

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_

# Life of Pi Reading Guide

For each character, write down:

1. Who they are.
2. What role they played in Life of Pi.

<b>Piscine Patel (Pi)</b>	<b>Richard Parker</b>	<b>The Author</b>
<b>Francis Adirubasamy</b>	<b>Ravi</b>	<b>Santosh Patel</b>
<b>Satish Kumar</b>	<b>The Hindu Pandit</b>	<b>Meena Patel</b>
<b>Nikhil Patel</b>	<b>Usha Patel</b>	<b>The Hyena</b>
<b>The Zebra</b>	<b>Orange Juice</b>	<b>The Blind Frenchman</b>
<b>Tomohiro Okamoto</b>	<b>Atsuro Chiba</b>	<b>The Cook</b>
<b>The Sailor</b>		

**Background Knowledge (Historical, Postcolonial, & Psychological Critical Lenses)**

1. Religious Premises. Understand the fundamental differences and similarities between the three most followed religions in the world.
2. History of India. Understand the history of colonization in India.
3. About Yann Martel. Understand the author’s biography.

**Religions All Over the Place**

Hinduism	Christianity
Islam	

Colonization in India:

Time Frame:

Describe what The Indian Crisis was.

---

---

---

---

---

List and EXPLAIN three things from the Yann Martel Biography that you believe may have had an impact on his writing.

---

---

---

---

---

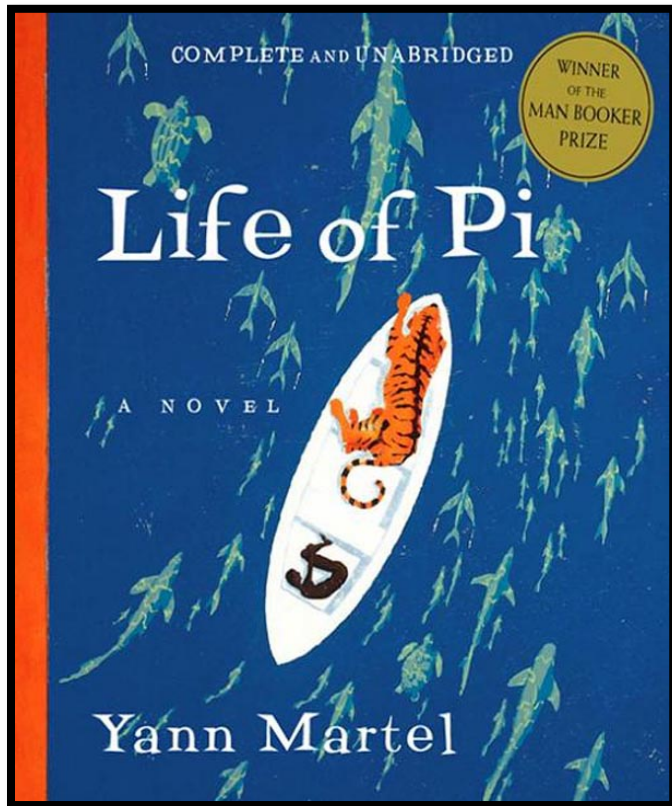
Explain the following literary criticisms in your own words.

Historical Criticism:

Postcolonial Criticism:

Psychological Criticism:

# Yann Martel Biography



## Once upon a time...

There were two French Canadians who fell in love and decided to have a child. They named their child, Yann Martel. He was destined for great things. Though he was French Canadian, he was born in Spain, where his mother was continuing her education. His mother was highly educated and his father was as well. They joined the Canadian service and traveled to many different places. Therefore, Yann moved many places throughout his childhood.

Yann attended high school and college in Ontario, where he pursued undergraduate and graduate studies in philosophy. Philosophy is the study of the schools of thought that influence science and art. After school, he travelled extensively as a young adult. He lived in Iran, Turkey, and India. He spent two years studying religions of the world. In these two years, he devoted himself to reading as many religious doctrines and castaway narratives as possible. In the meantime, he took on many odd jobs. He was a tree planter, dishwasher, security guard, and parking lot attendant. At the age of twenty-seven, he decided that he was ready to be a writer. And so, he wrote. He began writing in 1993.

Many of his works are not recognized today, as they should be. However, his book *Life of Pi* is often taught in classrooms across the United States. He published *Life of Pi* in September of 2001. This text gained national attention and won all of these cool honors and awards. He now lives in Saskatoon, Canada. His writing explores the complexities of human emotion, perspective, and experience.

For each of the following chapters, you need to know:

1. Major setting → Where does this take place?
2. Plot events → What are the major things that happen?

<b>CH.</b>	<b>The Author's Note</b>
<b>CH.</b>	<b>Part One: Toronto and Pondicherry</b>
<b>CH.</b>	<b>Part Two: The Pacific Ocean</b>
<b>CH.</b>	<b>Part Three: Benito Juárez Infirmary, Tomatlán, Mexico</b>

For the following literary terms:

1. Provide a definition.
2. Give an EXAMPLE from the text.

<b>Direct Characterization</b>	<b>Indirect Characterization</b>
<b>Dynamic Character</b>	<b>Static Character</b>
<b>Simile</b>	<b>Metaphor</b>
<b>Allusion</b>	<b>Connotation</b>
<b>Diction</b>	<b>Epiphany</b>
<b>Foil Characters</b>	<b>Foreshadowing</b>
<b>Tone</b>	<b>Atmosphere</b>

Understanding Symbolism. Provide definitions and an explanation for each symbol.

Define Conventional Symbol:

<b>The Ocean</b>	<b>A Tiger</b>
<b>Pi (3.14159.....)</b>	<b>The Moonlight</b>
<b>Orange</b>	<b>You Find One</b>

Define Literary/Contextual Symbol:

<b>The Zoo</b>	<b>Richard Parker</b>
<b>Sloths</b>	<b>The Carnivorous Island</b>
<b>White Teeth</b>	<b>You Find One</b>

Explain the meaning of each of the following symbols if reading this text as an allegory:

Define Allegory:

<b>The Zebra</b>	<b>The Tiger (Richard Parker)</b>
<b>The Hyena</b>	<b>The Orangutan (Orange Juice)</b>
<b>The Blind Frenchman</b>	



## The Dreaded Discussion Questions: PICK Twenty

Select **twenty** of the following **forty-five** discussion questions to answer. ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER, USING COMPLETE SENTENCES & CRITICAL THINKING, write your responses.

1. Do you agree with Pi's contention that animals in a zoo are no worse off than animals in the wild? Why or why not? Explain your answer thoroughly.
2. What are the three religions that Pi considers himself to be a convert of? Do you think it is possible for Pi to practice all three convictions faithfully?
3. What reasons does Pi give for not choosing one faith?
4. What is Pi's full name? Where did it come from? Explore and discuss the significance of Pi's name to the novel.
5. Explain the story of how Richard Parker got his name.
6. What does Richard Parker symbolize?
7. Describe the floating islands. What are the inhabitants? Explain the significance of the islands.
8. What does Pi find inside the fruit of the tree on the island?
9. Who or what ends up on the lifeboat with Pi? What does each of them symbolize?
10. Is Life of Pi a tragedy, a romance, or a comedy? Explain.
11. What was the name of the ship Pi was on that sank?
12. Where was the ship taking Pi and his family?
13. What are the different settings of the novel?
14. Who is the protagonist?
15. Who is the antagonist?
16. What is the mood of the novel?
17. What point of view is the novel written in?
18. When does the climax occur?
19. Where is the author when he first hears about Pi?
20. Who is narrating the italicized chapters?
21. Why does Pi hesitate in killing the fly fish?
22. What does Pi wish he had besides salvation?
23. Why couldn't Pi see the other castaway?
24. Where did Pi's lifeboat come ashore?
25. Where did they end up finding Richard Parker?
26. What does the book say is the most dangerous animal to man?
27. What does the book say is the most dangerous animal to zoo animals?
28. Besides the loss of his family and possessions, what else did Pi lose when the ship sank? What did he gain?
29. How does Mr. Patel's zoo helping ability compare to his parenting skills?
30. Discuss the scene in which Mr. Patel arranges for his children to watch a tiger devour a goat.



31. What is his purpose? Did this in any way help to prepare Pi for the most difficult journey of his life?
32. Part one of the book begins twenty years after Pi's ordeal. What words does Part one end with? Do you agree? Why or why not?
33. Do you agree with the claim from the book that this is a story "that will make you believe in God?" Explain.
34. Which story do you believe: the one with or without the animals? Why?
35. In his introductory note Yann Martel says, "This book was born as I was hungry." What does he mean in this statement?
36. Pondicherry, India is described as an anomaly; the former capital of what was once French India. In terms of storytelling, what makes this place an appropriate place for Pi to grow up.
37. How might the story have changed if the hyena, zebra, or the orangutan would have been the sole survivor with Pi?
38. Discuss some of Pi's strategies for dealing with Richard Parker. What do some of these strategies teach you about dealing with fear in your own life?
39. Why did Pi try so hard to save Richard Parker at the beginning?
40. Compare and contrast the grown up version of Pi to the little boy version.
41. Chapters 21 and 22 are very short, yet the author says they are at the core of the novel. Explain this.
42. Was Pi a convincing storyteller? Why or why not?
43. Does knowing Pi survives affect your reading of his survival account? Why or why not?
44. Discuss some of Pi's survival techniques.
45. How does Pi train Richard Parker?