

‘Life of Pi’ by Yann Martel.

### **Life of Pi Reading Questions**

#### **Author’s Note – Chapter 5**

##### **Author’s Note:**

1. Which two items does the author mention about traveling to Bombay?
2. What does the elderly man in the coffee shop tell the author to get his attention?
3. What is no longer in the Pondicherry Botanical Garden?
4. Is the story the man tells true? How do you know this?
5. How will the story be told? In what point of view?

##### **Chapter 1:**

1. Which two majors were pursued?
2. How many years of high school did the narrator complete before entering college?
3. What animal was studied for the zoology thesis and why was it studied?
4. Describe some of the characteristics of the sloth.
5. Describe how a sloth survives.
6. Explain the following statement: “The reason death sticks so closely to life isn’t biological necessity – it’s envy” (p. 6).
7. Based on the following statement: “a tie is a noose, ...it will hang a man nonetheless if he’s not careful,” what can you conclude about how the narrator feels about the working life?
8. Who has stayed with the narrator?
9. The narrator ends the chapter talking about his time recovering where?

**Chapter 2:**

1. Give a brief summary of the information provided.

**Chapter 3:**

1. Describe the term “mamaji.”
2. The narrator was named after what?
3. What did the narrator do three times a week throughout his childhood?
4. What did his father do?
5. What is the narrator’s full name?

**Chapter 4:**

1. What was created in a portion of the grounds of the Pondicherry Botanical Garden?
2. What titles did Piscine’s father hold?
3. What alarm clock did Piscine use every morning?
4. What does the narrator describe when he says: “Better to picture it in your head if you want to feel it?”
5. Explain why the narrator says animals in zoos are not unhappy and do not have broken spirits.
6. How does the phrase “There’s no place like home” relate to animals?
7. If an animal could choose where to live, where would that choice lie according to the narrator?
8. What happened to the Pondicherry zoo?

**Chapter 5:**

1. The section of this chapter that starts with “it is true that those” and ends with “Paul” is a reference to what?

2. List three allusions found in this chapter.
3. How did the narrator fix the problem with his name?

**Life of Pi Reading Questions**  
**Chapter 6 – Chapter 12**

Ch. 6

1. Give a brief summary of this chapter.

Ch. 7

1. Describe Mr. Satish Kumar.
2. How did Pi's father help the rhino at the zoo who was suffering from isolation?
3. What does Mr. Kumar consider the zoo?
4. What are Mr. Kumar's feelings on religion?
5. Describe how Pi feels when he learns that Mr. Kumar is an atheist.

Ch. 8

1. What is the most dangerous animal in the zoo?
2. What is the threat that man poses to the animals in the zoo?
3. What lesson does Father teach Ravi and Piscine?

Ch. 9

1. What is the key to getting animals used to human presence?

Ch. 10

1. Animals don't escape \_\_\_\_\_, but \_\_\_\_\_.
2. How high can leopards jump straight up?

Ch. 11

1. "Escaped zoo animals are not dangerous absconding criminals but simply

\_\_\_\_\_ seeking to \_\_\_\_\_.”

Ch. 12

1. Give a brief summary of this chapter.

**Life of Pi Reading Questions**  
**Chapter 13 - Chapter 19**

**Chapter 13:**

1. Why will a lion rip you to shreds if you fall in the pit?
2. What is hostile and aggressive behavior among animals an expression of?
3. Describe how social rank is so important to animals.
4. How do animals compare to humans in the area of social rank?

**Chapter 14:**

1. What does a close relationship with the super-alpha trainer mean for the omega animal?
2. Which type of animals make the most effort to get to know their trainers?

**Chapter 15:**

1. Describe Ganesha.
2. Explain the elements of religion found throughout the house. Why is this unique?

**Chapter 16:**

1. Why is Pi's religion Hindu?
2. Religion is more than what, according to Pi?
3. According to the Hindu religion, what is one's soul called?

**Chapter 17:**

1. Who led Pi to meet Jesus Christ?
2. Why is this an unusual pairing?
3. How did the hills within Munnar stand out?
4. Explain the differences between what was found on top of each of these hills.
5. What idea moved Pi when he saw the priest?
6. Which story is Pi told first?
7. What is seen in Krishna's mouth when it is opened?
8. What example does Pi give when he states that "Christianity is a religion in a rush?"

**Chapter 18:**

1. Which religion followed Christianity in Pi's life?
2. What happened to the bread when Pi was startled?
3. What does the baker do while Pi is there?

**Chapter 19:**

1. How is Islam described in this section?
2. How do you think this experience of religion differs from the experience of Christianity?

**Life of Pi Reading Questions**  
**Chapter 20 – Chapter 30**

Ch. 20

1. What does the Muslim mystic, Satish Kumar, say happens if you take two steps towards God?
2. Define hovel.
3. According to the narrator, what is the finest of rewards?

Ch. 21

1. Give a brief summary of this chapter.

Ch. 23

1. What religions was Pi practicing as a teenager?
2. Describe the scene as Pi's secret religious life is exposed.
3. Rather than spiritual worries, what concerned Pi's father?
4. How does Pi reply when initially asked to choose between the 3 religions?

Ch. 24

1. How does Pi's brother Ravi respond to Pi's exploration of religions?

Ch. 25

1. According to Pi, "religion is about our \_\_\_\_\_, not our \_\_\_\_\_."
2. What do you think this statement means?

Ch. 26

1. What two requests does Pi ask of his father?
2. How does Pi's father respond to Pi's request?

3. How does Pi's mother respond to Pi's request?

Ch. 27

1. Summarize the discussion Pi's mother and father have about Pi's attraction to the 3 religions.
2. What interests would Pi's father rather have him pursue?

Ch. 28

1. Where did Pi most often use his prayer rug?
2. When he prayed, which direction (city) would he face?

Ch. 29

1. According to Pi, what makes people move?
2. Why was Pi's family moving? Why?

Ch. 30

1. Give a brief summary of this chapter.

**Life of Pi Reading Questions**  
**Chapter 31 – Chapter 38**

**Chapter 31:**

1. How did Pi trick himself into recognizing Mr. Kumar?
2. Which animal is highlighted here?

**Chapter 32:**

1. What was unusual about the mouse?
2. What is the explanation of zoomorphism according to Pi?

**Chapter 33:**

1. What are the two men looking at during this section?
2. What is revealed about the man's mother?

**Chapter 34:**

1. Where was the family going and what happened to the zoo?
2. What happened to the animals?

**Chapter 35:**

1. When did they leave and what type of boat was it?

**Chapter 36:**



1. Summarize this chapter.

### **Chapter 37:**

1. Where does this chapter (and this section) take place?
2. What happened to the ship?
3. Who is Pi trying to save?
4. What has happened to his parents and brother?
5. What did Pi do when the tiger got in the boat with him?

### **Chapter 38:**

1. What are the differences between how Pi and his brother spent their time on the boat?
2. Explain how Pi is the only survivor.

**Life of Pi Reading Questions**  
**Chapter 39 – Chapter 47**

Ch. 39

1. Where did Pi land when the men threw him overboard?
2. What/who was thrown overboard after Pi?

Ch. 40

1. Describe Pi's experience in the water.
2. Which is Pi more terrified of- the Pacific or the tiger?

Ch. 41

1. Why does Pi decide to climb into the boat?
2. What sense do tigers primarily rely upon?
3. Why had Richard Parker not yet killed the zebra?
4. What does Pi now assume was the reason the men had thrown him into the lifeboat?

Ch. 42

1. Who came floating in on an island of bananas?
2. How did Orange Juice get her name?
3. Explain this quote: "This colossal waste would later weigh on me heavily."

Ch. 43

1. Where did the hyena position itself?
2. List 3 descriptors of the hyena.
3. Describe how hyenas attack.

4. What happened with the hyena after it stopped running circles around the lifeboat?

Ch. 44

1. What is the one memory of sound that Pi says dominated the first hours on the lifeboat?
2. What anxieties came about for Pi at the end of the day?

Ch. 45

1. What was Pi's hope for the second day?
2. What had the hyena done to the zebra during the night?
3. What sight makes Pi laugh out loud?
4. What is wrong with Orange Juice?
5. What does Pi tell the sea turtle?

Ch. 46

1. On the second day, what does Pi notice in the water surrounding the lifeboat?
2. Briefly describe the actions of the hyena in relation to the zebra.
3. How does Orange Juice respond to this vicious attack of the hyena on the zebra?
4. What happens to attract more sharks to the lifeboat?
5. As the second day comes to a close, what does Pi finally admit to himself?

Ch. 47

1. The morning of the third day, what is Pi horrified to find?
2. How does Orange Juice react to the hyena's advances?
3. Who wins the battle between Orange Juice and the hyena? How?
4. What does Pi discover after Orange Juice's death?

**Life of Pi Reading Questions**  
**Chapter 48 – Chapter 54**

**Chapter 48:**

1. Which is more important: hunger or thirst?
2. How did Richard Parker get his name?

**Chapter 49:**

1. Why is Pi so exhausted?
2. Explain the following statement: “With a tiger aboard, my life was over. That being settled, why not do something about my parched throat?”
3. What theories does Pi have about why Richard Parker has remained so calm?

**Chapter 50:**

1. How big, exactly, was the boat?
2. What color is predominant on the boat? Why do you think this is used?

**Chapter 51:**

1. How close is Richard Parker to Pi?
2. What was interesting about the cans of water found?
3. Which literary device is being used in this sentence: “My heart began to beat like a merry drum and blood started flowing through my veins like cars from a wedding party honking their way through town?”

4. Describe the first meal Pi has on the boat.
5. Pi has food rations to last how many days?
6. How many days of water did he have?

#### **Chapter 52:**

1. What is one item you find interesting from the supplies found on the boat?

#### **Chapter 53:**

1. What made Pi wake up? What caused this feeling?
2. What prevented Pi from giving up?
3. What did Pi make when he heard the tiger start to growl?
4. What sight will stay with him forever?
5. What appeared unrepentantly on the boat?
6. What happened to the animal?
7. What was the weather like when Pi returned to the boat?
8. Which literary device is used in the following sentence: "Fingers of water reached up furtively through the cracks and wet my bottom?"

#### **Chapter 54:**

1. What was the first plan Pi had to get Richard Parker off of the boat?
2. What was plan number two?
3. What was plan number three?
4. What was plan number four?
5. What was plan number five?
6. What was plan number six?

7. Which plan is most likely to work?

**Life of Pi Reading Questions**  
**Chapter 55 – Chapter 61**

Ch. 55

1. What could Pi not recall the night after the rain storm?
2. Why is *Plan Number Six* the worst plan of all?

Ch. 56

1. What is life's only true opponent?
2. How does fear affect decision making?

Ch. 57

1. Who calmed Pi down?
2. What is *Prusten*?
3. What does Pi determine he must now do with Richard Parker?
4. Describe how Pi goes about his first training session with Richard Parker.
5. What is *Plan Number Seven*?

Ch. 58

1. What does Pi determine is the one topic not addressed in the survival manual?
2. Why did Pi need to begin fishing as soon as possible?
3. List 4 things that Pi now needed to do for survival.
4. What is a castaway's worst mistake?

Ch. 59

1. How does the raft as a sea anchor affect the movement of the lifeboat?
2. What last foreign life forms does Pi see abandoning the boat?
3. How is Richard Parker cooling off in the midday sun?
4. How does Pi get additional drinking water?
5. How does Pi mark his territory on the tarpaulin?
6. What modifications does Pi make to the raft?
7. What is the commotion that Pi hears?

Ch. 60

1. As he awakens in the middle of the night, how does Pi see his suffering?

Ch. 61

1. What activity does Pi begin in the morning?
2. What does he use as bait? How successful is it?
3. What struck Pi across the face?
4. Why does Pi wrap a blanket around himself?
5. Why does Pi have so much trouble killing the fish?
6. How does Pi explain his change from weeping over the killing of the flying fish to the gleeful beating to death of a dorado?

**Life of Pi Reading Questions**  
**Chapter 62 – Chapter 76**

**Chapter 62:**

1. What was the tiger doing when Pi awoke?
2. What revelation does Pi make about the solar stills?
3. Day after day the lifeboat began to resemble what, according to Pi?
4. How long have they been adrift at sea?

**Chapter 63:**

1. How many days total was Pi at sea?
2. Which time of the day tended to be better?
3. What activity kept Pi busy in relation to Richard Parker?
4. Which day did the story start and when did it end?

**Chapter 64:**

1. What happened to his clothing?
2. What dilemma does Pi talk about in this chapter?

**Chapter 65:**

1. What are some challenges Pi had with navigation?
2. Which “road” was Pi actually traveling?



**Chapter 66:**

1. What became the most valuable fishing equipment?
2. How did Pi's reaction to sea life change over time?
3. What does he describe as the "good days?"
4. Why were the turtles so hard to get on the boat?

**Chapter 67:**

1. Where did Pi find the tiny shrimp?
2. What did he pop into his mouth like candy whenever he found them?

**Chapter 68:**

1. Explain the sleeping habits of the two travelers.

**Chapter 69:**

1. What gave Pi hope and also took it away?

**Chapter 70:**

1. What did Pi do after he slit the turtle's throat?
2. What activity is described in this chapter?

**Chapter 71:**

1. Describe this section.

**Chapter 72:**

1. What was the shield that was used?
2. What happened the first time Pi tried to train Richard Parker?

3. How many times did Pi not succeed?

**Chapter 73:**

1. What was Pi's greatest wish?
2. What sent him into tears?
3. What did he keep during his time out to sea?

**Chapter 74:**

1. What was hard for Pi at times on his journey?
2. What was a heavy blackness that let not light in or out?

**Chapter 75:**

1. Why do you think this section is so short?

**Chapter 76:**

1. What did Pi have to do to make sure Richard Parker didn't get sick?
2. What was the significance of Richard Parker trying to hide his feces?
3. Pi says that he was not concerned with good zoo keeping but rather with what?
4. What medical condition did both face?

**Life of Pi Reading Questions**  
**Chapter 77 – Chapter 86**

Ch. 77

1. To what amount did Pi limit his rations?
2. List 3 uses of turtle shells.

Ch. 78

1. According to Pi, the worst pair of opposites is \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
2. What is the only thing that constantly excites Pi's emotions?
3. Pi states that life on a lifeboat is physically arduous and morally killing. What do you think this means? Explain.

Ch. 79

1. How does Pi catch his first shark?
2. Briefly describe the battle between Richard Parker and the shark.
3. What does Pi discover is a faster, less tiresome way of killing sharks?

Ch. 80

1. How does Pi challenge Richard Parker over the dorado?
2. Who wins the battle for the dorado? Why?

Ch. 81

1. What reasons does Pi cite for his survival with Richard Parker?

Ch. 82

1. How does Pi protect the bags of water?
2. What does Pi notice about the way he eats?

Ch. 83

1. Why doesn't Pi move on to the floor of the boat during the storm?
2. What is lost during the storm? How does this make Pi feel?
3. What does Pi find while bailing out the boat after the storm?

Ch. 84

1. What is the blast that Pi hears in the water?
2. How does Pi kill the bird?
3. What parts of the bird does Pi take advantage of?

Ch. 85

1. What effect does the lightning have on Pi? On Richard Parker?
2. What does Pi say the sound of lightening is louder than?

Ch. 86

1. What does Pi spot at the beginning of this chapter?
2. Where is the ship headed?
3. Why is Pi unable to notify the ship of his presence?

**Life of Pi Reading Questions**  
**Chapter 87 – Chapter 91**

**Chapter 87:**

1. Describe the “dream rag” and what it did.

**Chapter 88:**

1. After the trash went by, what did Pi do with the bottle?
2. Do you think he really thought this would help? If not, why do you think he did it?

**Chapter 89:**

1. What does Pi not remember from his time at sea?
2. What do the last entries in the journal reveal?
3. Why did the diary entries stop?

**Chapter 90:**

1. What appears to have happened to Richard Parker?
2. What day does Pi mark as the day his extreme suffering began?
3. Who was Pi speaking to?
4. What were they discussing?
5. What did Pi do with the cigarettes?
6. What happened to the visitor?

## **Chapter 91:**

1. What happened to Pi's vision?
2. What did Pi end up doing with the body?

## **Life of Pi Reading Questions**

### **Chapter 92 – Chapter 94**

#### Ch. 92

1. What does Pi find at the beginning of this chapter?
2. How is this island different from most islands in regards to the shore or beach?
3. What does Pi find to eat on the island?
4. Why is Pi unable to stand or walk?
5. Where do Pi and Richard Parker return every evening?
6. Describe Richard Parker's actions as Pi continuously blows the whistle to stop his advances?
7. What is the unexpected thing that Richard Parker does?
8. What is Pi's estimate regarding the number of meerkats that inhabit the island?
9. What is Pi's explanation for the large quantities of fresh water?
10. After exploring most of the island, what does Pi determine through intuition rather than hard evidence about the island? Or, how is the island different than conventional islands?
11. What does Pi train Richard Parker to do?
12. Why does Pi eventually decide to sleep on the island rather than on the boat?
13. Why does Pi choose to sleep in a tree?
14. Who joins Pi in the trees at night?

15. What does Pi see in the surface of the water one night? What does he see in the water in the morning?
16. What does Pi find within the fruit of the tree?
17. How does Pi test his theory about the island? What happens?
18. What does Pi determine about the state of the island?
19. Why does Pi decide to leave the island?
20. Why does Pi decide to take Richard Parker with him?

Ch. 93

1. Where did Pi turn “in the throes of unremitting suffering?”

Ch. 94

1. What land did Pi and Richard Parker finally reach?
2. Describe Pi’s last image of Richard Parker.
3. Why does Pi weep?
4. What does Pi wish he would have said to Richard Parker?
5. How is Pi taken care of after his rescue?

**Life of Pi Reading Questions**  
**Chapter 95 – Chapter 100**

**Chapter 95:**

1. Who were the two men that were traveling?

**Chapter 96 – Chapter 97:**

1. What is the purpose of these two chapters?

**Chapter 98:**

1. Why do the men say “He thinks we’re fools?”

**Chapter 99:**

1. Describe this chapter.
2. What is the significance of the second story told? How do these characters match up to those found in the first story?

**Chapter 100:**

1. Which of the two stories made it into the report?
2. Which story do you think is correct? Why?