

READ GLOBAL BOOK DISCUSSION

Life of Pi

by Yann Martel

Questions & Quotes to Ponder

(Adapted from [Montana State University](http://MontanaStateUniversity.com), ReadingGroupGuides.com)

Warm-up: On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate this novel?

1. Whose voice do we hear in the "Author's Note" at the beginning of the book? How do you know who is speaking in this section? Why does Martel use this device?
2. Pi's full name, Piscine Molitor Patel, was inspired by a Parisian swimming pool. The shortened form refers to the ratio of a circle's circumference divided by its diameter. How is this significant?
3. Pi is polytheistic. Is it difficult to embrace several religions at once? Why? What is the difference between an agnostic and an atheist?
4. "We commonly say in the trade that the most dangerous animal in a zoo is Man. In a general way mean how our species' excessive predatoriness has made the entire planet our prey."
5. "I know zoos are no longer in people's good graces. Religion faces the same problem. Certain illusions about freedom plague them both."
6. In Chapter 31, we hear about Mr. Kumar the baker and Mr. Kumar the teacher visiting the zoo together with Pi. In one interview, Martel describes this part of the book as "the whole novel in one scene." How so?
7. Besides the loss of his family and possessions, what else did Pi lose when the *Tsimtsum* sank? What did he gain?
8. Time flows irregularly in the novel. We lose years, hundreds of days on the lifeboat, and we start at the end and end in the middle. How do the pace and pattern of Martel's tale create Pi?
9. How did you react to the story of Pi meeting the blind man? What did this add to the overall story? Or did it detract? Why?
10. What does the island signify?
11. After the interview with the officials from the Japanese Ministry of Transportation, do you feel you have been tricked by Pi or by Martel? that affect how you see Pi or how you feel about the book?
12. Share a favorite quote or scene from the book.

Wind-down: Did this discussion change your 1-10 rating for this book?

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June 2021