

This guide was prepared using the Dell Yearling edition, © 1960. Other editions may differ.

SYNOPSIS

Chap. 1: Twelve-year-old Karana, commonly known as The Girl with the Long Black Hair, and her six-year-old brother Ramo are the children of Chief Chowig, tribal leader of Indians at Ghalas-at on the Island of the Blue Dolphins. Only twenty leagues from Santa Barbara, California, its valuable sea animals attract Russian traders. Karana and Ramo see an Aleut ship at Coral Cove carrying Captain Orlov and forty hunters. Chowig rejects the offer of one third in exchange for permission to hunt and strikes a deal with Orlov.

Chap. 2: Chowig warns his people to avoid the hunters' camp, which is half a league away. Chowig refuses the hunters' demand for half the catch.

Chap. 3: Each dawn, the Aleuts paddle into kelp beds to kill otter, which Karana mourns. Chowig reminds her that there are many more otter near surrounding islands. The Aleuts seem ready to depart.

Chap. 4: On the day of departure, islanders assemble on the beach while the women hide. Chowig refuses Orlov's offer of one chest of to compensate for 120 bales of pelts. Orlov offers more chests. Chowig withholds fifteen bales of pelts until Orlov produces three more chests. Orlov insists on loading the ship before a storm. After Chowig is injured in a shoving match, a battle breaks out. Chowig and many other islanders are killed. The Aleuts depart.

Chap. 5: The battle reduces the male population from 42 to fifteen, seven of whom are aged. The survivors bury the dead and burn enemy corpses. Two days later, the storm ends; the tribe considers rowing east to Santa Catalina. The council votes to remain at Ghalas-at. Karana, whose mother died a few years earlier, mourns her father. The village sinks into depression. Kimki travels to the east in search of a place to settle.

Chap. 6: A month into spring, the tribe is alarmed that Kimki has not returned and worries about drought. A small vessel arrives, bringing a white man who wants to remove them from the island.

Chap. 7: As the group prepares to board the ship, Ramo returns for his fishing spear. The ship departs; Karana swims to shore for her little brother. The ship disappears toward the east.

Chap. 8: Karana and Ramo take shelter in the rocks. The next day, he plays chief, but Karana is more cautious. Late on the second day, Karana locates Ramo's corpse, bitten through the throat by wild dogs.

Chap. 9: Days later, Karana burns the village and moves to a headland a mile west of Coral Cove. In a clear spot near a spring, she camps on a flat rock. To fend off wild dogs, she breaks taboo against women making weapons and fishes for abalone.

Chap. 10: Karana kills some of the marauding dogs.

Steering by the North Star, she attempts to paddle a six-passenger canoe toward the tribe's destination, but a leak fills the canoe with water. She turns back.

Chap. 11: Karana decides that the Island of the Blue Dolphins is her real home and builds a permanent residence.

Chap. 12: Karana weaves a fence out of whale ribs and kelp and erects a house from sparse trees, rock, and sinew. She makes pots out of hollow rocks and makes a waterproof basket out of reeds and pitch. The cracks in the rock wall she uses for shelves. To light her home, she burns small dried fish.

Chap. 13: Karana stalks the bull sea elephant, but withdraws after injuring her leg.

Chap. 14: Karana crawls into a nearby cave and remains for six days. As an emergency shelter, she stores food, baskets, water, and weapons. When she returns to her first home, she uses sea elephant teeth as spear points.

Chap. 15: Karana slays two dogs and tracks the pack leader. She transports him to the headland, cleans his chest wound, and, after four days, domesticates him, naming him Rontu or Fox Eyes.

Chap. 16: Into summer, Karana watches for Aleuts and shortens a canoe for easy flight. She discovers a sea cave with a ledge where she can hide her canoe in winter. She and Rontu stalk a devilfish, then return to Coral Cove.

Chap. 17: Karana fashions a special spear for killing devilfish. In spring, Rontu battles two dogs for the leadership of the pack and kills them both. The dogs never again menace the headland.

Chap. 18: Karana captures redwing blackbirds, which she names Tainor and Lurai. She makes a yucca skirt, sealskin belt, and sandals.

Chap. 19: A year later, Karana and Rontu fish for abalone and gather sea urchins for dyeing. She hooks a giant devilfish and stabs it with her knife. She returns to her lair, too weary to bring in her catch.

Chap. 20: Karana busies herself catching and drying fish and explores Tall Rock and Black Cave. After two years, the Aleuts return, bringing a woman.

Chap. 21: Karana can see the Aleut camp on the mesa a half league away. Bored in the dark, she makes a skirt of cormorant skins. Outside her hideout, she meets a girl named Tutok. Karana is cautious and gives no clue to her hiding place. Tutok leaves a necklace of black stones as a gift.

Chap. 22: At first, Karana keeps her distance, then rushes to meet Tutok, who says "pretty," a word that Karana recognizes. Karana introduces herself as Won-a-pa-lei and later reveals her secret name. As winter approaches, the Aleuts leave with their bales of otter pelts.

Chap. 23: Karana tends an injured otter, which she names Mon-a-nee or Boy with the Large Eyes. Without the fish that give light, her winter is dark. She makes hooks, a string for her spear, and earrings. She walks alone, wishing

ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS

that Tutok were there.

Chap. 24 : Karana's birds hatch two fledglings. She befriends a gull with a broken leg and names an otter Won-anee or Girl with the Large Eyes. Out of love for otters, she abandons killing.

Chap. 25: Two years later, Karana makes more weapons and stops counting the passing months. Rontu dies. She buries him on the headland.

Chap. 26: Karana captures a dog that resembles Rontu by drugging spring water. She names him Rontu-Aru, Son of Rontu. He does not replace human companions.

Chap. 27: A tidal wave strikes, forcing her to flee up the cliff. As she recovers, she feels an earth tremor during the night.

Chap. 28: The earthquake wipes out food, weapons, and her canoe. Karana searches for materials for another canoe. A ship arrives, but she hides from men who locate her camp.

Chap. 29: Two years later, the ship returns. This time, Karana marks her face with blue and white clay to indicate she is unmarried. The men make her a dress. They transport her, the dog, and birds to the Santa Barbara Mission. Father Gonzales communicates that the ship that brought her tribe to the mainland sank in a storm. There was no other ship available to return for her.

Author's Note: The Island of the Blue Dolphins was discovered by Sebastián Vizcaíno, a Spanish explorer, in 1602. He named it La Isla de San Nicolas, where Karana lived alone from 1835-1853. According to Captain Nidever, Father Gonzales communicated with her by sign language. Named the Lost Woman of San Nicolas, she lived at the mission, where she was buried. Her skirt was sent to Rome. Later anthropological discovery proved that natives had lived on San Nicolas long before the Christian era. Carvings from the island were stored at the Southwest Museum in Los Angeles. The island became a U. S. Naval base.

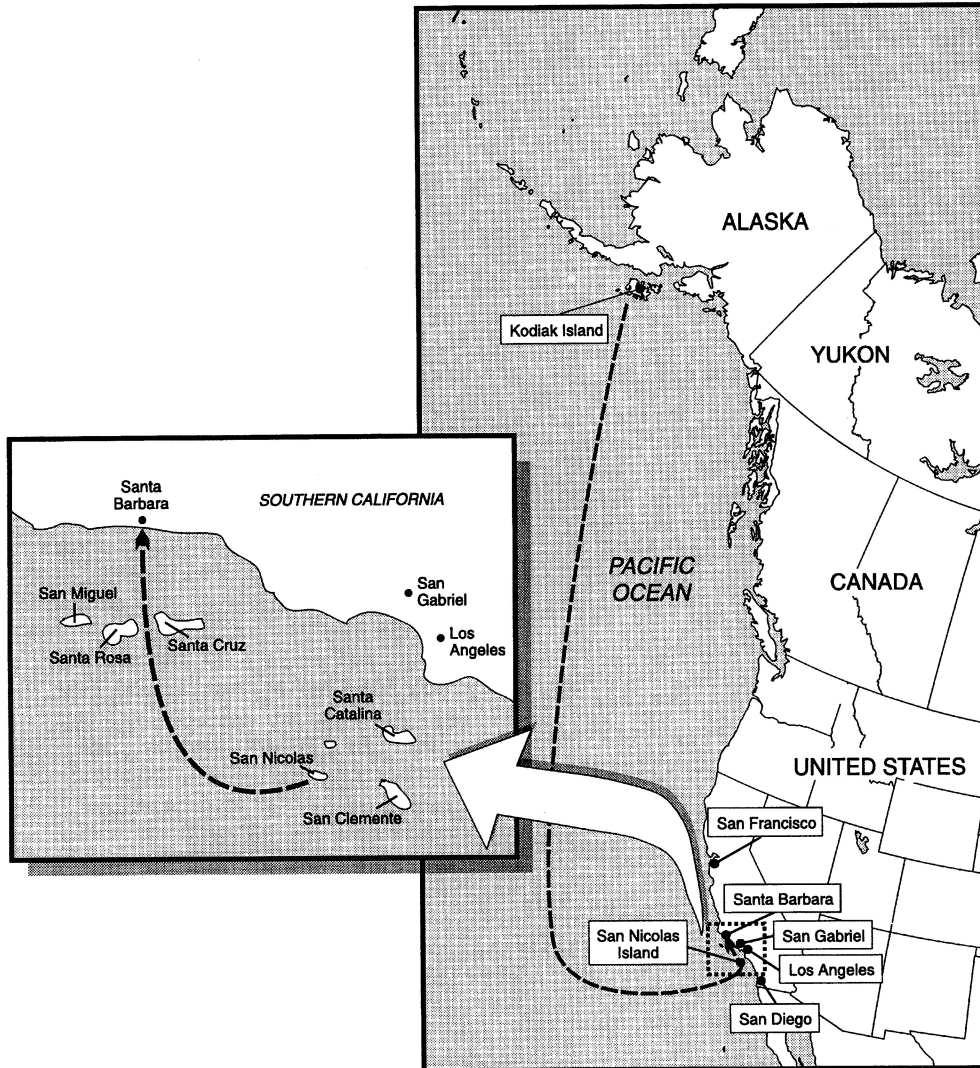
TIME LINE

- 1540** Francisco Vásquez de Coronado explores California.
- 1542** Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo sails from Mexico to San Diego and discovers Santa Catalina. He names San Miguel "Ysla de Posesion."
- 1543** Bartolomé Ferrelo, Cabrillo's pilot, voyages from the Channel Islands all the way to the Oregon coast.
- 1579** Francis Drake sails to California.
- 1585** Sebastián Vizcaíno goes to Mexico to seek his fortune.
- 1596** Vizcaíno leads an unsuccessful expedition of pearl-seekers to the Gulf of California.
- 1602** Sebastián Vizcaíno discovers the Island of the Blue Dolphins while searching for a place to establish a Spanish colony.
- 1603** Vizcaíno recommends that Monterey be used as a Spanish port.
- 1611-14** Vizcaíno leads an expedition to Japan.
- 1615** Vizcaíno dies.
- 1741** Vitus Bering explores the Aleutian Islands. Captain Chirikov sights the island of Umnak. Resulting influxes of traders nearly exterminate animal life in the islands.
- 1770** Settlers colonize Monterey.
- 1786** The Santa Barbara Mission is established.
- 1812** Santa Barbara Mission is destroyed by earthquake.
- 1815** Santa Barbara Mission is restored.
- 1823** Karana is born.
- 1830** Kodiaks migrating south from Sitka massacre male residents of San Nicolas, leaving only forty islanders in what was once a thriving city.
- ca. 1833** Chowig's wife dies.
- 1835** **April** Isaac Sparks and Lewis L. Burton charter Captain Charley Hubbard's schooner *Peor es Nada* for the purpose of otter hunting on San Nicolas. **Spring** Captain Hubbard arrives to carry the Indians away in his schooner. Karana swims ashore in search of Ramo. **Next day** Ramo is killed by wild dogs. **Several days later** Karana burns Ghalas-at. **July** At the request of the church, the *Peor es Nada* sails from San Pedro to San Nicolas to ferry islanders to the mainland. During a storm, one young widow jumps overboard and swims through a tangle of kelp to rescue her infant. The ship leaves without her. On return, the schooner sinks near the Golden Gate.
- 1838** Aleuts return to the island. Karana meets Tutok.
- ca. 1840** Karana stops marking the passage of months.
- 1846** Commodore Robert Field Stockton claims Santa Barbara for the United States.
- 1848** Mexico cedes California to the United States.
- 1850** Father Gonzales pays Thomas Jeffries \$200 to return for the lost widow and child on San Nicolas. **Midwinter** Jeffries returns to Santa Barbara without finding the woman and her child.
- 1851** **Winter** Jeffries and George Nidiver [sic] return to San Nicolas to hunt otter. As they depart, a mariner claims he spies a lone figure on the island's headland. A ship arrives to rescue Karana, who hides.
- 1853** Captain Nidever rescues Karana and Rontu-Aru. **July** Captain Nidiver and Carl Detman make a third foray to San Nicolas and locate a 45-year-old woman, who accompanies them on board. Detman makes a ticking dress and teaches her to sew with a threaded needle. She expresses in sign language that wild dogs may have eaten her baby. **Sept. 8** The historical Lone Woman of San Nicolas arrives in Santa Barbara and lives with Captain Nidever's family. She delights in seeing a horse and ox team, which were unknown to her. **A few weeks later** The anonymous Lone Woman, baptized "Juana Maria," dies and is buried at the Santa Barbara Mission. Priests dispatch her feather robes to Rome.
- 1880** *Scribner's Monthly* publishes "Eighteen Years Alone: A Tale of the Pacific," Volume 20, pp. 657-664.
- 1961** R. F. Heizer and A. B. Elsasser publish *Original Accounts of the Lone Woman of San Nicolas Island*, based on reports of the University of California Archeological Survey.
- 1971** Robert Heizer and M. A. Whipple publish *The California Indians*, containing a chapter by Emma Hardacre entitled "The Lone Woman of San Nicolas Island."

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

A distant relative of Sir Walter Scott, Scott O'Dell (1898-

ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS



1989) filled his works with a love and appreciation of history and nature, which he derived from travels in many European countries and the United States and from observations of his native Los Angeles, which he described as a "frontier town" during his early childhood. The son of May Elizabeth Gabriel and Bennett Mason O'Dell, an official on the Union Pacific Railroad, O'Dell, a restless, towheaded child, was born on Terminal Island. Being somewhat of a loner, he did not have a close relationship with his father, a fact that he regretted in adulthood.

A bright, inquisitive reader of American and world classics, O'Dell enjoyed the early years of his public education, which ended with graduation from Long Beach Polytechnic High School, but rebelled against the lockstep courses and large classes of college. He became a drifter, moving from school to school in search of an environment conducive to his relaxed style of learning. At Occidental College, the University of Wisconsin, Stanford, and the University of Rome from 1919-1925, he took courses that pleased him and that facilitated his ambition to write, particularly psychology, history, English, and philosophy.

O'Dell worked as a farmer, cameraman for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, technical director at Paramount Studios, teacher

of a correspondence course in photoplay writing, and book editor of the Los Angeles *Times*, *Mirror*, and *Daily News*. During the filming of *Ben Hur*, he operated one of the first technicolor cameras. After serving time in the Air Force, he devoted his life to writing. The first ten years he wrote for adults, but he spent the next decade writing for children, whom he preferred as an audience because of their ability to identify with character experience.

O'Dell usually featured females in his novels, partly to compensate women for what he terms as a "lousy deal" from society. He claimed that he centered on a single theme, evolved from Dr. Albert Schweitzer's concept of reverence for life. In O'Dell's words: "We must learn to forgive our enemies, that the hopes of civilization itself, obscure as they are, cannot be realized without this act of identification." His books, reflecting the damage done by greed, racial conflict, and alienation, depict what O'Dell termed "the human heart, lonely and in need of love."

The most significant accomplishment of O'Dell's works were his re-creations of historical situations, from which sprang the annual Scott O'Dell Award for Historical Fiction, an honor bearing a \$5,000 purse. A veteran of stories about the Revolutionary War, Native Americans, Saint Francis of

ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS

Assisi, Spanish explorers, and Mayan, Incan, and Aztec civilization, O'Dell justified the value of history for young readers. He maintained, "No educated person . . . can live a complete life without a knowledge of where we came from."

O'Dell found writing hard because of distractions that lured him from the typewriter. He claimed to write because of inner need and observed a strict 7:00 A. M. to noon schedule seven days a week. He enjoyed especially the three to four months of research that preceded the six months of writing each work. In addition he liked reading, sailing, gardening, fishing, and observing the sea birds, whales, dolphins, and changes of weather and seasons outside his California home, which he shared with his children, Susan and David, and wife, Elizabeth Hall, author and editor of *Human Nature* and *Natural History*.

Late in his career, O'Dell grew pensive, regretting past relationships and missed opportunities. Critics claimed that his work, although still quality, lacked the spunk of his earlier works. While working on a slave narrative in his ninety-first year, he died of prostate cancer on October 15, 1989, in Mount Kisco, New York.

CRITIC'S CORNER

O'Dell remains a favorite of young readers. During his lifetime, he received over 2,000 fan letters per year. He earned a broad range of awards and honors during a fifty-year career. Outstanding among them are three Newbery Awards for *The King's Fifth*, *The Black Pearl*, and *Sing Down the Moon*. In addition he received the Rupert Hughes Award, Hans Christian Andersen Medal, William Allen White Award, German Juvenile International Award, Nene Award, Southern California Council on Literature award, Regina Medal, Focal Award of the Los Angeles Public Library, and University of Southern Mississippi Medallion. Other honors came from the Freedom Foundation, Parents Choice Foundation, Florida State Historical Society, School Library Media Specialist of Southeastern New York, and the Northern Westchester Center for the Arts.

Various audiovisual works preserve O'Dell's writings and biography. *The Island of the Blue Dolphins*, which sprang from an incident involving atavistic, wasteful hunters, earned praise for the timeless quality of its narration and a thorough undergirding of research. It was filmed by Universal Studios in 1964; Diamond Films made *The Black Pearl* in 1976. In 1982, *The King's Fifth*, a tale of Spanish conquistadors, was filmed as the television cartoon, "Mysterious Cities of Gold."

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To comprehend the will to survive
2. To express the interdependence of human beings and nature
3. To discuss the importance of companionship
4. To locate the setting of the story on a map
5. To research the background of the Aleuts
6. To analyze evidence of maturation
7. To list and define unfamiliar words, particularly dialect
8. To contrast the society and lifestyles of Indians and whites
9. To characterize historical fiction
10. To comment on the conventions of episodic narrative

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To characterize the treachery which leads to the chief's death
2. To discuss Karana's relationship with her brother
3. To explain why Karana chooses to nurse the wild dog back to health
4. To describe Karana's tentative friendship with Tutok
5. To list items that are important to Karana's survival
6. To apply information from the Author's Note to the story
7. To express the irony of Karana's choice to turn back
8. To explain the name of the island
9. To analyze taboos that forbid women from making weapons
10. To determine why Karana chooses to leave the island

LITERARY TERMS AND APPLICATIONS

For a better understanding of Scott O'Dell's novel, present the following terms and applications:

characterization the author's revelation and development of believable human qualities, words, thoughts, influence, and actions in fictional beings, as found in O'Dell's depiction of Chowig's family. The author takes an historical figure and gives her a believable background. Karana, the middle child in a motherless family, is dutiful and loving to her rascally little brother. Unlike the prissy, self-centered older sister, she takes seriously tribal and family responsibilities. The agony of her father's confrontation with Captain Orlov is obvious from Karana's vantage point in safety among the women beyond the beach. As she observes her father's attempt to negotiate with a foreign hunter, she witnesses his death at the hands of an opportunist. The steady downhill slide of family and tribal circumstances sets the stage for Karana's courageous survival efforts and her willingness to follow whites to a new life on the mainland.

episode a coherent event, digression, or incident in a narrative or serial that stands out on its own merit, for example, Karana's collection of pets, canoe adventures, and creation of weapons to protect her two residences. The tight construction of episodes keeps readers interested in her attempt to stabilize her residence on the island. As she battles problems with wild dogs, foreign visitors, tidal wave, earthquake, and loneliness, she demonstrates the toughness and flexibility that keeps her alive. Her longing for someone to talk to impels her to seek Tutok as a friend and to accept European clothing and the priest's offer of transportation to California. In the final episode, her departure brings to a close the hardships she has known as the only tribal member to remain on traditional land.

historical fiction a fictional representation of an historical era, as in O'Dell's depiction of the early years of California history, when native tribes and European invaders accosted themselves to each other. The story of Karana concentrates less on Aleut hunters and sailors from California than with the consequences of the tribe's attempt to maintain its homeland. As the only member still in residence, she confronts a challenge to the female role and opts to make weapons to ward off wild animals and hostile outsiders. By accepting a role change from chief's daughter to marooned survivor, she learns to think ahead and to prepare for numerous challenges. She copes surprisingly well with crises and manages to drug the dog, hide from hunters, spear a devil-

ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS

fish, and differentiate between predators and possible friends.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SETTING

The milieu of *Island of the Blue Dolphins* becomes the antagonist as Karana copes with marooning and the possibility of another Aleut hunt for otter pelts. As her tribe dwindles and her family is left fatherless, she continues to perform women's duties as a gatherer and food preserver. After her sister departs with the tribe to the mainland, Karana and her brother scout the empty landscape and study the behaviors of wild dogs, which eventually kill the boy. Alone with her hopes of rescue, she burns the village and continues studying the land, learning the location of food and water and securing raw materials for food, shelter, implements, weapons, and security she will need until the tribal leaders return for her.

Karana gradually accepts the fact that the marooning may be permanent. Alone in familiar territory, she advances her knowledge of crags, headlands, coves, currents, and natural predators. By managing a canoe, she increases mobility and moves carefully along the coast, acquiring information about hunting for devilfish and locating a place to hide her canoe in winter. The walled enclosure and cave residence offer her alternatives in case of danger or invasion. Primitive fish lights allow her more choices for using her time while remaining out of sight.

At the end of an extensive period of solitude on the island, Karana gladly accepts transportation east, supposedly to the land where her tribe has found a new home. The afterword indicates that Karana's hopes are never realized. Still coping with newness, she lives a short while among European settlers and applies sign language to her new relationships and questions about the tribe. Her poignant death and the preservation of the cormorant skirt in the Vatican salvage her memory in an era when many people died and faded into obscurity as a result of the confrontation between European and native worlds.

CROSS-CURRICULAR SOURCES

For more information about the Pacific Ocean, native culture, California history, exploration, and other subjects and issues deriving from the novel, consult these sources:

Comparing Cultures, A. W. Peller

Homes in the Sea, Bancroft-Sage

Incredible Facts About the Ocean, Bancroft-Sage

Incredible Facts About the Ocean, Volume II, Bancroft-Sage

Indians of North America, Britannica

Indian Terms of the Americas, Libraries Unlimited

Sea Mammals, Bancroft-Sage

Also, consult these web sites:

"California History," http://www.calhist.org/Support_Info/Publications/QuarterlyInd.

"Santa Barbara Mission,"

<http://www.geol.ucsb.edu/~mea/mission.html>.

"Sebastian Vizcaino," <http://www.monterey.edu/other-sites/history/vizcaino.html>.

"Why the Lost Coast Is Lost,"

<http://www.northcoast.com/~history/ahs/bkessler/histben.htm>.

THEMES AND MOTIFS

A study of the central issues and situations in Scott O'Del's *Island of the Blue Dolphins* should include these aspects:

Themes

- invasion
- dilemma
- isolation
- survival
- nature
- loneliness
- loss
- flexibility
- rescue
- adaptation

Motifs

- coping with diminishing family and tribe
- accepting a rigid division of labor
- developing a home from the wild
- taking responsibility for actions
- recovering from assaults on security
- accepting friendship
- adapting to a foreign culture and language

MEANING STUDY

Below are words, phrases, or sentences that have a particular meaning in the novel. Explain each. Chapter references are provided so that you can re-read the passage from which the item is taken.

1. I remember the day the Aleut ship came to our island. (Chap. 1, p. 1)
(Aleuts, a branch of Eskimos, originated in Alaska. Stocky and broad-shouldered, they are of medium height with dark skin and scanty black hair. Usually situated on the shore, Aleuts at one time depended on whalebone, driftwood, and other sea materials for provisions and building materials. In the early days, Aleut men wore feathered skirts. Women preferred the soft fur of the sea otter or seal. Both sexes ornamented themselves with bone or tusk ornaments. In addition, the women tattooed themselves about the face.
About 1740, when Aleuts came under the influence of Russian missionaries, they abandoned ancestral ways and adopted Russian lifestyles, for example, giving up communal lodges in favor of smaller dwellings suited to single-family occupancy. In 1867, Russia sold Alaska and its outlying islands to the United States. Since that time, Aleuts have been assimilated into American culture and bear little resemblance to their ancestors.)
2. Dolphins sit there, and gulls and cormorants, and otter, and whales too, but not clouds. (Chap. 1, p. 2)
(The web-footed cormorant is an aquatic bird found on seacoasts everywhere. Duck-like in shape 19-40 inches in length, it is easily identified by its long neck, hooked bill, and stiff tail. Coloring ranges from flat to metallic black. Cormorants feed themselves on fish that they catch live and swallow whole. They also eat shellfish and other sea creatures.)
3. By the time I filled the basket, the Aleut ship had sailed around the wide kelp bed that encloses our island and between the two rocks that guard Coral Cove. (Chap. 1, p. 4)
(Kelp, which the islanders use as a food and raw material, is a broad-leaved seaweed that grows in ocean shallows. Commercially it is harvested for fertilizer and iodine; in oriental cultures, kelp is a food staple. The

ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS

islanders dry kelp in the sun and use it for rope, which Karana employs in fashioning a curious house out of a whale skeleton.)

4. "I come in peace and wish to parley," he said to the men on the shore. (Chap. 1, p. 5)

(The Russian, Captain Orlov, addresses Chief Chowig in the island language and asks to parley, a word derived from the French parler, meaning to talk. The term indicates a willingness to discuss business or political differences and implies that violence and hostility is suspended until a settlement is reached. Orlov proposes that his forty men hunt sea otter, using the island as a base of operations. In exchange, he offers to share one third of the proceeds in goods. Chowig, wary after his tribe was cheated by Captain Mitriff, demands equal parts. Orlov suspends negotiations without giving Chowig a reply and turns his attention toward making camp.)

5. Our island is two leagues long and one league wide, and if you were standing on one of the hills that rise in the middle of it, you would think that it looked like a fish. (Chap. 2, p. 9)

(The league varies in length from 2.4 to 4.6 miles, depending on interpretation of the unit. The Island of the Blue Dolphins is therefore less than ten miles long and five miles wide.)

6. Kimki portioned work for each one in the tribe, giving Ulape and me the task of gathering abalones. (Chap. 5, p. 26)

(Work in the tribe is allotted according to age and sex of participants. For young girls, the gathering of abalone is a suitable task. Note that taboo forbids female tribe members from making or handling weapons without dire consequences. Even after she is abandoned on the island, Karana still hesitates to violate the taboo.

The abalone or sea-ear is a soft mollusk that lives in a single shell and feels its way about the ocean floor with a fleshy appendage. For the islanders, abalone forms a major portion of the natural diet, particularly in dried form when fresh foods are not available. The shell, which is rough on the outside, contains a soft, iridescent lining that is highly prized for decorative purposes, particularly jewelry, buttons, and inlaid boxes.)

7. Some wished to leave and go in their canoes to the island called Santa Catalina, which lies far off to the east, but others said that there was little water on that island. In the end, a council was held and it was decided to stay at Ghalas-at. (Chap. 5, pp. 25-26)

(San Nicolas or the Island of the Blue Dolphins is the westernmost of three large islands comprising the Outer Santa Barbara Channel group. It is situated roughly fifty miles southwest of Los Angeles and the same distance northwest of San Clemente. The distance to Santa Catalina is forty miles. Forty to fifty miles to the northwest lie three more islands in the Santa Barbara Channel—San Miguel, Santa Rosa, and Santa Cruz. Note that the naming of the islands reflects the Catholic culture of Hispanic explorers and settlers.)

8. After food had been stored in autumn and the baskets were full in every house, there was more time to think about them, so that a sort of sickness came over the village and people sat and did not speak, nor ever laughed. (Chap. 5, p. 28)

(After the terrible battle the islanders are left with only eight able-bodied males, seven old men, and grieving widows and orphans. In normal response to such a traumatic experience, the group sinks into a collective depression.

Kimki, the new chief, makes a noble and heroic gesture by setting out by canoe to the east for "a country which was there and which he had once been to when he was a boy. It lay many days across the sea, but he would go there and make a place for us." To spare the tribe the loss of any more men, he goes alone.)

9. Rontu did not hear me. He was watching a devilfish, just beyond the opening of the cave. (Chap. 16, p. 103)

(Rontu is fascinated by the peculiarities of the devilfish, a member of the ray or skate family and relative of the shark. Residing in shallow water, the devilfish maneuvers its flat, flexible body after its prey and immobilizes the victim with poison from a sharp spine on its tail. While not considered edible by modern society, devilfish is a treat to Karana's people for its flesh, "white and tender and very sweet."

Karana, well versed in the ways of sea creatures, knows that the tentacles of the devilfish are capable of holding a human being under water. She aims her spear but strikes too late to avoid the devilfish's unique method of self-protection: before the weapon reaches the animal, it squirts a "black cloud of liquid which instantly hid him from view." By the time Karana repositions her weapon, the devilfish has moved far out of range.)

10. In that year the Spanish explorer Sebastián Vizcaíno set out from Mexico in search of a port where treasure galleons from the Philippines could find shelter in case of distress. (Author's Note, p. 182)

(The discovery of La Isla de San Nicolas, named "in honor of the patron saint of sailors, travelers, and merchants," brought the Santa Barbara Channel islands into the Spanish realm of influence. Sebastián Vizcaíno (1550-1629), who followed the trail of Juan Cabrillo and re-scouted the lower California coast, is known for spreading stories of the beauties of Monterey, in Salinas County on the north end of California. Based in Acapulco, Mexico, Sebastián Vizcaíno drove his men against terrible odds of hunger, exhaustion, and the elements in order to map the California coastline.)

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 in the novel.

Questions 1-5 Literal Level

1. Describe Karana's feelings as she arms herself with weapons.

(After wild dogs dig up Karana's food and fight over the scraps, she comprehends that she must have weapons to survive or else die as Ramo did. High above the pack, she lies on a rock, contemplating tribal taboos "which forbade the making of weapons by women." Questions plague her mind: "Would the four winds blow in from the four directions of the world and smother me as I made the weapons? Or would the earth tremble, as many said, and bury me beneath its falling rocks? Or, as others said, would the sea rise over the island in a terrible

ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS

flood? Would the weapons break in my hands at the moment when my life was in danger, which is what my father had said?" On the third day, Karana makes up her mind "no matter what befell me I would make the weapons." Still, her heart quakes at the thought of her temerity. The handiwork is hampered because she "had watched, but not with the eye of one who would ever do it.")

2. What preparations do Ulape and Karana make for the departure?

(Karana, who is twelve, fills two baskets with essentials—whalebone needles, an awl, a "stone knife for scraping hides, two cooking pots," and a small box of earrings. Ulape, who is two years older and more interested in finding a husband, brings two boxes of earrings in her basket. To show her availability for marriage, she draws "a thin mark with blue clay across her nose and cheekbones.")

3. Explain why Karana jumps from the ship.

(During the hurry to board ship to avoid the storm, women and men fill separate boats. Karana relies on information from Nanko that Ramo, who asked permission to return for his fishing spear, is accounted for. The ride out to the ship causes much confusion as the white men shout over the surf and the boat "pitched so wildly that in one breath you could see the ship and in the next breath it had gone.")

On the crowded deck of the large ship, Karana looks for Ramo, knowing that he is probably exploring and getting in the sailors' way. The wind drowns her voice. As the anchor is raised and the sails unfurled, Karana exhausts all possibilities. It is Ulape who spots Ramo—still on the island, "running along the cliff, the fishing spear held over his head."

When the ship does not return for Ramo, Karana acts quickly, pushing past restraining hands and flinging herself into the sea. In the tossing waves, Karana must abandon her basket of belongings and swim to shore. An able swimmer, she arrives safely and encircles Ramo with her arms.)

4. How does Karana pass the time when the Aleuts return to the island?

(In order to hide herself from the Aleuts, who return after two years to hunt, Karana abandons the whale rib compound and hides in the cave. Both she and Rontu chafe at their unaccustomed confinement. Rontu sniffs at crevices; Karana burns her store of sai-sai fish to give enough light for her handicrafts. As Rontu lies nearby watching, Karana fashions a cormorant skirt.

Following the first meeting with Tutok, Karana packs her belongings and prepares to move to the western end of the island. She sleeps on the headland alongside the baskets and returns at dawn to the ravine, where she hides on a brushy ledge near the spring in order to observe the mouth of the cave. Her second meeting with Tutok eases concern over strangers. This time, Karana accepts Tutok's gift of a black stone necklace and even shares her secret name with the Aleut girl.

For the next five nights, Karana fashions a circlet for Tutok's hair. Tutok visits the cave often until the Aleuts depart the island. On the last night, Karana, no longer fearful of the Aleuts, cooks openly over a fire, making a

portion for herself as well as food for Rontu and Tutok, although her friend does not join her for dinner. At dawn, when the fog clears, the ship and its red sails have moved beyond the horizon.)

5. Explain how Karana cooks.

(At first, Karana eats dried stores before cooking her own catches of shellfish and perch. For vessels she uses hollowed rocks, which "saved the juices of the fish which are good and were wasted before." For vegetable dishes, she weaves a reed basket and lines it with pitch. To make a soup of seeds and roots, she heats stones and drops them into the basket.)

Questions 6-8 Interpretive Level

6. How does tribal heritage influence Karana's attitude toward being marooned?

(After Ramo's death, Karana is overwhelmed by a sense of loneliness. She busies herself with the work of survival—filling her basket with fresh spring water and locating dried food and canoes. She makes up her mind to "Take one of the canoes and go to the country that lay toward the east.")

Karana is incapable of communing with dead ancestors, which is Chief Kimki's method of seeking advice. Still, she has a valuable inner resource to rely on: "I knew that my ancestors had crossed the sea in their canoes coming from that place which lay beyond." With their example in mind, she prefers to face death on the open sea than to remain "where everything reminded me of those who were dead and those who had gone away.")

7. How does Rontu's death affect Karana?

(Even though Karana vows to avenge herself on the wild dogs that kill Ramo, she forms a firm bond of friendship with the lead dog, which she deliberately wounds and then nurses to health. After years of companionship, Rontu shows signs of weakness, choosing to lie in the sun and rest. One night, he barks to be let out, but does not return. Karana finds him near his original lair, "lying in the back of the cave, alone.")

The dying dog scarcely breathes and licks her hand only once. She sits all night and talks to him. At dawn, she carries him along the cliff. His light body indicates his weakened condition. Even the sound of the gulls cannot coax a bark from him. He takes a few steps and collapses. His heart beats twice and then stops. Karana weeps for her friend and works "two days from dawn until the going down of the sun" on a suitable grave "in the crevice of the rock" of the headland. To show her love, she decorates his grave with sand flowers and his favorite stick and covers his corpse with colored stones from the shore.

Karana stops counting the passage of months, eats sparingly, and, except for trips to the spring, remains indoors. When winter ends, her spirits revive after she sights a dog that is certainly Rontu's son. She anesthetizes the dog with xuchal—a mixture of ground shells and wild tobacco—and carries him to her dwelling. Again, she forms a healing bond with a dog, which eases her loneliness. Still, the companionship of a dog cannot replace her desire to hear a human voice.)

8. How do the rescuers indicate that their culture differs from the islanders'?

ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS

(On the second voyage of the rescue ship, Karana chooses to reveal her hiding place so that she can return to her people. By this time, she is thirty years old. She follows Ulape's example and marks herself as an unmarried woman by putting clay stripes on her cheeks. After bathing in the spring, Karana dresses herself in her best—"my otter cape and my cormorant skirt" plus the "necklace of black stones and the black earrings." She completes the outfit with tribal markings across her nose. When Captain Nidever, Father Gonzales, and a third man reach her house, she confronts them, noting a "string of beads around [the priest's] neck and at the end of it was an ornament of polished wood." She has no knowledge of his rosary or the sign of the cross, which he makes over her. The sounds of the white men's language cause Karana to bite her tongue to suppress laughter.

The men admire Karana's handicrafts, but insist that she have a dress. She pretends to admire the blue garment that a sailor makes for her, but prefers her own garments to the hot dress, which scratches her skin and covers her to the feet. Unfamiliar with a culture in which women hide their bodies, Karana does not realize how life will change for her at the mission.)

Questions 9 and 10 Critical Level

9. What does the Author's Note add to the text of the novel?

(Without the final comments, the reader is unable to set Karana's life and experiences into a social, geographic, and time framework. Born about 1823, the Lost Woman of San Nicolas lived at Ghalas-at with her tribe until 1835, when white men took the tribe toward the Santa Barbara Mission in California. The author implies that the entire tribe was lost at sea near the California shore, although this fact is not clearly stated.

From 1835 to 1853, Karana lives alone. Yet the story of her leap from Captain Hubbard's ship is known to the mainlanders. It is Father Gonzales, a priest of the mission, who returns to find her. He befriends her and learns about Ramo's death. From the author's description, the reader can visualize an improved life for Karana in that she finds human companions, but she never learns to converse and express all that has happened to her from age twelve to thirty. Additional information explains the history of the San Nicolas Island and its current use as a U. S. naval base.)

10. What theme holds this story together and makes it worthy of note?

(Scott O'Dell indicates by his fictionalized account of life on the island that Karana survives by overcoming aspects of nature that threaten her, such as wild dogs, starvation, and shifts in the weather. Yet, her most pronounced accomplishment is the positive spirit with which she tames a natural fear of abandonment and keeps herself working at useful tasks. Even creating the cormorant skirt proves beneficial during her confinement in the dark cave.

Karana survives because she has spunk and because she has observed the tribe's survival methods. Even though she has never made weapons, she quells her fears of ancient taboo and emulates the men of the tribe. By observing the habits of animals, she lives in

harmony with nature and feeds herself from the resources at hand. Most important, she deals with isolation by surrounding herself with domesticated animals. This awareness of her inner need for companionship makes bearable the eighteen year exile from her tribe.)

Questions 11 and 12 Creative Level

- Using models from books on prehistoric art and archeology, draw some tribal figures to depict everyday life on the Island of the Blue Dolphins. Emphasize the tribal members' closeness to nature. Keep your colors simple, such as charcoal, umber, blue, white, or ochre, which come from natural sources.
- Explain the difference between biography and historical fiction. For example, note that the real lost woman of San Nicolas Island had an infant and is not identified by name.

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Drama

- Improvise the arrival of Captain Orlov's hunters in Coral Cove. Begin with Chowig's greeting and continue to the battle between hunters and natives. Stress the demands that each group makes on the other.
- Discuss with a group the protracted drama of life apart from human society. Express the domestication of wild animals and birds as substitute friends and family.

Cinema

- Draw a cartoon strip or story board depicting an individual befriending a wild dog or bird. Show the steps by which the animal is domesticated and trained to serve a human master.
- Summarize a video of Theodora Kroeber's *Ishi in Two Worlds*. Discuss how the main character's situation compares with that of Karana.

Science

- Make a mural of sea life that surrounds San Nicholas Island. Include animals and plants, such as the otters, sea elephants, seals, cormorants, starfish, kelp, sea ferns, and devilfish.
- Make an oral report on tidal waves. Explain why they are associated with earthquakes. Discuss plate tectonics, the study of geological faults in the earth's crust. Identify faults that affect California, especially the San Andreas Fault.
- Study the eulachon or candlefish. Determine why native peoples used it as a source of light.

Health

Research and discuss possible reasons for the Lost Woman's death so soon after reaching the mainland.

Geography

- Create a mural or web site that introduces the fish-shaped island. Emphasize the landing spot in Coral Cove, Tall Rock, Black Cave, hunters' camp, the headland, Karana's cave house, both springs, the cliffs, and the distance from Santa Catalina, Los Angeles, and Santa Barbara, California. Note the placement of Ron-tu's grave.
- Locate a detailed map of the California coastline. Chart historical events that occurred after the arrival of Spanish and white settlers, especially the building of forts and missions, search for gold, and construction of railroads.

ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS

Arts and Crafts

1. Sketch the artwork in Black Cave. If you have difficulty imagining the figures, study examples of prehistoric art, such as Mayan and Incan friezes or the drawings from the caves in Lascaux, France.
2. Using Karana's methods, make a model canoe. Be sure to overlap planks and fill crevices with a waterproof substance, such as rubber cement.

Law

1. Discuss the role of greed in international trade and warfare. Outline laws that protect territory and natural resources from invaders.
2. Explain the law governing salvage at sea. Determine who might profit from dives to the sunken galleon that capsized in the storm.

Economics

1. Determine the cost of a rescue operation in search of a lone woman on an island off the California coast.
2. Explain why the island was a favorite of Aleutian hunters and why otter pelts were valuable enough to entice the Aleuts for annual voyages.

Social Studies

1. Write a report challenging tribal taboos that separate activities for men and women, such as a refusal to let women make weapons. Record your sources.
2. Make an oral evaluation of Chowig's family. Discuss how work and responsibility are divided before and after Chowig's death, particularly care for Ramo. Comment on the hardships faced by girls in a motherless family.
3. Compose an extended definition of culture. Explain how culture permeates everyday life, such as the initiation of young natives into adult society. Note the cultural events mentioned in the book, for instance the use of blue and white clay to mark the faces of unmarried women. List the cultural events that mark your own passages, such as membership in a church or adult organization, learning to drive a car, or wearing adult clothes, jewelry, and makeup.

Psychology

1. Lead a discussion of how pets help isolated people deal with frustration and loneliness. Suggest types of animals that might benefit different ages and personalities, for example, Chowig, Captain Orlov, or Ramo. Refer specifically to Karana's pets and to her decision not to kill animals.
2. Write a report on isolation. Discuss psychological mechanisms that protect people from the debilitating effects of marooning, such as dreams and fantasy.

Music

Listen to recorded music that suggests the emotions that Karana and Ulape experience as they prepare to leave home. Describe the way that music captures human feelings.

Language and Speech

1. Compose a letter to Karana in which you comment on her experiences at sea and on the island. Indicate your personal response to her adventures. Discuss Karana's decision to accept Tutok as a friend.
2. Keep a list of crucial vocabulary terms from the novel that fit under the following headings: history, Indian cul-

ture, tools and weapons, plants, the sea, and mammals.

3. The Author's Note gives scanty information about the tribe from Ghalas-at. Create a plausible story about their voyage and arrival in California. Explain what happens during the story and why Captain Hubbard's report survives. Discuss Karana's reaction to the loss of family and tribe.

Literature

1. Read aloud from nonfiction, novels, plays, and stories about isolation and survival. Include Dorothy Johnson's "A Man Called Horse," John Glenn's "A Day in Space," Lois Lowry's *The Giver*, Gore Vidal's *A Visit to a Small Planet*, Esther Hautzig's *The Endless Steppe*, Paula Fox's *Slave Dancer*, Karel Capek's *R. U. R.*, Yoko Kawashima Watkins's *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*, Theodora Kroeber's *Ishi*, Orson Scott Card's *Ender's Game*, Margaret Walker's *Jubilee*, Avi's *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*, Gary Paulsen's *Nightjohn* and *Hatchet*, and Jack London's *Call of the Wild*.
2. Explain in a paragraph why Karana is referred to as the "girl Robinson Crusoe."
3. Propose titles for the book that would highlight Karana's character strengths, particularly courage and curiosity.

History and Current Events

1. Make a time line of the worst earthquakes and tidal wave disasters in the past twenty years. Give date and places of each.
2. Contrast Karana's response to loneliness with the biographies of other people who have had lonely adventures, such as Sir Edmund Hillary, Sir Frances Chichester, John Glenn, Amelia Earhart, Sally Ride, Richard Byrd, and Charles Lindbergh. Discuss your findings with a small group.
3. Draw a map of North America. Place names of Indian tribes that settled each section, including Apaches, Massasoit, Nez Perce, Comanches, Aleuts, Inupiat, Kwakiutl, Cherokee, Dakotas, Hopi, Seminole, Sioux, Crow, Pomo, Mission Indians, and Tlingit. Look up in an Almanac and record on your map the current population figures for each tribe.
4. Compose an annotated time line of the age of exploration. Include the progress of Spanish, Russian, and Portuguese explorers along the Pacific Coast and Florida, the French in Canada and the Ohio Valley, and the Scandinavian and English on the Atlantic Coast.

Education

Brainstorm ways of acclimating Karana to the Santa Barbara Mission. Suggest types of languages lessons that would acquaint her with European methods of dress, cookings, behavior, and speech.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

1. Compose a paragraph in which you explain how travel and history influenced Scott O'Dell's outlook and writing style.
2. Listen to recorded poems about the sea. Compose poetic lines to express your own experiences with fishing, swimming, cooking out, exploring rocks and reefs, canoeing, hunting, and roughing it.
3. Read Theodore Taylor's *The Cay*. Explain what the main character has in common with Karana. Discuss qualities

ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS

that give both main characters strength in difficult situations. Explain how each responds to rescue.

4. Make a list of natural materials that you could locate near your house in order to fashion a temporary shelter for one person. Discuss how you would keep out predators, cold, rain, wind, or intense heat. Invent ways of decorating the exterior. Describe how you would cook meals and wash clothes.
5. Write a newspaper account of Karana's rescue. Describe her friendship with Father Gonzales. Strengthen your writing with direct quotations from Captain Nidever, Father Gonzales, the mariners, and Karana.
6. Create a wall chart illustrating how action words strengthen historical fiction. Cite sentences that characterize Karana's adventures.
7. Lead a debate concerning whether Karana deserves to be called a hero. Contrast her heroism to that of Chowig, Captain Nidever, and Father Gonzales.
8. Lead a panel discussion of how isolation changes people. Discuss ways in which Karana has to adjust in order to find happiness among the residents of the Santa Barbara Mission. Suggest ways in which someone like Tutok might help Karana feel welcome and accepted.
9. Compose a letter to Father Gonzales or Captain Nidever in which you ask questions about Karana that the book does not answer, such as how long she lived at the mission, who her friends were, whether she ever saw other natives, what chores she performed, what crafts she made, and whether she learned to understand and speak any English or Spanish.
10. Write a diary entry describing your life on a remote island. Include activities that involve locating food, cooking, building a shelter, seeking rescue, dressing yourself, and passing the time. Select an animal that would make an appropriate companion and pet.

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

1. List examples of tribal custom, fear, insecurity, intimidation, loyalty, victory, loss, and compensation in the story of Karana.
2. Compile a list of actions that demonstrate Karana's ability to adapt to the environment.
3. Compose a scene in which Karana and Tutok share information about their families.
4. Account for the tribe's knowledge of lands beyond their island.
5. Explain how the canoe increases Karana's chances of surviving alone.

O'DELL'S PUBLISHED WORKS

Representative Photoplays Analyzed: Modern Authorship, 1924
Woman of Spain: A Story of Old California, 1934
Hill of the Hawk, 1947
Man Alone 1953
Country of the Sun: Southern California, an Informal History and Guide, 1957
The Sea Is Red, 1958
The Psychology of Children's Art, 1967
The Black Pearl, 1967
The King's Fifth, 1966

The Dark Canoe, 1968
Journey to Jericho, 1969
Sing Down the Moon, 1970
The Treasure of Topo-el-Bampo, 1972
The Cruise of the Arctic Star, 1973
Child of Fire, 1974
The Hawk That Dare Not Hunt by Day, 1975
The 290, 1976
Zia, 1976
Carlota, 1977
Kathleen, Please Come Home, 1978
The Captive, 1979
Sarah Bishop, 1980
The Feathered Serpent, 1981
The Spanish Smile, 1982
The Amethyst Ring, 1983
The Castle in the Sea, 1983
Alexandra, 1984
The Road to Damietta, 1985
The Serpent Never Sleeps: A Novel of Jamestown and Pocahontas, 1986
Streams to the River, River to the Sea: A Novel of Sacagawea, 1987
Black Star, Bright Dawn, 1988
My Name Is Not Angelica, 1989

RELATED READING

Avi, *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*
Michael Blake, *Dances With Wolves*
Edgar Rice Burroughs, *Tarzan of the Apes*
Karel Capek, *R.U.R.*
Orson Scott Card, *Ender's Game*
Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*
Paula Fox, *Slave Dancer*
Jean Craighead George, *Julie of the Wolves*
Esther Hautzig, *The Endless Steppe*
Thor Heyerdal, *Kon-Tiki*
Dorothy Johnson, "A Man Called Horse"
Rudyard Kipling, *The Jungle Book*
Theodora Kroeber, *Ishi*
Jack London, *The Call of the Wild*
Lois Lowry, *The Giver*
Farley Mowat, *Never Cry Wolf*
Gary Paulsen, *Hatchet*, *Nightjohn*, and *Voyage of the Frog*
Ayn Rand, *Anthem*
Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*
Gore Vidal, *A Visit to a Small Planet*
Yoko Kawashima Watkins, *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*
Johann Wyss, *Swiss Family Robinson*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Blair-Broeker, Lynn. *The Years Alone: A Reading Comprehension Unit*. Cedar Falls, Iowa: Area Education Agency 7, 1980.
Children's Literature Review, Vol. 16. Detroit: Gale, 1989.
Contemporary Authors, Vol. 61-64. Detroit: Gale, 1976.
Contemporary Authors New Revision Series, Vol. 12. Detroit: Gale, 1984.
Contemporary Literary Criticism, <http://galnet.gale.com>.
Dictionary of Literary Biography, Vol. 52. Detroit: Gale Research, 1986.
Fuller, Muriel, ed. *More Junior Authors*. New York: H. W. Wilson, 1961.

ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS

- Gallo, Donald R., ed. *Speaking for Ourselves*. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1990.
- Georgiou, Constantine. *Children and Their Literature*. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1969.
- Hoffman, Miriam, and Eva Samuels. *Authors and Illustrators of Children's Books*. New York: Bowker, 1972.
- "Island of the Blue Dolphins," <http://i-site.on.ca/booknook/79/fable/islandofbluedolphins/ch>.
- "Island of the Blue Dolphins," <http://www.teleport.com/~kevero/library/books/odell1.htm>.
- Kingston, Carolyn T. *The Tragic Mode in Children's Literature*. New York: Columbia Univ. Teachers College Press, 1974.
- Kirkpatrick, D. L., ed. *Twentieth-Century Children's Writers*. New York: St. Martin, 1983.
- Meigs, Cornelia, ed. *A Critical History of Children's Literature*. New York: Macmillan, 1969.
- O'Dell, Scott, "Acceptance Speech: Hans Christian Andersen Award," *Horn Book*, October 1972.
- , "An Embarrassing Plenty," *Saturday Review*, Oct. 30, 1943.
- , "Newbery Award Acceptance Speech," *Horn Book*, Aug. 1961.
- , "The Tribulations of a Trilogy," *Horn Book*, April 1982, pp. 137-144.
- Peterson, Linda Kauffman, and Marilyn Leathers Solt. *Newbery and Caldecott Medal and Honor Books, an Annotated Bibliography*. Boston: G. K. Hall, 1982.
- Raymond, Allen, "A Visit with Scott O'Dell, Master Storyteller," *Early Years*, March 1984.
- Roop, Peter, "Profile: Scott O'Dell," *Language Arts*, November 1984.
- Schon, Isabel, "A Master Storyteller and His Distortions of Pre-Columbian and Hispanic Cultures," *Journal of Reading*, January 1986, pp. 322-325.
- "Scott O'Dell," Danbury, Connecticut *News-Times*, March 29, 1987, n. p.
- "Scott O'Dell," <http://encarta.msn.com/index/concise/0vol39/06E37000.asp>.
- "Scott O'Dell" (videotape), Profiles in Literature, Temple Univ., 1976.
- Something About the Author*, Volume 12. Detroit: Gale 1977.
- Tarr, C. Anita, "An Unintentional System of Gaps: A Phenomenological Reading of Scott O'Dell's 'Island of the Blue Dolphins,'" *Children's Literature in Education*, June 1997, pp. 61-71.
- Townsend, John Rowe. *A Sense of Story: Essays on Contemporary Writing for Children*. New York: Lippincott, 1971.
- . *Written for Children: An Outline of English Language Children's Literature*. New York: Lippincott, 1965.
- Warfel, Harry. *American Novelists of Today*. New York: American Book, 1951.
- Washington Post Book World*, March 9, 1980; Jan. 9, 1983.
- Wesselhoeft, Conrad, "Blue Dolphins Author Tells Why He Writes for Children," *New York Times*, April 15, 1984.
- Wintle, Justin, and Emma Fisher. *The Pied Pipers: Interviews with the Influential Creators of Children's Literature*. London: Paddington Press, 1974.

ANSWER KEY

VOCABULARY TEST

- | | | |
|-------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1. undergo | 8. sparingly | 15. forlorn |
| 2. shirkers | 9. pelt | 16. parley |
| 3. decrees | 10. stunted | 17. ancestors |
| 4. mesa | 11. bales | 18. smother |
| 5. reefs | 12. fateful | 19. dim |
| 6. ravine | 13. awl | 20. portioned |
| 7. ceasing | 14. beckoned | |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Quotation Identification (20 points)

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| 1A. Chief Chowig | 4A. Karana |
| 1B. the tribe | 4B. Rontu |
| 2A. Ramo | 5A. Matasaip |
| 2B. Karana | 5B. Karana |
| 3A. Chief Chowig | |
| 3B. Captain Orlov | |

Part II: Fill-in (30 points)

- | | | |
|-------------------|-----------|---------------|
| 1. Santa Catalina | 6. chest | 11. gruel |
| 2. canoe | 7. Ramo | 12. wild dogs |
| 3. otter | 8. sea | 13. Ghalas-at |
| 4. Tainor | 9. basket | 14. weapons |
| 5. club | 10. kelp | 15. Nanko |

Part II: True/False (30 points)

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

Part III: Identification (10 points)

- With pitch, Karana lines the bottom of baskets and her canoe to make them waterproof.
- Karana is wearing a handmade skirt of green cormorant feathers when Captain Nidever finds her on the island. The skirt was sent to Rome after Karana's death.
- Karana uses the dried bodies of these finger-length fish for lamps.
- Karana names her dog Rontu or "Fox Eyes."
- Each tribe member has a public and a private name. Karana's public name Won-a-pa-lei, meaning "The Girl with the Long Black Hair."

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)

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

Part II: True/False (30 points)

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

Part III: Short Answer (20 points)

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. thirty | 6. red foxes |
| 2. Santa Barbara Mission | 7. Ulape |
| 3. 1835 | 8. pelts |
| 4. two pairs of trousers | 9. flee |
| 5. Rontu-Aru | 10. fishing spear |

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS

VOCABULARY TEST

Fill in the blanks in each of the following lines with vocabulary from the list below.

awl	clutching	headland	portioned	slinking
ancestors	decreed	mesa	ravine	smother
bales	dim	mussels	reefs	sparingly
beckoned	fateful	parley	shafts	stunted
ceasing	forlorn	pelt	shirkers	undergo

1. Since there are no men to give the rites, perhaps you will not have to _____ the nettles and the ants, Chief Ramo.
2. There will be grumbling in Ghalas-at because of this. There will be _____.
3. There was much trouble over this until Kimki _____ that the work would again be divided—henceforth the _____ men would hunt and the women harvest.
4. The village of Ghalas-at lay east of the hills on a small _____, near coral Cove and a good spring.
5. Like a dolphin lying on its side, with its tail pointing toward the sunrise, its nose pointing to the sunset, and its fins making _____ and the rocky ledges along the shore.
6. I thought of everything I could do, of the different places I could go, and at last decided to stay in the _____.
7. "We hunted," said my father, "but the one you call a fool wished us to hunt from one moon to the next, never _____."
8. During this time the village eats _____, mostly from stores of seeds harvested in autumn.
9. They counted the dead otter and thought of the beads and other things that each _____ meant.
10. There are no trees on the island except the small ones _____ by the wind.
11. You have one hundred and five _____ of otter on the ship.
12. When the _____ day had dawned the tribe numbered forty-two men, counting those who were too old to fight.
13. I filled two baskets with the things I wished to take. Three fine needles of whalebone, an _____ for making holes, a good stone knife for scraping hides, two cooking pots, and a small box made from a shell with many earrings in it.
14. Beside them stood four white men and as we came down the trail, one of the men _____ us to walk faster.
15. I kept thinking over and over as I swam how I would punish Ramo when I reached the shore, yet when I felt the sand under my feet and saw him standing at the edge of the waves, holding his fishing spear and looking so _____, I forgot all those things I planned to do.
16. "I come in peace and wish to _____," he said to the men on the shore.
17. I knew that my _____ had crossed the sea in their canoes coming from that place which lay beyond.
18. Would the four winds blow in from the four directions of the world and _____ me as I made the weapons?
19. Since I could not see well by the _____ fire I used for cooking, I made lamps of the dried bodies of little fish which we call sai-sai.
20. Kimki _____ work for each one in the tribe, giving Ulape and me the task of gathering abalones.

ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Quotation Identification (20 points)

Identify the person who is speaking (A) and the person or persons (B) being addressed.

- _____ 1A. They are people who do not understand friendship. They are not those who were here before,
_____ 1B. but they are people of the same tribe that caused trouble many years ago.
- _____ 2A. The sea is smooth . . . It is a flat stone without any scratches.
_____ 2B.
- _____ 3A. The rest of the pelts must stay here . . . until the chests are brought.
_____ 3B.
- _____ 4A. I suppose this cave once had a name . . . but I have never heard of it or heard it spoken about.
_____ 4B.
- _____ 5A. He will be safe. There is food for him to eat and water to drink and places to sleep.
_____ 5B.

Part II: Fill-in (30 points)

Fill in the blanks with answers which complete each statement.

1. We would then leave in our canoes for the island of _____.
2. But the great waves had cost me all the food and weapons which were stored in the cave, as well as the _____ I had been working on and those hidden under the south cliffs.
3. Then I decided to give the _____ a name. The name was Mon-a-nee, which means Little Boy with Large Eyes.
4. _____ and Lurai built a nest in the tree where they were born. They built it of dry seaweed and leaves and also with hairs off Rontu's back.
5. I had a _____ I found in one of the huts, but I needed a bow and arrows and a large spear.
6. The _____ lay deep from the washing of the waves and I did not try to dig it out, but only so I could raise the lid.
7. Since there are no men to give the rites, perhaps you will not have to undergo the nettles and the ants, Chief _____.
8. "The _____ which surrounds the Island of the Blue Dolphins belongs to us," answered my father.
9. I was still clutching the _____ that held all of my things, but it was very heavy and I realized that I could not swim with it in my arms.
10. Between them I wove many strands of bull _____, which shrinks as it dries and pulls very tight.
11. By heating small stones and dropping them into a mixture of water and seeds in the basket I could make _____.
12. I vowed that someday I would go back and kill the _____ in the cave.
13. Thus, one by one, I destroyed them all so that there were only ashes left to mark the village of _____.
14. As I lay there I wondered what would happen to me if I went against the law of our tribe which forbade the making of _____ by women—if I did not think of it at all and made those things which I must have to protect myself.
15. My sister was in love with _____, but she laughed at him.

ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS

Part III: Identification (10 points)

Explain the significance of the following details from the story.

1. pitch
2. skirt of cormorant feathers
3. sai-sai
4. Fox Eyes
5. Won-a-pa-lei

Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Describe how Karana makes a spear.
2. Discuss why Karana jumps off the ship and returns to the village.
3. Describe the life of a female villager at Ghalas-at.
4. Explain why Karana is successful in taking care of herself for eighteen years.

ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Select an answer to complete each of the following statements.

- _____ 1. The tribe watches in horror as
 - A. Karana fashions a spear from a tooth.
 - B. wild dogs kill Ramo.
 - C. Aleuts attack Chowig and his men.
 - D. the Russian vessel is lost in a storm.
- _____ 2. Everyone laughs at Ulape's story about
 - A. a girl hunting among men.
 - B. fish thrown up on land by a great wave.
 - C. an earthquake.
 - D. a Spanish priest who arrives by sea.
- _____ 3. Karana uses a coral twig to clean
 - A. Rontu's wound.
 - B. the ancient markings on the walls of Black Cave.
 - C. a cut on her knee.
 - D. the devilfish and prepare its flesh for dinner.
- _____ 4. The sai-sai are only finger length but they
 - A. taste better than abalone.
 - B. give a great light.
 - C. can poison a human being.
 - D. are as valuable to traders as otter pelts.
- _____ 5. After the great wave, Karana finds
 - A. an Aleut canoe with holes in the bottom.
 - B. that the spring has dried up.
 - C. a necklace made of black stones near the mouth of the cave.
 - D. two small whales stranded in the cove.
- _____ 6. When Karana approaches the new arrivals,
 - A. the captain indicates that she is an enemy.
 - B. she puts clay markings on her face to show she is unmarried.
 - C. only Tutok is able to speak her language.
 - D. Ramo runs away and hides in the village.
- _____ 7. Within the far room of the cave,
 - A. Russian hunters lie in wait for sea elephants.
 - B. Rontu fights the spotted dog to the death.
 - C. Ulape stores her basket of earrings.
 - D. Karana locates a shelf on which to hide her canoe.
- _____ 8. Karana demonstrates her loneliness by
 - A. waving to passing ships.
 - B. making friends with different types of animals.
 - C. paddling her leaky canoe toward the departing ship.
 - D. grieving for Ramo, Ulape, and their dead mother.
- _____ 9. To show their grief for the dead tribesmen, the women
 - A. wear wreaths about their necks.
 - B. store their jewelry in baskets until the mourning period ends.
 - C. singe their hair.
 - D. decorate the graves with colored stones.
- _____ 10. In Kimki's absence, Matasaip
 - A. serves as tribal leader.
 - B. makes a deal with Captain Orlov.
 - C. refuses to share the tribe's food with Aleuts.
 - D. takes on the responsibility of medicine man.

ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS

Part II: True/False (30 points)

Mark each statement either **T** for true or **F** if any part is false.

- _____ 1. Cave drawings alarm Karana so badly that she never returns to Black Cave.
- _____ 2. Karana goes to great trouble to make a surprise gift for Tutok.
- _____ 3. According to Captain Nidever's records, Karana spends eighteen years alone at Ghalas-at.
- _____ 4. Rontu eats the mixture of ground shells and wild tobacco, falls asleep, and recovers from his wound.
- _____ 5. The blue clay markings on Ulape's cheeks indicate that she is unmarried.
- _____ 6. Karana suspects that Aleut hunters are responsible for Ramo's death.
- _____ 7. After the summer in which Rontu dies and the otter do not leave, Karana ceases to count the months that she spends alone on the island.
- _____ 8. Father Gonzales has difficulty communicating with Karana until he teaches her Spanish.
- _____ 9. It takes Karana six days to recover from a leg injury inflicted by the tusks of fighting bull sea elephants.
- _____ 10. Karana returns to her whalebone house and finds three ribs cut from the fence.
- _____ 11. A pack of wild dogs gorges itself on the abalone that villagers leave behind.
- _____ 12. Karana must turn back to the Island of the Blue Dolphins after her canoe develops a leak.
- _____ 13. After Rontu defeats the spotted dog, the pack of wild dogs divides into two packs and never returns to the headland.
- _____ 14. Tutok surprises Karana by hiding under the cave shelf and watching Karana sew feathers on her skirt.
- _____ 15. Kimki is aware that Ulape likes him, but he gives no indication of an interest in her.

Part III: Short Answer (20 points)

- _____ 1. Approximately how old is Karana when she is rescued?
- _____ 2. Where is the Lost Woman of San Nicolas buried?
- _____ 3. In what year did Karana jump from the ship?
- _____ 4. What do the men use to make a dress for Karana?
- _____ 5. Who sits beside Karana as she departs from the Island of the Blue Dolphins?
- _____ 6. What animals are clever thieves of Karana's stores?
- _____ 7. Who is the oldest of Chowig's children?
- _____ 8. What does Chowig keep on shore until the chests are brought?
- _____ 9. What do the remaining villagers plan to do if Aleuts arrive before Kimki's return?
- _____ 10. What does Ramo go back to the village to retrieve?

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

- 1. Discuss tribal superstitions about secret names.
- 2. Explain why Chowig is cautious in making deals.
- 3. Describe how Karana gathers, cooks, and stores food.
- 4. Give proof that Karana is a brave and clever woman.
- 5. Explain why Karana's recovery is a significant part of California history.



THE STRONGEST BOOKS YOU CAN BUY

PERMA-BOUND BOOKS • 617 East Vandalia Road • Jacksonville, Illinois 62650

Toll Free 1-800-637-6581 • Fax 1-800-551-1169

email: books@perma-bound.com

PERMA-BOUND CANADA • Box 517, Station A • Willowdale, Ontario M2N 5T1

Toll Free 1-800-461-1999 • Fax 1-888-250-3811

email: perma-bound.ca@sympatico.ca

VISIT OUR WEB SITE: <http://www.perma-bound.com>