

Word Specific Analysis (Quote 1)

When you've suffered a great deal in life, each additional pain is both unbearable and trifling. My life is like a memento mori painting from European art: there is always a grinning skull at my side to remind me of the folly of human ambition. I mock this skull. I look at it and say, "You've got the wrong fellow. You may not believe in life, but I don't believe in death. Move on!" The skull snickers and moves even closer, but that doesn't surprise me. (Ch. 1)

Guided Questions. Be sure to use the advanced A-C-E paragraph format for your response.

1. How does Martel's word choice influence the tone of this excerpt?
2. How does this foreshadow the plot events that follow in the story?
3. Why is a memento mori significant in regards to this story?

Word Specific Analysis (Quote 2)

Words of divine consciousness: moral exaltation; lasting feelings of elevation, joy; a quickening of the moral sense, which strikes one as more important than an intellectual understanding of things; an alignment of the universe along moral lines, not intellectual ones; a realization that the founding principles of existence is what we call love, which works itself out sometimes not clearly, not cleanly, not immediately, nonetheless ineluctably. (Ch. 21)

Guided Questions. Be sure to use the advanced A-C-E response format for your response.

1. How do the words and connotative meanings surrounding those words develop the *atmosphere* of this excerpt?
2. Furthermore, how does the word choice reflect the Martel's tone in the story? (Simply: What can we assume Martel feels about the function of religion (or more broadly- belief)?)

Word Specific Analysis (Quote 3)

People move because of the wear and tear of anxiety. Because of the gnawing feeling that no matter how hard they work their efforts will yield nothing, that what they build up in one year will be torn down in one day by others. Because of the impression that the future is blocked up, that they might do all right but not their children. Because of the feeling that nothing will change, that happiness and prosperity are possible only somewhere else. (Ch. 29)

Guided Questions. Be sure to use the advanced A-C-E response format for your response.

1. How do the words and connotative meanings develop the *atmosphere* in the story when Pi's father and mother decide to leave India for Canada? (Simply: What is the mood of this part of the story?)
2. Furthermore, how does the word choice reflect the Martel's tone in the poem? (Simply: What can we assume Martel feels about leaving?)
3. Based on your knowledge of the Indian Emergency, how does this philosophical stance towards moving reflect a greater message about the feelings created by political tensions in India during this time frame?

Word Specific Analysis (Quote 4)

He had seen me. He looked panic-stricken. He started swimming my way. The water about him was shifting wildly. He looked small and helpless. “Richard Parker, can you believe what has happened to us? Tell me it’s a bad dream. Tell me it’s not real. Tell me I’m still in my bunk on the *Tsimtsum* and I’m tossing and turning and soon I’ll wake up from this nightmare. Tell me I’m still happy.” (Ch. 37)

Guided Questions. Be sure to use the advanced A-C-E response format for your response.

1. How does the language and word choices indicate a balancing in power positions of the characters in this part of the story?
2. How do these words demonstrate how Martel feels about Richard Parker?
3. How do the processes of swimming and tossing and turning in a nightmare relate to this story?

Word Specific Analysis (Quote 5)

I did not grasp all these details- and many more- right away. They came to my notice with time and as a result of necessity. I would be in the direst of dire straits, facing a bleak future, when some small thing, some detail, would transform itself and appear in my mind in a new light. It would no longer be the small thing it was before, but the most important thing in the world, the thing that would save my life. This happened time and again. How true it is that necessity is the mother of invention, how very true. (Ch. 50)

Guided Questions. Be sure to use the advanced A-C-E response format for your response.

1. How does the contrast between the new and the old, the notice and the invention impact the tone of this part of the story? Further, why might this be seen as foreshadowing?
2. Consider how the mother of invention and the idea of transformation might relate to the characteristics that define magical realism as a literary movement.
3. How do the words and connotative meanings of the words shed a greater light on the purpose of this novel?

Word Specific Analysis (Quote 6)

I will not die. I refuse it. I will make it through this nightmare. I will beat the odds, as great as they are. I have survived so far, miraculously. Now, I will turn miracle into routine. The amazing will be seen every day. I will put in all the hard work necessary. Yes, so long as God is with me, I will not die. Amen. (Ch. 53)

Guided Questions. Be sure to use the advanced A-C-E response format for your response.

1. How do the words and connotative meanings within this quotation suggest a greater theme in the story? What is that theme and why is it important?
2. How do the word choices suggest a struggle that mirrors the current situation of Pi and Richard Parker on the lifeboat?

Word Specific Analysis (Quote 7)

I must say a word about fear. It's life's only true opponent. Only fear can defeat life. It is a clever, treacherous adversary, how well I know. It has no decency, respects no law or convention, shows no mercy. It goes for your weakest spot, which it finds with unerring ease. It begins in your mind, always. One moment you are feeling calm, self-possessed, happy. Then, fear, disguised in the garb of mild-mannered doubt, slips into your mind. Doubt meets disbelief and disbelief tries to push it out. (Ch. 56)

Guided Questions. Be sure to use the advanced A-C-E response format for your response.

1. How do the words and connotative meanings within this quotation impact the definition of fear? The definition of doubt?
2. How do the word choices suggest a struggle that mirrors the current situation of Pi and Richard Parker on the lifeboat?