

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### I Survived The Shark Attacks of 1916



# CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS AND ESSAY ASSIGNMENT

## CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS:

1. Why are the boys excited to tell Chet about the shark attack in the newspaper?

---

---

---

2. How does Captain Wilson disagree with Uncle Jerry about sharks? Why is Chet unsure about whether to believe Captain Wilson?

---

---

---

3. Why does Chet feel like he understands what it's like to be alone in the middle of the ocean?

---

---

---

4. When Chet's friends play a prank on him in the creek, Chet feels a few different emotions. What does he feel and why?

---

---

---

5. Why doesn't Chet understand pranks? How does Uncle Jerry explain pranks to him?

---

---

---

---

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### I Survived The Shark Attacks of 1916

## CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS AND ESSAY ASSIGNMENT *(CONTINUED)*

6. How does Chet feel after the Creek Devil prank? How does Uncle Jerry help him?

---

---

---

7. Why is Chet convinced that Captain Wilson will believe his story about being attacked by the shark?

---

---

---

8. How does Captain Wilson make it clear that he believes Chet about the shark in the creek? How does he encourage and empower—or give power to—Chet after hearing Chet's story?

---

---

---



9. How do the boys help each other at the creek when the shark is attacking?

---

---

---

10. Why do the newspapers call Chet the "miracle kid"?

---

---

---

**ESSAY ASSIGNMENT:** Answer the organizer questions on the next page to help you write a three-paragraph essay explaining how Chet learns about friendship over the course of the book.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### I Survived The Shark Attacks of 1916

## CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS AND ESSAY ASSIGNMENT *(CONTINUED)*

### THREE-PARAGRAPH ESSAY ORGANIZER FOR *I SURVIVED THE SHARK ATTACKS OF 1916*

Answer the questions below to brainstorm ideas for your first paragraph, which will be your introduction:

Before living in Elm Hills with Uncle Jerry, what has Chet's life been like? Where has he been living? Has he had many real friends?

---

---

For your second paragraph, list the two pranks the boys and Chet pull, and explain what Chet learns about friendship from talking to Uncle Jerry about these pranks:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Next, answer the questions below to help you write a concluding paragraph.

What do the boys decide about pranks at the end of the book, after the shark attacks? What does this say about their friendship?

---

---

---

Now, write your essay on the back of this page or on a computer using your answers above.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### I Survived The Shark Attacks of 1916

## ANSWERS

#### CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS:

1. Because the boys have never heard of anything like it happening before. As far as they know, sharks don't attack humans, so it's a surprising and scary event.
2. Captain Wilson says that Uncle Jerry is wrong that sharks don't attack people and that some sharks are killers. He says a shark attacked him after he was shipwrecked. Chet isn't sure whether to believe Captain Wilson because the captain says he has to go home to his wife, and his wife has been dead for more than 20 years.
3. For a long time, Chet has been traveling around with his parents without settling in one place, so he feels like he's alone and doesn't really belong anywhere.
4. First Chet is scared, because he believes there's a shark in the water. Then he's angry and embarrassed, because he realizes his friends tricked him.
5. Chet doesn't understand pranks because he's never had any real friends. Uncle Jerry says that Chet should be flattered because the prank the boys played on him means that they like him and think he's one of them.
6. Chet feels terrible after the Creek Devil prank because the boys are furious at him. He feels like he doesn't belong in Elm Hills, and he wants to leave. Uncle Jerry tells Chet that he does belong, and that a person has to face up to things. He says, "You never solve anything by running away."
7. Chet knows that Captain Wilson has also been attacked by a shark.
8. Captain Wilson tells Chet that they need to warn people, and he sends Chet to the swimming hole to tell people what he saw.
9. When the shark is attacking, Chet dives in to help Sid when Sid freezes after seeing the shark's fin in the water. Next, the boys grab onto Chet as he tries to get on the dock, and they don't let go when the shark has Chet's leg. When the shark finally lets go, they pull Chet onto the dock.
10. The newspapers call Chet the "miracle kid" because he survived a shark attack, unlike several other people who died.

**ESSAY ASSIGNMENT:** Answers will vary but should include the idea that Chet learns that pranks can be a way that people show they like someone, but also that they can go too far. After the shark attacks, the boys call a truce and decide not to pull any more pranks. This shows that their friendship has deepened, and that they would rather look out for and help each other than pull pranks.