinates Tomás about vultures? _____
7. What does Tomás see that makes him nervous? _____
8. Why do you think Zoro and Jesús come to the island? _____
9. What is the difference between the nets the Torreses use and those of Zoro and his son? _____
10. What decision had Jesús made about his future? _____

11. Why couldn't Tomás see all of the shark? _____
12. What conclusion does Tomás draw about the shark? _____
13. How do you think Tomás feels at the end of this chapter? _____

B. Now read Chapter 8. As you read, try to answer the questions to yourself. Write down each page number where the question is answered in the text.

Chapter 9 - "Oficiales"

A. Before you begin reading this chapter, read these questions. In this chapter, Tomás, his grandfather, and uncle are confronted by the *oficiales*. As you read decide if you think the *oficiales* are concerned about overfishing. Ask yourself if this is the true reason they made the Japanese fishing boats leave the area.

1. What happens to Tomás's shark? _____
2. What does Tomás fail to see as the shark swims? _____
3. Why do you think Tomás fails to see this? _____
4. What vision does Tomás have after spearing the red snapper? _____
5. What clue should Tomás have gotten from the disappearance of the grouper?

6. Why does Tomás ask Tezcatlipoca if he is out there? _____
7. What important point does Miguel make about the shrimp industry? _____
8. Why is Tomás somewhat disappointed when Ramon asks him to help repair the net? _____

9. Describe the attitude of Zoro and Jesús toward the *oficiales*. _____
10. Why do the *oficiales* come to the island? _____
11. What do they tell Ramon he will have to do? _____
12. What do Victorio and the other sportfishermen want? _____
13. Why do you think that Ramon doesn't help the *oficiales* push off their boat?

14. Describe how the three men feel when the *oficiales* finally leave the island.

B. Now read Chapter 9. As you read, try to answer the questions to yourself. Write down the page number where each question is answered in the text.

Chapter 10 - "The Return of Quetzalcoatl and Tezcatlipoca"

A. Before you begin reading this chapter, read these questions. The struggle that Tomás is experiencing about his decision is apparent in this chapter. He watches the Christmas pageant and concludes that good does win over evil.

1. What does Uncle Diaz give Tomás? _____
2. What do the two plan to do together? _____
3. What likenesses can you see between Tomás and Uncle Diaz? _____
4. Why is José waiting for Tomás to come home? _____
5. How do the women in the Torres family react to the news of the *oficiales*?

6. What American custom is the Torres family observing for the first time? _____
7. What special power does Tomás feel? _____
8. Describe the scene in the plaza. _____
9. What realization does Tomás make for the first time about the pageant? _____

10. Why is Tomás offended by the offer of Victorio's family? _____
11. Tell how the play showed the battle between good and evil. _____
12. Why does Juan Fuertes want Tomás to go to school? _____
13. How does the crowd react to the Roman candle? _____
14. What do you think is Tomás's goal as the chapter ends? _____

B. Now read Chapter 10. As you read, try to answer the questions to yourself. Write down each page number where the question is answered in the text.

Chapter 11 - "Three Gifts"

A. Before you begin reading this chapter, read these questions. Christmas traditions are described and Tomás learns a lesson about people.

1. What version of the Christmas pageant does Tomás dream about? _____
2. What important question does Tomás ask himself about good? _____
3. What does Victorio offer José? _____
4. What advice does Tomás give José about Victorio's offer? _____
5. Do you see a connection between this advice and the decision that Tomás is facing? Explain. _____
6. Why do you think that Tomás believes his decision will be easier to make tomorrow? _____
7. How does Maria feel about her present? How do you know? _____
8. What is important about the present that Tomás's mother gives to him? _____
9. What is important about the present that Tomás's grandfather gives to him?

10. What great disappointment does Tomás experience when he gets to the beach? _____

11. Who do you think Tomás is talking about when the chapter closes?

B. Now read Chapter 11. As you read, try to answer the questions to yourself. Write down each page number where the question is answered in the text.

Chapter 12 - "Have You Come For Me?"

A. Before you begin reading this chapter, read these questions. Jean Craighead George describes the new world that has opened up to Tomás with beautiful descriptions and accurate information about the reef dwellers. Try to imagine her word pictures in your mind.

1. Who is Benito Juarez? _____
2. Why do you think Tomás thinks about Benito Juarez as Ramon and Miguel are in the government offices? _____
3. How does Tomás show you that he is sensitive to the feelings of others?

4. What does Francisca tell her son that upsets him? _____
5. How does the author let you know that Ramon and Miguel have bad news before they even speak? _____
6. Why does Tomás feel hurt when he hears what the *oficiales* said? _____
7. Why is Tomás happy with the task that Ramon gives him? _____
8. What exciting news does José share with Tomás? _____

9. What fascinating things does Tomás see in the underwater world? Why does this world take on a new perspective? _____

10. What fish do you wish you could see? Why? _____

11. What does Tomás realize about his shark? _____

12. What questions does Tomás call out? Why do you think he asks these things? _____

13. How do **you** feel at the end of this chapter?

B. Now read Chapter 12. As you read, try to answer the questions to yourself. Write down each page number where the question is answered in the text.

Chapter 13 - "Of Sharks and Men"

A. Before you begin reading this chapter, read these questions. The struggle between good and evil comes to life in this chapter as Tomás confronts the wind, the shark, and the reality of a fisherman's life. Many of these questions do not have a line for page numbers. You are to use what you read in the book to form your own conclusions.

1. What does Tomás finally realize the birds have been trying to tell him? _____
2. What does Tomás realize about his dreams? _____
3. Why do you think Tomás seems proud of the wound from the shark?
4. What descriptive words does the author use to convey Tomás's feelings about the shark? _____
5. Why do you think the author compares the eyes of Jesús to a vulture's eyes?
6. Whom do you think is right in the fight over the shark? Why?
7. How is the wind both evil and good? _____
8. What deal does Tomás make with the forces of good? _____
9. Does Zoro show much concern for Tomás's life? Explain. _____

10. What important fact does Tomás realize about the shark? _____
11. Why is Miguel's arrival "like a miracle?"
12. What reality about the future of the shark is Tomás faced with? _____
13. Why does Miguel react in the way he does at the end of the chapter?

B. Now read Chapter 13. As you read, try to answer the questions to yourself. Write down each page number where the question is answered in the text.

Chapter 14 - "Pebbles"

A. Before you begin reading this chapter, read these questions. Life, as Tomás knows it, seems to be disappearing in this chapter. Pay careful attention to the role you think Pebbles plays.

1. How do the plants show they are adapted to life in the desert? _____
2. Why does Ramon call the thatch palm "the greatest gift God ever gave to the fishermen?" _____
3. What did Ramon and Miguel decide to do about the rent money? _____
4. What decision does Tomás tell Miguel he has made about his future? _____
5. Why does Miguel tell Tomás to go to school? _____
6. How does Tomás react to the news of Miguel's plans? _____
7. What does Tomás tell Miguel about the bargain he made? _____
8. What wish does Tomás make for his future son as he looks at the shark? What does this tell you about Tomás? _____
9. Why does Miguel give the shark jaws to Tomás? _____

10. Why does Miguel pack up everything on the island? _____
11. How do the sea lions react to the arrival of Tomás and Miguel? _____
12. What is special about Pebbles? _____
13. What important question does Miguel ask Tomás at the end of this chapter?
Do you agree with Tomás's answer? _____

B. Now read Chapter 14. As you read, try to answer the questions to yourself.
Write down each page number where the question is answered in the text.

Chapter 15 - "The Teacher"

A. Before you begin reading this chapter, read these questions. Tomás realizes that there are different ways to look at the same thing, and he tells Juan Fuertes his final decision.

1. What does Tomás realize about his dream of carrying the shark through the plaza? _____
2. How do the Torreses react to the news of Tomás's decision? _____
3. How does Miguel feel as he walks to Victorio's? _____
4. How does Griselda react to Tomás's request? _____
5. What does Juan Fuertes say about being a teacher? _____
6. What does Tomás finally tell Juan Fuertes about the two faces of the wind? _____
7. What does thinking about the real people in the pageant, the absence of the galleon on the volcano, and the life of Uncle Diaz help Tomás to realize? _____
8. Then, what does Tomás realize about the face of a fisherman? _____

B. Now read Chapter 15. As you read, try to answer the questions to yourself. Write down each page number where the question is answered in the text.