

# The Cay

by Theodore Taylor

## Teacher's Guide

Written By Mary Ellen Snodgrass

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## Synopsis

### Chapter 1

A gasoline production specialist, Phillip's father, also named Phillip, calms his wife and son after German submarines attack the Lago oil refinery at Sint Nicolaas, Aruba. During this tense period, authorities cancel school. The Enrights restrict Phillip to their home in Scharloo, but he sneaks away to Punda, Fort Amsterdam, and the Queen Emma pontoon bridge with friend Henrik van Boven.

### Chapter 2

The governor of the Netherlands' West Indies appeals to Washington for help. Grace Enright, Phillip's mother, insists on taking him back to her parents' home in Norfolk until the danger passes. Mr. Enright decides to help preserve oil and gas supplies to aid the Allied war effort, but in April he books passage for his wife and son on the *S.S. Hato*, a Dutch freighter bound for Miami by way of Colón, Panama. From Miami, they will take the train to Norfolk.

### Chapter 3

At 3:00 a.m. on April 6, 1942, two days out of Panama, torpedoes cripple the freighter. The concussion throws Phillip from the top bunk. Grace helps him dress for abandoning ship, but the two are separated when their lifeboat capsizes during launching. Phillip, knocked unconscious by a blow on the head, awakens four hours later on a raft with Timothy, a 70-year-old West Indian deck hand, and Stew, the cook's cat.

Phillip rests while Timothy examines their supplies—a keg of water, biscuits, chocolate, and matches—and parcels out water and raw flying fish, which he catches at nightfall. Phillip, suffering from headache, sulks and refuses to eat. He resents contact with a black and blames his mother for forcing him to leave the island.

### Chapter 4

In the chill dark, Phillip and Timothy draw closer together. Despite prejudices Phillip learned from his mother, he trusts Timothy, who keeps them alive. The next morning, Phillip is headachy, dizzy, and unable to focus his eyes. Timothy settles him in a makeshift shelter and advises him to avoid glare from the sun or water. After a nap, Phillip awakens terror-stricken, this time totally blind. Timothy soothes the panic and tears a piece of his shirt to use as a compress. He knows they are near Providencia and San Andrés. At times, he sings calypso music.

### Chapter 5

On the third day, they hear an aircraft. After it flies away, Timothy tries to lift Phillip's flagging spirits.

### Chapter 6

On the fourth day, Timothy sights land. Phillip accidentally falls overboard. Timothy rescues him from sharks and chastises him for carelessness.

### Chapter 7

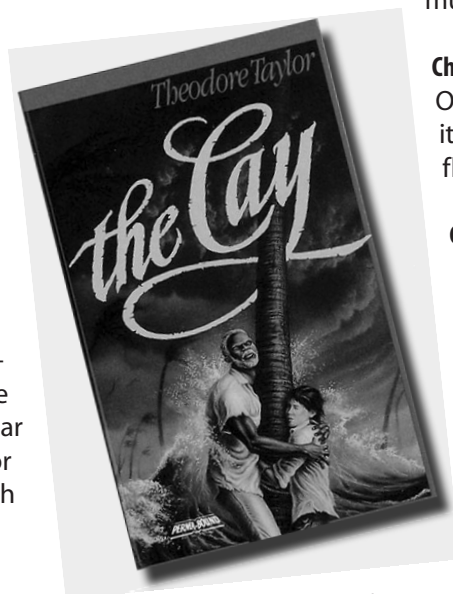
Within hours, the castaways arrive on a cay. Timothy describes its beauty, yet fears it may be in the remote U-shaped Devil's Mouth. He makes camp on a 40-foot rise and devises a trap for water.

### Chapter 8

Timothy fashions palm fronds into a shelter. He catches langosta, a clawless native lobster. To assure rescue, he collects timber for a signal fire and rocks to spell out 'help' for pilots to see. Phillip realizes that Timothy can't write and scribbles 'help' in the sand so Timothy can copy it.

### Chapter 9

Timothy eases the burden of Phillip's blindness by providing a vine rope as a handhold. Phillip thinks of him as a friend, and asks to be called by name.



## Chapter 10

Phillip explores his prejudices with Timothy. To ease his worry about blindness, Timothy avoids discussing it.

## Chapter 11

Timothy provides a cane with which Phillip explores the island. He also carves a wooden cat to kill the evil spirit he believes is in Stew Cat.

## Chapter 12

One morning in mid-May, Timothy awakens with a high fever from recurrent malaria. Phillip offers water and a cool cloth. In his delirium, Timothy runs to the surf, but Phillip pulls him to safety.

## Chapter 13

In late May, the two survivors lapse into a pleasant lifestyle. Phillip teaches Timothy geography. The boy climbs a palm to retrieve coconuts.

## Chapter 14

In mid-July, they hear a sharp sound like a rifle shot, which indicates a freak early hurricane. In preparation, they eat a huge meal because they may not have food after the storm.

## Chapter 15

Before rain falls in earnest, Timothy lashes them to a palm tree at the highest point on the island. When the hurricane hits, he shelters Phillip with his body. In darkness, Phillip hears the wind and feels water at their ankles. After the eye of the hurricane, turbulent winds return. Phillip comes close to drowning as water rises. He and Timothy lapse into unconsciousness. When the storm abates, the two are stripped naked from its force. Phillip realizes that Timothy is dying from the buffeting his back has suffered and from loss of blood. Phillip falls asleep clutching his hand. When he awakens, Timothy is dead.

## Chapter 16

Unable to weep, the boy digs a grave and holds a brief service, praying "Take care of him, God, he was good to me." Relying on the companionship of Stew Cat, he determines to stay alive without help.

## Chapter 17

Ten days later, Phillip fishes by hand for langosta at the bottom of the fishing hole. He finds a small one, then reaches into a recess and is attacked, probably by a moray eel.

## Chapter 18

He and Stew Cat survive well on the skills that Timothy taught the boy. He relies on sounds to compensate for blindness. He hears a plane approach and depart. He decides to burn sea grape vines because of their oil.

## Chapter 19

On August 20, after the crew of a rescue plane spot the dense black smoke, Phillip boards an American destroyer and travels to a naval base in Cristóbal, Panama. His parents fly in from Willemstad to meet him. Four months later, three operations in a New York hospital have restored his sight. The family returns to Willemstad in early April. He studies maps of the Caribbean and determines to charter a schooner to Devil's Mouth and the unnamed cay on which Timothy lies buried.

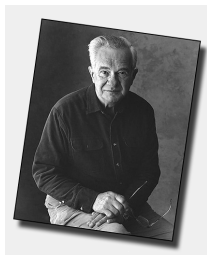
## Timeline

<b>Sept. 3, 1939</b>	President Roosevelt chooses neutrality toward hostilities in Europe.
<b>Sept. 8</b>	President Roosevelt declares a state of limited emergency.
<b>late</b>	The Enrights come to Curaçao from Virginia. Phillip Enright works for Royal Dutch Shell.
<b>May 10, 1940</b>	Germany invades the Netherlands.
<b>May 13</b>	Queen Wilhelmina escapes to London.
<b>May 14</b>	Dutch military surrenders to the Nazis.
<b>May 31</b>	President Roosevelt calls for the building of more planes.
<b>June 16</b>	U. S. officials fear a German takeover of Dutch and French colonial possessions.
<b>May 27, 1941</b>	President Roosevelt declares an unlimited state of emergency.
<b>June 20</b>	U.S. petroleum products are placed under government control.
<b>Aug. 3</b>	Gasoline rationing begins.
<b>Sept. 11</b>	President Roosevelt orders the Navy to attack German or Italian submarines in U.S.-protected waters.
<b>Dec. 7</b>	Japanese planes bomb Pearl Harbor.
<b>Dec. 8</b>	The U.S. declares war on Japan.
<b>Dec. 11</b>	Germany and Italy declare war on the U. S.
<b>February 1942</b>	German submarines attack the Lago oil refinery on Aruba and blow up tankers on Curaçao.
<b>Feb. 21</b>	Enemy subs torpedo a Norwegian tanker off Curaçao.
<b>Feb. 23</b>	A submarine sinks the <i>Empire Tern</i> .

<b>Early April</b>	Grace and Phillip board the <i>S. S. Hato</i> in St. Anna Channel bound for Colón, Panama, and ultimately Miami.
<b>April 6</b>	The <i>S. S. Hato</i> is torpedoed at 3 a. m. after leaving Panama. Four hours later, Phillip awakens on a raft.
<b>April 9</b>	Timothy spots the cay and lands the raft.
<b>April 17</b>	Rain fills the keg with fresh water.
<b>Mid-May</b>	Timothy suffers an attack of malaria.
<b>June</b>	The FBI arrests eight German saboteurs. Six are executed.
<b>July</b>	A hurricane hits the cay. Timothy dies.
<b>Early August</b>	Phillip hears a plane and lights the signal fire, but the plane passes over.
<b>Aug. 20</b>	An American destroyer rescues Phillip and tranposts him to Panama.
<b>December</b>	Three operations performed in a New York hospital restore Phillip's sight.
<b>early April 1943</b>	The Enrights return to Willemstad.
<b>Sept. 3, 1944</b>	Allied troops enter the Netherlands.
<b>Apr. 30, 1945</b>	Allies begin shipping food and supplies to the Netherlands.
<b>May 7</b>	Germany surrenders to Western Allies at Rheims.
<b>May 14</b>	Allied forces retake Holland.
<b>Aug. 6</b>	The U. S. drops an atomic bomb on Hiroshima.
<b>Aug. 9</b>	A second atomic bomb destroys Nagasaki.
<b>Aug. 14</b>	Japan surrenders.

## Author Sketch

Theodore Taylor was born on June 23, 1921, in Statesville, North Carolina, the sixth child of foundryman Edward Riley and Elnora Alma Langhans Taylor, a would-be actress. His sisters spoiled him; his playmate, a racist named Phillip, became the central character of *The Cay*. During the Depression, his father entered a Soldier's Home in Johnson City, Tennessee, then worked part-time jobs in other cities. Ted, a shy, but resourceful boy, surmounted shaky finances by raising greens, manning an early morning paper route, and selling candy and scrap metal. After the Taylors moved to Portsmouth, Virginia, he plucked chickens and delivered dry cleaning. He invested meager earnings in a \$10 rowboat and added crabbing to his odd jobs. The position that changed his life, however, was the sports column he wrote for the *Portsmouth Star* in 1935.



Dubbed "Hayseed" by his peers, Ted was a poor math student who had to stay at Fork Union Military Academy an extra year to graduate. Even though he has no impressive academic degrees, he profited from on-the-job training—as a drama reporter, prize-fighter manager, merchant seaman, naval officer, magazine writer, movie publicist, story editor, and production assistant in documentary films. He left home at seventeen to work for the *Washington Daily News* and reported for the *Portsmouth Star*, *Bluefield News*, and *Orlando Sentinel Star*. He learned sportswriting at NBC Radio and produced documentaries for Perlberg-Seaton. From 1942-43 he attended the U. S. Merchant Marine Academy, developing a love of naval history that later served him well. In 1948 he studied for a year at Columbia University. He later trained at the American Theatre Wing and helped make seventeen feature films, notably *Tora! Tora! Tora!*, *The Counterfeit Traitor*, *Diamond Head*, and *The Sand Pebbles*. Since 1961 he has worked full-time as a writer.

Ted Taylor has three children—Mark, Wendy, and Michael—from his marriage to Gweneth Goodwin. With his second wife, Flora McLellan Schoenleber, a children's librarian, he makes his home in Laguna Beach, California, enjoying early morning walks on the beach as well as annual jaunts to faraway places. His published works include screenplays and fiction and nonfiction for children and adults, plus stories and articles for *Redbook*, *McCall's*, *Argosy*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Collier's*, and *Parade*.

## Critic's Corner

In a personal evaluation of his work, Taylor summarizes, "Dullness is the death of writing, as well as many other things. I love to switch around, change gears." Nurtured on Bible stories, he developed a taste for action, which he translated into print. He succeeded with *The Cay*, which he calls "the quickest and easiest book I've ever written." Basing the novel on his experiences in the Virgin Islands, Haiti, Carriacou, Barbados, Grenada, Aruba, Curaçao, and Puerto Rico, he claims that his subconscious did the hard work. Richard Crenna's movie version, made by Pendick Productions in 1974, stars James Earle Jones.

The book earned Taylor the Jane Addams Children's Book Award in 1970. The victim of censorship, it was labeled a racist book at the height of its popularity. As a result, sponsors of the Jane Addams Award requested he return the award in 1975. Taylor complied, but denied the charge. He surmised that if a black author

had written the book, there would have been no outcry. Subsequent awards include the Lewis Carroll Shelf Award, Commonwealth Club Silver Medal, Best Book Award of the Southern California Council on Children's Literature, Best Book Award of the University of California at Irvine, a best non-fiction award from Western Writers, Young Reader's medal of the California Reading Association, and a Jefferson Cup honor book.

## Other Works by the Author

*Billy the Kid* (2005)  
*The Bomb* (1995)  
*Box of Treasures* (1995)  
*Boy Who Could Fly Without a Motor* (2002)  
*The Cats of Shambala* (1985)  
*The Children's War* (1971)  
*The Flight of Jesse Leroy Brown* (1998)  
*The Hostage* (1987)  
*Hello Arctic!* (2002)  
*Ice Drift* (2005)  
*Into the Wind* (1995)  
*Lord of the Kill* (2002)  
*Making Love to Typewriters* (2005)  
*The Maldonado Miracle* (1973)  
*Maria: a Christmas Story* (1992)  
*Monocolo* (1989)  
*Night Without End* (1959)  
*The Odyssey of Ben O'Neal* (1977)  
*Rocket Island* (1985)  
*Rogue Wave* (1996)  
*Sailor Returns* (2001)  
*A Shepherd Watches, A Shepherd Sings* (1977)  
*Showdown* (1973)  
*The Sniper* (1989)  
*The Stalker* (1987)  
*Stranger from the Sea* (1995)  
*Sunshine, the Whale* (1974)  
*Sweet Friday Island* (1984)  
*Teetoncey* (1974)  
*Teetoncey and Ben O'Neal* (1975)  
*Timothy of the Cay* (1993)  
*To Kill the Leopard* (1993)  
*Tom Threepersons* (1964)  
*Tuck Triumphant* (1991)  
*The Trouble with Tuck* (1981)  
*Walking up a Rainbow* (1996)  
*The Weirdo* (1992)

## Related Reading

Avi, *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*  
Karel Capek, *R. U. R.*  
Orson Scott Card, *Ender's Game*  
Sook Nyul Choi, *Year of Impossible Goodbyes*  
Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*  
Paula Fox, *Slave Dancer*  
Jean Craighead George, *Julie of the Wolves* and *My Side of the Mountain*  
Robin Graham, *Dove*  
Robert Heinlein, "The Green Hills of Earth" and *Tunnel in the Sky*  
Will Hobbes, *Downriver*  
Jack London, "To Build a Fire"  
Farley Mowat, *Never Cry Wolf*  
Gary Paulsen, *Nightjohn* and *Hatchet*  
Yoko Kawashima Watkins, *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*  
Elie Wiesel, *Night*

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Dorsey, Charles, "Review," *New York Times Book Review*, June 26, 1969.  
Kirkpatrick, D.L., ed. *Twentieth-Century Children's Writers*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983.  
Marquardt, Dorothy A., and Martha E. Ward. *Authors of Books for Young People*. New York: Scarecrow, 1979.  
Parker, T. Jefferson, "Review," *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, June 21, 1987, pp. 3, 8.  
"Review," *Saturday Review*, June 28, 1969.  
Snodgrass, Mary Ellen. *Literary Maps for Young Adult Literature*. Englewood, Colo: Libraries Unlimited, 1995.  
*Something About the Author*, Vol. 5. Detroit: Gale, 1987.  
*Something About the Author Autobiography Series*, Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1987.  
*Top of the News*, November 1971.  
"Review," *Washington Post*, May 26, 1979.  
Wicks, Stephen, and Barbara Hall, "Teachers at Work II: Two Novels in the Classroom," *Children's Literature in Education*; Fall 1980, pp. 124-128.

## General Objectives

1. To define survivalism
2. To describe the physical, mental, and emotional effects of marooning
3. To pinpoint prejudicial attitudes and expectations
4. To characterize stages of fear and acceptance
5. To list ways of surviving a hurricane
6. To account for misgivings about location and rescue
7. To question the advisability of separating a family during wartime
8. To assess the loss of a friend
9. To isolate moments of disillusion, discouragement, and fatigue
10. To account for an ominous tone and atmosphere

## Specific Objectives

1. To characterize Aruba's situation at the beginning of the war
2. To compare Phillip and Timothy as survivors
3. To characterize the relationship between Timothy and his parents
4. To comprehend the force of the torpedo
5. To list examples of superstition
6. To explain how burning sea grape leaves indicate Phillip's position
7. To account for Timothy's insistence that Phillip help himself
8. To contrast Phillip before and after Timothy's death
9. To analyze the family's strengths after they are reunited
10. To characterize the emotional upheaval in Phillip as his eyes dim

## Literary Terms and Applications

For a better understanding of Theodore Taylor's novel, present the following terms and applications:

**Bildungsroman:** literally a "formation novel," which describes the coming-of-age of an untried or naive youth. The emergence of Phillip's survivalism indicates that challenge and loss force him to think and act for himself, even though he is blind and alone on an unidentified Caribbean cay. By the time he is rescued, he has begun to think for himself and to discard his mother's prejudices toward blacks. His intent to locate

Timothy's grave and honor it suggest that Phillip is capable of thinking like an adult. His disdain for Henrik van Boven's childishness is another indication that Phillip has matured.

**Irony:** an implied discrepancy between what is said or done and what is meant. A stark vignette at the end of the storm finds Phillip's strong island rescuer dead from exposure to the elements and the boy safe on a high point of the island. Because Timothy has applied his experience in the islands and with hurricanes, he has prepared Phillip for the worst and enabled him to hang on until help arrives. A greater irony is Phillip's after-the-fact gratitude toward Timothy, the rescuer whom he rejected for his black skin and ignorance. Phillip appreciates the kind of learning that doesn't come from books as he makes his sightless way toward food and shelter.

**Literary Foil:** a character who serves as an opposite or as a standard by which another character is measured, as with the helpless Phillip and the strong, experienced Timothy. The unusual pairing that results from the early morning torpedoing of the *S.S. Hato* offers Phillip a more personal relationship with a West Indian that he has had in strolls through the Ruyterkade Market. Alone on the island, Phillip loses some of the traits of the outsider visitor to Aruba and develops the resilience of a true Caribbean native.

## The Importance of Setting

The milieu of *The Cay* begins on Aruba, a strategically located island colonized by the Dutch off the northeast coast of South America. The opening chapters stress the value of a Dutch petroleum processing facility that is important enough to draw an American expert on refining and an attack by a German submarine. Phillip's brief foray with Henrik van Boven suggests the variety of local architecture and attractions at Punda, Fort Amsterdam, and Queen Emma pontoon bridge, but lacks the closeness with natives that he needs to help him lose his Southern prejudice against blacks. At the time of Phillip's departure with his mother for America, he anticipates sailing on the *S.S. Hato* to Miami and taking a train to Virginia to protect them from more severe wartime violence.

The jolt of the 3:00 A.M. attack at sea throws Phillip off balance. His mother calmly dresses him for abandoning ship, but neither is prepared for the capsizing of their lifeboat or the terrors of separation at sea in the dark.

The passage of time further isolates Phillip, who awakens on a raft with an aged West Indian deck hand and a cat. Phillip's clouded vision and head pain allow him enough vision and concentration to size up their stock of supplies. The next day, total blindness reduces Phillip's dependence on sight and thrusts him into a fearful darkness. By the time the raft makes landfall on the fourth day, Phillip has been on a tossing raft in shark-infested waters and is now marooned in Devil's Mouth. The dimensions of the cay, its topography, and the small palm branch shelter maintain limits on Phillip's world, forcing him to depend on Timothy for shelter, food, and water.

In the weeks that follow the sea disaster, Phillip exhibits a willingness to adapt and to assist in making the island inhabitable. He learns to fish, find coconuts, weave mats, and guide his steps by clinging to the woven rope that Timothy provides. The unexpected shift of seasons toward hurricane weather confronts the two islanders with high water, fierce winds, and a pitiless pelting with sand and loose objects. By the end of the storm, Phillip is not only alone on an uncharted cay, but responsible for the burial of his adult friend and protector.

Taylor skims rapidly through the rescue aboard the American destroyer and transport to the naval base at Cristóbal, Panama. From rescue to reunion with parents and surgeries at a New York hospital, Phillip returns to Willemstad the next April in better health and attitude. He cruises the marketplace in search of Timothy's friends and the sound of the old man's island dialect. By poring over charts of the Caribbean, Phillip proves his concern for Timothy and the unmarked burial site he hopes to visit out of respect for his aged black rescuer.

## Cross-Curricular Sources

For more information about Aruba and Curaçao, prejudice, storms, sea life, survivalism, grief, World War II, U-Boats, blindness, and other subjects and issues deriving from the novel, consult these sources:

*Acting on Your Values*, Rosen Publishing Group  
*Characters in Crisis*, Center for Humanities  
*The Day the Lights Went Out: On Going Blind*, National Public Radio  
*Disaster! Hurricanes*, Children's Press  
*The Expanding Conflict: 1940-1941*, Coronet Films  
*Eyes—Seeing the Light*, Coronet Films  
*Grief Recovery Handbook*, HarperCollins

*The Living Seas*, Disney Educational Products  
*The Newspaper: Today's Model for Clear and Concise Writing*, A. W. Peller  
*No Man Is an Island*, Center for the Humanities  
*Places and Peoples of the the World: The Caribbean*, Chelsea House  
*The Prejudice Book*, Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith  
*Stand Tall*, AGS Media  
*Thinking Things Through: Solving Problems/Making Decisions*, A. W. Peller  
*Weather*, A. W. Peller  
*Weather Command: A Science Game*, A. W. Peller  
*A World at War: 1942-1945*, Coronet Films

Also, consult these web sites:

"Blindness Related Resources,"  
<http://www.hicom.net/~oedipus/blind.html>  
"Crisis, Grief, and Healing,"  
<http://www.webhealing.com>  
"DISCovering Multicultural America,"  
<http://galenet.gale.com>  
"The U-Boat,"  
<http://www.uboat.net>

## Themes and Motifs

A study of the central issues and situations in Theodore Taylor's *The Cay* should include these aspects:

### Themes

- disaster
- isolation
- survival
- rebellion
- weather
- loss
- independence
- responsibility
- rescue
- recovery

### Motifs

- coping with war on civilians
- making emergency preparations at sea
- dealing with prejudice
- taking responsibility for actions
- grieving the loss of a friend

## Meaning Study

Below are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have particular meaning in the novel. Explain the meaning of each. Chapter and page numbers are given so that you can note the context from which the item is taken.

1. If there was an enemy U-boat out there, I wanted to see it and join the people in shaking a fist at it. (Chap. 1, p. 10)  
*(The German U-boat, short for unterseeboot, literally an under-sea boat, played a limited role in battles with England after 1914. German competency at submarine warfare improved after 1939 and peaked in 1942, when an antisubmarine campaign attempted to halt the sinking of ships in the Caribbean Sea. In June of that year, Germany employed 48 U-boats to sink 142 allied ships. About that time, improvements in S-band or microwave radar helped destroyers and aircraft locate submarines. By 1943, U-boat warfare declined as a result of high frequency-direction finders, sonar, sono-radio buoys, floodlights, magnetic detection, and loran navigation. The combined effect of depth charges, rockets, and electric torpedoes as a part of a well-defined plan of attack greatly reduced the effectiveness of the U-boat.)*
2. He said the refinery would have to close down within a day, and that meant precious gas and oil could not go to England, or to General Montgomery in the African desert. (Chap. 2, p. 20)  
*(In 1942, Viscount Bernard Montgomery, a decorated veteran of World War I, led the Eighth Army against German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel in North Africa. After crushing German and Italian lines near El Alamein on October 23, he chased the enemy through Libya. He was knighted and promoted to full general by King George VI for a decisive victory. By May of 1943, Montgomery completed a grueling sweep of desert territory and pushed German stragglers into Tunisia.)*
3. He was carrying a brief case and a navigation instrument I knew to be a sextant. (Chap. 3, p. 29)  
*(The sextant, a portable navigational instrument for measuring the altitudes of stars and planets above the horizon, was invented in 1730 on both sides of the Atlantic—by Thomas Godfrey in Philadelphia and simultaneously by Captain John Hadley in England. The device employs polished mirrors in the measurement of angles. Later versions, especially the bubble sextant and gyro-compass, were fitted on aircraft and replaced the astro-compass as more reliable tools.)*
4. "As to our verree location, I mus' guess we are somewhar roun' d'cays, somewhar mebbe fifteen

latitude an' eighty long." (Chap. 3, p. 31)  
*(The cays or keys, sandy coral reefs, resulted from centuries of accumulation of coral skeletons. The location, 15 o° by 80 °, would place them due south of Cuba and the Cayman Islands and halfway between the eastern tip of Honduras and Jamaica.)*

5. His voice was rich calypso, soft and musical, the words rubbing off like velvet. (Chap. 3, p. 32)  
*(The traditional music of Trinidad, Calypso has invaded all the Caribbean and from there spread to other parts of the world. A feature of the pre-Easter carnival, calypso lyrics often contain humorous local political allusions. With an offbeat rhythm, its syncopated tunes suit maracas and steel bands made from oil drums.)*
6. "I do tink we are not too far from Providencia an' San Andrés." (Chap. 4, p. 43)  
*(As the S. S. Hato sails north from Panama toward Miami, it passes by Providencia Island and San Andrés as well as the Roncador and Serrana Banks. If Timothy is correct in his assumptions, the ship was headed toward the Rosalind Bank when it sank.)*
7. "But now an' den, I see a petrel. While ago, a booby." (Chap. 5, p. 52)  
*(Timothy is using the seafarer's knowledge of wildlife to determine position. If he had seen land birds, he would have known the raft was close to a suitable landfall. The sighting of the long-winged petrel is not auspicious because this species of seabird is known for its ability to navigate far from land.)*
8. Timothy shouted up from the water, "Many feesh 'ere. Langosta, too, I b'knowin'. We ros' dem." (Chap. 7, p. 58)  
*(The langosta or spiny lobster is a large prawn, one to six inches long, found in both salt and fresh waters. Tropical species can grow as large as 24 inches and contain a mass of succulent white meat in the trunk.)*
9. My father had told me about "obediah," or "voodoo," in the West Indies. (Chap. 11, p. 81)  
*(Obi or obeah, alternate names for voodoo, refer to the occult practices of African emigrants found in the British West Indies, Guiana, and the southeastern U. S. As practiced in Haiti, voodoo is an amalgam of African customs, Roman Catholicism, and local pantheism. Festivals feature prayers, incantations, drums, dancing, and feasting. Worshippers invested by spirits give advice, heal the sick, and in general serve as tangible proof of supernatural possession.)*

10. I don't remember everything that happened in the next few hours but very soon I was helped up the gangway of a destroyer. (Chap. 19, p. 134) *(Destroyers originated in the 1890s as torpedo-boat destroyers, vessels designed to intercept the swarms of small torpedo-armed boats that posed a threat to the larger armored vessels that were the backbone of major navies. By World War I destroyers had grown from the original 200-ton models to over 1,000 tons and taken on the role of torpedo attack themselves. Their speed and maneuverability made them the best ships to escort convoys and hunt submarines.)*

*A typical U.S. destroyer of World War II weighed about 3,000 tons, was about 360 feet long, and could reach speeds of about 35 knots. Modern destroyers are over 500 feet long and weigh over 8,000 tons. Besides guns and torpedoes, they also carry guided missiles and helicopters.)*

## Comprehension Study

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important and you should be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages from the novel.

### Questions 1-5 (Literal Level)

1. Contrast Phillip and Timothy after the storm. *(Timothy and Phillip Enright are diametric opposites in background and physique. At eleven years of age, Phillip, a white American, seems vastly smaller than the huge, muscular West Indian deck hand from Charlotte Amalie, Virgin Islands, who weighs 225-230 pounds and is covered with tough, cracked black skin. With his broad, flat African features and wiry gray hair, Timothy, who estimates his age at nearly 70, contrasts the naked body of Phillip, who loses his clothes during the hurricane.)*

*The contrast grows more poignant after the hurricane. As the storm subsides, Timothy collapses weakly in the sand, his clothes in tatters. His body, warm and sticky, attests to the virulence of the storm, which he prevented from reaching Phillip. The slashed flesh extends down his back and legs. Phillip can do little but hold the work-hardened hand.)*

2. Describe the sinking of the *Empire Tern*. *(During the last week of February, 1942, Phillip Enright accompanies his father, also named Phillip, to Schottegat, Curaçao, where a British tanker, the S. S. Empire Tern, dull white with streaks of rust, is being loaded with fuel. Armed fore and aft, it stands out among the unarmed vessels in the harbor. Other idlers watch from the rail amid the heavy smell of gas and oil.)*

*Later that afternoon, after the tanks are secured for embarkation, the vessel steams down St. Anna Bay past the governor and other well-wishers, who cheer its departure on a voyage to "help refuel the Royal Air Force." Crewmen hold up the V-for-victory sign. The pilot boat is returning to Willemstad when an explosion engulfs the *Empire Tern* in flames. Black smoke rises to the sky. A mile away, a German submarine surfaces to observe its work firsthand.*

*A tug and small motorboats hurry to offer assistance, but it is too late. Both men and women weep at the sight of Nazi treachery. Phillip, stunned by the violence of war so near his home, is "no longer excited about the war," which brings death and destruction without warning and threatens islanders who once felt secure from the European war.)*

3. Explain how Timothy and Phillip prepare for a hurricane.

*(Timothy, aware that a July hurricane spells trouble, interprets the sound that resembles a rifle shot as a sign to make emergency preparations. He scans the yellowish sky and finds no birds, an indication that his surmise is correct. Already housed at the "highest point of land on the cay," he lashes the water keg to the palm trunk and winds the rope around for a lifeline.)*

*Blaming the war for causing the freak storm, Timothy strips usable material from the raft and carries it up the hill. He and Phillip consume a large meal of fish and coconut meat and milk because fish might not return to the reef for a week. Timothy cleans his knife, places it in the tin box, lashes the box to the tree, and waits for the storm.)*

4. How does Phillip keep up with the passage of time?

*(Timothy marks the 48 days of their ordeal by dropping pebbles into a discarded can. After Timothy's death, Phillip locates a new time can and drops in five pebbles to mark the time since Timothy's death. After depositing a total of ten pebbles, he again feels adventurous and dives for langosta.)*

5. Describe Phillip's reaction to blindness.

*(Waking up from a nap on the raft, Phillip asks the time and is alarmed that it is only 10:00 A. M. He tests his eyes by putting his hand in front of them, but cannot see. He screams, "I'm blind, I'm blind." After Timothy ascertains the truth of his injury, Phillip lies down, blinking repeatedly, touching his eyes, and realizing that the headache has gone, leaving him blind. Timothy can only apply compresses as first aid.)*



*The terror of being blind, separated from familiar faces, and lost at sea sends the boy into a panic. He crawls about, screams for his parents, and turns his anger against Timothy. Eventually, weary of hitting him, Phillip falls back to the hot boards of the raft. In retrospect, he says, "I'll never forget that first hour of knowing I was blind. I was so frightened that it was hard for me to breathe. It was as if I'd been put inside something that was all dark and I couldn't get out."*)

**Questions 6-8 (Interpretive Level)**

6. Discuss how Phillip is reacclimated to normal life. (Phillip demonstrates spunk and self-assurance as soon as he hears the approach of rescuers. Giving directions to the American sailors, he says, "If you'll carry Stew Cat, you can just lead me to the boat." He even dispatches a sailor to fetch Timothy's knife, which is stuck in a palm tree. Aboard the destroyer, Phillip responds fully to questions about his name and volunteers information about his father and the sinking of the Hato.

*Even though the ship's doctor finds him healthy, Phillip receives emergency care at the naval hospital in Cristóbal, Panama. Four months later, a third operation in New York City restores his vision. Phillip, wearing glasses, returns to Willemstad, Curaçao, to live with his family and observes changes in others. His mother is now content on the island. Henrik van Boven, his former companion, seems "very young."*

*In place of games, Phillip spends much time at the Ruyterkade market "talking to black people" who had been Timothy's friends. Perhaps the greatest sign of health and acceptance is Phillip's desire to return to the Caribbean. After consulting charts and locating places near the cay, Phillip hopes some day to "charter a schooner out of Panama and explore the Devil's Mouth." Uppermost in his mind is a visit to Timothy's grave.)*

7. How does racism develop in Phillip? (From childhood, Phillip hears his mother's pointed comments about the differences between blacks and whites. Possibly spawned by her Southern upbringing in Norfolk, Virginia, and her discontent with life near the refinery on Curaçao, she imparts racist notions. For example, "They are not the same as you, Phillip. They are different and they live differently. That's the way it must be."

*With these prejudices in mind, Phillip dwells on differences rather than similarities. On discovering that he is marooned with a deck hand from the Hato, he notes, "His face couldn't have been blacker, or his teeth whiter. They made an alabaster trench in his mouth, and his pink-purple lips peeled back over them like the meat of a conch shell."*

*Repulsed by the touch of black flesh, Phillip draws away from the huge West Indian. He recalls, "In Virginia, I knew they'd always lived in their sections of town, and us in ours. A few times, I'd gone down through the shacks of colored town with my father . . . I saw them mostly in the summer, down by the river, fishing or swimming naked, but I didn't really know any of them."*

8. What cures Phillip's distaste for black people? (When extremes of weather dictate close contact with Timothy, Phillip conquers some of his prejudices about smell, skin color, and lack of education. Timothy's warmth, kindness, and reassurance calm the boy's worries about his mother and soothe his fears of permanent blindness. Even though Timothy restricts Phillip's intake of water, Phillip begins to see the logic and values lessons in survival.

*On the cay, Timothy continues to think of longterm needs, prodding the boy to weave mats, help with chores, and fend for himself, even to shelling mussels and baiting his own hook. The vines woven into a handhold encourage Phillip to explore; fishing lessons overcome his complete dependence. At this point, Phillip admits, "I had begun to change."*

*Discussions of personal matters reveal Timothy's deprived past, his love of the islands, and other data that prove that he is a normal human being. When Phillip asks direct questions about race, Timothy laughs, "Why b'feesh different color, or flower b'different color? I true don' know, Philleep, but I true tink beneath d'skin is all d'same."*

*Timothy, who seems to have a sixth sense about his mortality, leaves Phillip as fully prepared as conditions permit to survive the remainder of the ordeal. Having nursed the old man through malaria and buried his remains after the storm flays his back and legs, Phillip speaks a fitting farewell: "Take care of him, God, he was good to me."*

**Questions 9 and 10 (Critical Level)**

9. In what ways is this book an appropriate study of race?

*(Because Phillip makes an issue of race from the beginning of his ordeal aboard the raft, the reader must take into account color and nationality, as well as social class in evaluating the relationship. Not only is Timothy the savior and comfort of the boy, he is also educator and father figure. Phillip realizes the worth of their chance meeting and comments: "I wished my father and mother could see us there together on the little island." He nestles against the big man's body for warmth and security. His questions indicate trust. At one point, Phillip sums up the closeness of man, boy, and cat: "The thought of losing either of them was unbearable. If something bad happened on*

*the cay, I wanted it to happen to all of us." The reader cannot help perceiving the bonding that takes place between man and boy, black and white.)*

10. What does Phillip learn from the experience? *(Almost every aspect of Phillip's awareness changes after his four-month absence from home. He learns about inner strength through his brush with blindness. His reliance on other senses forces him to appreciate the softness of Stew Cat's fur, the rustle of palm leaves, the taste of fresh coconut milk, and the warmth of the sun.)*

*Phillip comes to value growth when he faces the challenge of the fishing hole, climbs the coconut palm, and signals the rescue plane with the thick black smoke of sea grape limbs. Back in Willemstad, he perceives his own maturity when he resumes his friendship with Henrik van Boven. Fittingly, he learns to look back on his relationship with Timothy and to treasure it in retrospect, filling in gaps with information from Timothy's friends and planning a return trip to the cay to honor the old man's grave.)*

### Questions 11-13 (Creative Level)

11. Write a realistic description of a hurricane ravaging your own neighborhood. Research information about wind speed, temperatures, and rainfall during a major storm. Imagine how your home and family would survive. Devise methods of compensating for damage, such as a time can to keep track of days and homemade mats, ropes, and shelters to replace lost belongings. Show how preventive measures will keep your stores of water and food safe and will halt damage to windows and roof.
12. Read or listen to a recording of the "I Have a Dream" speech by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Explain why Theodore Taylor dedicates his book to the dream and why he believes that young people should be involved.
13. View the video *Clara's Heart*. Summarize how speech, idiom, music, food, and customs endear a Caribbean maid and cook to a racist boy the age of Phillip Enright.

## Across the Curriculum

### Art

- Using desk-top publishing or other artistic media, design a road sign indicating the refinery or pontoon bridge, a ship's menu, a letterhead for a naval base or ophthalmologist, a placard or banner welcoming Phillip home from the hospital, a poster on malaria prevention or first aid for concussion, pamphlets on survival techniques or fishing for langosta, business cards for a petroleum chemist or freighter captain, an announcement or television news item about a harbor explosion or Phillip's rescue, or a schedule of entertainments at Cristóbal, Panama, or aboard the *S. S. Hato*.
- Compose a mural of various uniforms from World War II. Stress a U-boat crew, air and navy rescue, military nurse and doctor, and merchant marine.

### Cinema and Drama

- Watch a video of Ernest Hemingway's *Islands in the Stream*. Discuss how and why German submarines threatened island communities and how local people protected themselves.
- Role-play the return of Phillip from the cay. Begin with the American sailors who take him aboard the destroyer and carry the scenario to Willemstad. Stress the questions people ask Phillip about Timothy, the cay, Stew Cat, the sudden blindness, the storm, and rescue.

### Economics

- Determine the cost of a rescue operation in search of the explosion and raft. Add figures on the medical examination, grief counseling, and surgeries for the rescued boy.
- Make a timeline of the worst hurricane disasters in the past 20 years. Give date and landfall of each and approximate cost of destruction of property and loss of life.
- Discuss the role of petroleum in wartime. Explain how nations protect their fuel supplies in times of danger, such as camouflage and underground storage.

**Education**

1. Brainstorm ways of training blind people to survive alone in difficult situations.

**Geography**

1. Sketch the melon-shaped cay. Emphasize the landing spot of the raft and the location of the shelter, coconut palms, lagoon, fishing hole, woven rope, trough, and raft. Note in particular the high point on which the pair shelter from the hurricane and the placement of Timothy's grave.
2. Locate a detailed map of the Caribbean. Mark the various cities and islands mentioned in the story. Trace the path of the *Hato* to Panama and the point of attack. Indicate the position of Devil's Mouth and the cay. Mark with a star Charlotte Amalie, Virgin Islands, Timothy's birthplace.
3. Make an oral report on the volcanic origin of islands. Explain how reefs are formed and how they protect islands. Discuss the ecology of reefs and explain why and how the balance of animal and plant life affects human beings on nearby islands.

**History and Social Studies**

1. Examine the role played by submarines during World War II. What other roles did submarines have besides the destruction of enemy merchant ships?
2. Make an oral evaluation of the Enrights' homelife. Describe the ways in which Phillip is educated, guided, encouraged, protected, and punished.
3. Describe how settlements vulnerable to hurricanes protect themselves during emergencies. Include the role of agencies such as the Red Cross and the National Guard. Describe architectural designs that withstand the force of strong winds.
3. Contrast Phillip's response to blindness with the biographies of real blind people, such as Helen Keller, Ray Charles, Stevie Wonder, and Louis Braille. Discuss your findings with a small group.

**Journalism**

1. Compose a paragraph in which you explain how journalistic training influenced Theodore Taylor's writing style.

2. Write a newspaper account of Phillip's return to the cay. Describe his visit to Timothy's grave. Sketch an appropriate marker to commemorate Timothy's bravery and loyalty. Strengthen your writing with direct quotations from Phillip, his rescuers, and his parents.

**Language Arts**

1. Keep a list of crucial vocabulary terms from the novel that fit under the following headings: islands, war, Dutch communities, animals, plants, sailing vessels, petroleum, and superstition.
2. Select an action-packed paragraph. Underline all action words. For example: "He grabbed my hair with one hand and used his other arm to drag me back toward the raft."
3. Compose an extended definition of dialect. Explain how dialects function in everyday speech. Note the dialects mentioned in the book and examples of Timothy's native speech in Taylor's prequel, *Timothy of the Cay*. List dialects from your area. Give examples of alterations in grammar and pronunciation; then rewrite the examples in standard English. For example: "Say somethin' wid d'rock, wid many rock; eevery rock be sayin' somethin'." Rewritten version: "Say something with the rocks, with many rocks; every rock will say something."
4. Compose a letter to Phillip in which you comment on his experiences at sea and on the cay. Indicate your personal response to his adventures. Discuss Phillip's change of heart toward Timothy's race and his grief at losing a friend.
5. Using examples from *The Cay* or *Timothy of the Cay*, define islander. Differentiate between natives, temporary residents, military, and tourists.
6. Listen to recorded poems about the sea. Compose poetic lines to express your own experiences with fishing, swimming, cooking out, and roughing it.
7. Lead a debate concerning whether or not Phillip deserves to be called a hero. Contrast his heroism to that of Timothy, the rescue crew, and Phillip's father.

## Music

1. Listen to recorded music that suggests the emotions that Timothy and Phillip experience during their time on the raft, after they are marooned, and while the storm is raging. Describe to classmates the way music captures human feelings.

## Psychology and Health

1. Lead a discussion of how pets help handicapped people deal with frustration and loneliness. Suggest types of animals that might benefit different ages and degrees of handicap, such as people in wheelchairs, the blind, hearing impaired, elderly, mentally retarded, and amputees.
2. Write a report on the parts of the eye and the way in which nature protects the eye from foreign particles, trauma, sunlight, and glare. Illustrate your report with diagrams. Name the leading causes of blindness, including glaucoma, macular degeneration, complications from diabetes, and cataract.

## Science

1. Sketch a freighter and point out where lifeboats are located. Explain how they are loaded and launched. Include a list of supplies that should be kept on board each lifeboat.
2. Write a report on the invention and use of the torpedo as a weapon. Explain how sea vessels detect approaching torpedoes, warn the crew, and protect passengers.
3. Make a mural of sea life that surrounds a coral reef. Include animals and plants mentioned in the novel, such as the booby, flying fish, sea grape, moray eel, petrel, langosta, sea urchins, pompano, mussels, and sharks.

## Student Involvement Activities

1. Organize a panel discussion of human nature. Discuss how the novel isolates heroism, good, and evil in the characters, including Grace Enright, the freighter captain, rescuers, Timothy, and Phillip.
2. Launch a discussion group to determine why Theodore Taylor wrote a prequel, *Timothy of the Cay*, to account for the islander's background, dialect, and hardships.

3. List questions to ask at an interrogation of the officer who locates Phillip. Determine why he survived, how Timothy protected him from sharks, why sea grape was a good choice for a signal fire, how Timothy rescued only Phillip, why Phillip was blinded by a blow to the head, how he survived the hurricane, and why he intends to return to the cay. Append a summation of Phillip's recovery from blindness and the reunion of his family in Aruba.
4. Using desktop publishing, compose a web site on the themes and symbols that intrigue readers, especially jumbis, survivalism, U-boats, family unity, and random violence to civilians during war.
5. Explain with a collage, shadow pictures, or mobile how isolation, fear, loss, homesickness, prejudice, and temporary blindness bring out the best and worst in the young survivor.
6. Dramatize a meeting between parents and son. Express mutual concerns for safety of the family, the end of World War II, and an explanation of the torpedoing of the *S. S. Hato*.
7. Create a list of images from the novel that appeal to the five senses. Use these as models: "Mebbe dat outrageous cat is d'jumbi," "I found, on opening the bung, that the water was still sweet and the matches, wrapped in cellophane inside the tin box, were dry," "It was about noon when I heard the bell," and "The radio was on, and a voice said that fifty-six men had died on the lake tankers that were blown up and that the governor of the Netherlands' West Indies had appealed to Washington for help."
8. Write a scene in which Phillip locates the cay and guides his parents over the setting. Point out the high place where he survives the storm, the fishing hole, the beach where he spelled out "help," and the point where he first heard the bell of the rescue boat.
9. Discuss the effects of warmth, fresh coconut, sand, and shelter on Phillip. Explain why Timothy overcomes his fear and rids him of race prejudice without preaching or scolding.

10. Draw a cause-and-effect diagram illustrating the changes that take place in Phillip. Comment on the constant struggle with blindness, loss of family, and concern for Timothy's frail health.

### Alternate Assessment

1. List examples of family unity, teamwork, fear, insecurity, loyalty, grief, and prejudice as Phillip matures.
2. Compile a list of actions that demonstrate why Timothy's advice is sound.
3. Compose a scene in which Phillip shows Henrik how he abandoned ship and made his way to the cay.
4. Make a character list and explain the character flaws of each, including Phillip's prejudice, Henrik's childishness, Grace's terror, and Timothy's illiteracy.
5. Account for Phillip's visits to the Ruyterkade market in search of the sound of Timothy's dialect.

### Teacher's Notes

## Vocabulary

Complete the sentences below with words from the list that follows.

aft	conniving	herr	papayas	sextant
bight	drone	jumbi	parch	slithering
booby	fascination	langosta	petrel	spans
bung	flayed	leeward	pompano	squall
calypso	fore	matmaker	refinery	tern
catchment	fronds	moray	schooners	whitecaps
channel	funnel	mussel	scorpions	

1. Many feesh 'ere. \_\_\_\_\_, too, I be'knowin'. We ros' dem.
2. Late in the afternoon, my father, whose name was also Phillip—Phillip Enright—returned home from the \_\_\_\_\_ where he was working on the program to increase production of aviation gas.
3. Somewhar far off, out beyond d'Grenadines, or in dat pesky \_\_\_\_\_ off Honduras, a hurrican' is spawnin', young bahss.
4. His voice was rich \_\_\_\_\_, soft and musical, the words rubbing off like velvet.
5. He was carrying a brief case and a navigation instrument I knew to be a \_\_\_\_\_.
6. I loved the koenoekoe with its giant cactus; the divi-divi trees, their odd branches all on the \_\_\_\_\_ side of the trunk; the beautiful sandy beach at Westpunt.
7. I listened again for the \_\_\_\_\_. Yes, it was still there. Closer now.
8. It took me a long time to get the keg and the tin box to the ground, but I found, on opening the \_\_\_\_\_, that the water was still sweet and that the matches, wrapped in cellophane inside the tin box, were dry.
9. It had \_\_\_\_\_ his back and his legs until there were very few places that weren't cut.
10. I felt movement around my legs and feet. Things were \_\_\_\_\_.
11. He'd listen in \_\_\_\_\_, almost speechless.
12. Timothy guided my hands in opening the tough \_\_\_\_\_ shell and digging the slippery meat out to bait the hook.
13. "B'gettin' his own self a lizzard, mebbe, mebbe," he answered, but there was something \_\_\_\_\_ in his voice.
14. That night after dinner, Timothy grumbled, "No aircraft! D'islan' mus 'ave a \_\_\_\_\_."
15. Timothy cooked a small fish, a \_\_\_\_\_, that he'd speared at dawn down on the reef.
16. The \_\_\_\_\_ wind was in the tops of the palms and I could imagine how they looked in the night sky, thrashing against each other high over our little cay.
17. He'd picked up bamboo lengths on the beach and had fitted them together into a short pipe to \_\_\_\_\_ the rain water into our ten-gallon keg.
18. He sighed back, saying, "D'best \_\_\_\_\_ in Charlotte Amalie, downg in Frenchtown, b'total blin'."
19. I had my back to a palm and was thinking that back in Willemstad, at this moment, I'd probably be sitting in a classroom, three desks away from Henrik, listening to \_\_\_\_\_ Jonckheer talk about European history.
20. The palm \_\_\_\_\_ above me rattled in the breeze, and there were other noises from the underbrush.

## Comprehension Test A

### Part I: Matching (20 points)

Match each quotation with the name of a speaker. Place the letter of your response in the blank provided at left. Some answers may be used more than once.

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| _____ 1. Son, get some sleep. The <i>Hato</i> was sunk way back in April.  | A. Grace Enright         |
| _____ 2. Now, remember everything that we were told about abandoning ship. | B. Timothy               |
| _____ 3. My father told me there is nothing left of Aruba.                 | C. Henrik van Boven      |
| _____ 4. We can't go out in motorboats and attack them with rifles.        | D. Phillip               |
| _____ 5. You 'ad a mos' terrible crack on d'ead, bahss.                    | E. captain of the Hato   |
| _____ 6. I was raise by a woman call Hannah Gumbs.                         | F. Phillip's father      |
| _____ 7. Why didn't you take us with you?                                  | G. destroyer captain     |
| _____ 8. Jump, Scotty, the water's shallow.                                | H. Herr Jonckheer        |
| _____ 9. Phillip, I'm sorry, I'm so sorry.                                 | I. American sailor       |
| _____ 10. Dis b'dat outrageous cay, eh, Timothy?                           | J. Phillip's grandfather |

### Part II: True/False (30 points)

Mark the following statements either T for true or F if any part is false.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Phillip is particularly obedient after attacks by German U-boats terrify his mother.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The only treatment Phillip can offer against malaria is aspirin.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Timothy tries to soften Phillip's fears of blindness by telling about a man who was temporarily blinded after being hit by a sailboat boom.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. To help Phillip's eyes, Timothy urges him not to look at the sun or water.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. At the time of the attack on Curaçao, the Dutch navy is bravely fighting U-boats in the Caribbean.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Timothy is glad to have Stew Cat on the island as a means of locating bird eggs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Phillip realizes that sea grape branches give off a thick black smoke.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Phillip, frustrated with the job of weaving mats, ridicules Timothy's lack of education.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. The boy drags Timothy's heavy body to the lagoon and buries it at sea after a brief service.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. After Phillip's eyesight is surgically restored, he has to wear glasses.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. When the storm is over, Stew Cat is never seen again.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Lashed to the palm, Phillip finds at least a dozen fishing poles complete with hooks and sinkers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Phillip makes good use of items that wash ashore after the hurricane, such as a sponge, canvas, and pieces of cork.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Malaria causes Timothy alternately to burn with fever and shiver with chills.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Among the goods aboard the raft are chocolate, biscuits, and Phillip's leather jacket and sweater.

## Comprehension Test A (Page 2)

### Part III: Short Answer (20 points)

Supply a word or phrase in answer to each of the following questions. Place your response in the blank provided at left.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. What does Timothy carve for the shelter?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. What kind of food lands in the raft?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. What kills Timothy?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Where does Phillip think Timothy is from?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. What word does Phillip spell for Timothy?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. From what country is the *Hato* sailing when it sinks?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. What event does the sharp sound indicate?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Who survives the wreck of the *Hettie Redd* in 1928?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. What dialect does Timothy speak?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. In what month does the hurricane strike?

### Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

- 1. Describe Timothy's skill at making things, such as fish hooks and the time can.
- 2. Explain the ways in which Phillip is prepared for survival after Timothy's death, even though he is blind.
- 3. Describe the hurricane that kills Timothy.
- 4. Account for the ominous atmosphere of the opening chapters.



## Comprehension Test B

### Part I: Identification (20 points)

Briefly describe each of the following characters.

1. captain of the *Hato* \_\_\_\_\_
2. captain of the destroyer \_\_\_\_\_
3. governor \_\_\_\_\_
4. Hannah Gumbs \_\_\_\_\_
5. Henrik van Boven \_\_\_\_\_
6. Mr. Enright \_\_\_\_\_
7. Mrs. Enright \_\_\_\_\_
8. Herr Jonckheer \_\_\_\_\_
9. Scotty \_\_\_\_\_
10. Stew Cat \_\_\_\_\_

### Part II: Sentence Completion (20 points)

Complete each of the following sentences by underlining a completer from the list that follows.

1. The cay is roughly the shape of a (**papaya, melon, mouth**) .
2. Phillip and his father observe the destruction of the (**Hato, Empire Tern, Van Kingsbergen, mocki jumbis**).
3. The sound of a rifle shot indicates the arrival of (**a Dutch freighter, a lake tanker, a July hurricane, the Royal Air Force**).
4. On April 6, 1942, Phillip is thrown from (**a top bunk, the edge of the lagoon, the raft, a lake tanker**).
5. For use against German attackers, Phillip hides a (**hunting knife, catchment, langosta, hatchet**).
6. As a model, Timothy describes a blind man in Frenchtown who makes (**rope, fish hooks, canes, mats**).
7. While diving into a deep crevice, Phillip is bitten, probably by a (**moray, shark, skate, pompano**).
8. To protect the shelter from spirits, Timothy carves a (**hook, cat, signal, time can**).
9. After rescue, Phillip goes directly to the naval hospital at (**Colón, Norfolk, Cristóbal, Scharloo**).
10. The *Hato* is loaded with (**bananas, four pumps, airplane fuel, fresh vegetables**).

## Comprehension Test B (Page 2)

### Part III: Fill-in (30 points)

Supply a word or phrase from the list below to complete each of the following statements. Some answers may be used more than once.

coconut	Hato	petrel	Ruyterkade market	Tern
Curaçao	Holland	pompano	Scharloo	U-boats
destroyer	langosta	pontoon bridge	sea grape	Virginia
emergency	moray	raft	sharks	voodoo
England	mussel	reef	shelter	Washington
fronds	Navy	Royal Air Force	Stew Cat	water keg
Haiti	Nazis	Royal Dutch Shell		

- \_\_\_ 1. On one end, to the east, was a low coral \_\_\_ that extended several hundred yards, awash in many places.
- \_\_\_ 2. I said, "Timothy, the \_\_\_ is searching for us. I know."
- \_\_\_ 3. After we ate, Timothy carefully cleaned his knife and put it into the tin box, which he lashed high on the same tree that held our \_\_\_.
- \_\_\_ 4. Once something solid hit us and then rolled on. "\_\_\_," Timothy shouted.
- \_\_\_ 5. Careful, young bahss. D' \_\_\_ always hungry, always waitin' for d'mahn to fall ovahboard.
- \_\_\_ 6. I gathered \_\_\_ close to me as we waited, feeling the warm breeze against my face.
- \_\_\_ 7. It was very different in \_\_\_ where my father had been in charge of building a new refinery on the banks of the Elizabeth River.
- \_\_\_ 8. \_\_\_ had borrowed him from his American company because he was an expert in refineries and gasoline production.
- \_\_\_ 9. The radio was on, and a voice said that ... the governor of the Netherlands' West Indies had appealed to \_\_\_ for help.
- \_\_\_ 10. Everyone felt bad that Holland had been conquered by the \_\_\_.
- \_\_\_ 11. My father had told me about "obediah," or "\_\_\_," in the West Indies.
- \_\_\_ 12. Angrily, I said, "Timothy, \_\_\_ is not a jumbi."
- \_\_\_ 13. A tug and several small motorboats headed out toward the \_\_\_, but it was useless.
- \_\_\_ 14. Then he told me to feel the hook and slip the \_\_\_ bait over the barb.
- \_\_\_ 15. We drank every drop of the \_\_\_ milk, and feasted on the fresh meat.

### Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Explain how Timothy reacts to Phillip's occasional outbursts of temper.
2. Describe Phillip's condition when he is rescued.
3. Describe the foods that the survivors depend on.
4. Explain why Phillip wants to charter a schooner out of Panama.

## Answer Key

### VOCABULARY

- |                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. langosta    | 11. fascination |
| 2. refinery    | 12. mussel      |
| 3. bight       | 13. conniving   |
| 4. calypso     | 14. jumbi       |
| 5. sextant     | 15. pompano     |
| 6. leeward     | 16. squall      |
| 7. drone       | 17. funnel      |
| 8. bung        | 18. matmaker    |
| 9. flayed      | 19. herr        |
| 10. slithering | 20. fronds      |

### COMPREHENSION TEST A

#### Part I: Matching (20 points)

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. G | 6. B  |
| 2. A | 7. D  |
| 3. C | 8. I  |
| 4. F | 9. A  |
| 5. B | 10. D |

#### Part II: True/False (30 points)

- |      |       |       |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. F | 6. F  | 11. F |
| 2. F | 7. T  | 12. T |
| 3. T | 8. T  | 13. F |
| 4. T | 9. F  | 14. T |
| 5. F | 10. T | 15. F |

#### Part III: Short Answer (20 points)

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1. cat           | 6. Panama      |
| 2. flying fish   | 7. hurricane   |
| 3. the hurricane | 8. Timothy     |
| 4. Africa        | 9. West Indian |
| 5. help          | 10. July       |

#### Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

### COMPREHENSION TEST B

#### Part I: Identification (20 points)

Answers will vary.

#### Part II: Sentence Completion (20 points)

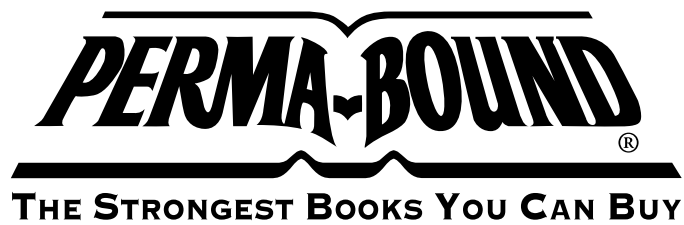
- |                     |                |
|---------------------|----------------|
| 1. melon            | 6. mats        |
| 2. Empire Tern      | 7. moray       |
| 3. a July hurricane | 8. cat         |
| 4. a top bunk       | 9. Cristóbal   |
| 5. hatchet          | 10. four pumps |

#### Part III: Fill-in (30 points)

- |                      |                 |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. reef              | 9. Washington   |
| 2. Navy              | 10. Nazis       |
| 3. water keg         | 11. voodoo      |
| 4. sea grape         | 12. Stew Cat    |
| 5. sharks            | 13. <i>Tern</i> |
| 6. Stew Cat          | 14. mussel      |
| 7. Virginia          | 15. coconut     |
| 8. Royal Dutch Shell |                 |

#### Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.



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