

# The Cay by Theodore Taylor

Doubleday © 1969

Activities by Nancy Polette © 1998

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## ABOUT THE BOOK

Timothy WAS different. He was huge, and he was very old, and to Philip he seemed ugly. He ate raw fish and believed in JUMBIS. And he was the most stubborn man Philip had ever known.

But after the Germans torpedoed the freighter on which he and his mother were travelling from war-time Curacao to the U. S., Philip found himself dependent on the old West Indian. There were just the two of them cast up on the barren little Caribbean island — three if you counted Stew Cat — and a crack on the head had left Philip blind. The story of their struggle for survival, and of Philip's efforts to adjust to his blindness and to understand the dignified, wise, and loving old man who was his companion, makes memorable reading.

## VOCABULARY

Use as many words as possible in ONE sentence to describe the cover of the book.

Philip	freighter	Timothy
sextant	papaya	outrageous
cay	mussels	submarines
refinery	mumble	mussels
channel	malaria	palm fronds
conquer	mutiny	alabaster
U-boats	blackouts	hurricane
ballast	noble	sea urchins
explosion	disheartened	koenoekoe

## Sentence Starters for *The Cay* —

Chapter One:

1. Living in a place without seasons...
2. When submarines attack...

Chapter Two:

3. An island that depends upon ships for food and water...
4. Watching a large ship explode is like...

Chapter Three:

5. Drifting for days on the sea in an open raft...
6. Basic survival needs at sea are...

## CHAPTERS ONE AND TWO

Philip lives in the Dutch West Indies where ships carrying oil from the Island of Curacao are attacked by U-Boats.. The year is 1942. Philip's father arranges passage for the boy and his mother on a ship to the states.

Activity: Answer these questions. Guess if you do not know. Support or deny your guesses finding out .

1. How many tons did a U-Boat weigh?
2. German wolf packs of \_\_\_ to \_\_\_ U-Boats traveled together to attack Allied ships.
3. A U-Boat could dive \_\_\_feet in \_\_\_seconds.
4. U-Boats sank a total of \_\_\_\_\_ ships in World War Two.

Total of all numbers \_\_\_\_\_

## CHAPTERS THREE TO SIX

Philip's ship is torpedoed. He awakens on a raft blinded from a blow on the head. His companion is Timothy, a black man. Philip resents Timothy's efforts to conserve food and water. The raft is surrounded by sharks . Philip falls overboard and is rescued by Timothy. Activity: Complete a data bank on an ocean creature.

Lives	Eats	Has
warm seas	sea animals	rounded body
West Indies	bony fish	21 ft. length
shallow water	turtles	pointed snout
near shore	seals	sharp teeth
Australia	tuna	warm body

Does	Other Facts
Swims rapidly	Dangerous to humans
opens jaws wide	Top of ocean food chain
Bites prey	Bites but rarely eats humans
Waits for blood loss before eating	

Use the Data Bank information in Mystery Report.

List ten facts ( clues)

Ask a classmate to give a number between 1-10. Read the clue for that number.

The student can guess or pass.

The game continues until the mystery creature is guessed or all clues are read.

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## CHAPTERS SEVEN THROUGH NINE

Philip and Timothy arrive on a small island surrounded by high coral reefs. Timothy goes to explore and Philip becomes frightened to be left alone. Philip rebels when told he has to work and lashes out verbally at Timothy who hits him.

**Activity:** Island Analogies: How many can you write?

Example: Coral is to island as claws are to bear. (Both protect themselves by ripping and tearing.) What can you do with sharks, palm trees, coconuts, grass hut, wild birds, fish, hurricane, palm fronds, tide pool?

## CHAPTERS TEN AND ELEVEN

Timothy is convinced that Stew Cat is an evil spirit who prevents help from arriving.

**Activity:** Complete these superstitions in a new way. Be as original as you can.

1. Breaking a mirror is
2. If you spill salt you should
3. Walking under a ladder is
4. Bubbles in coffee mean
5. A black cat crossing your path

## CHAPTERS TWELVE AND THIRTEEN

Timothy has a severe attack of malaria. His fever sends him running into the water. Philip pulls him out. Philip feels helpless to do anything about Timothy's illness. The boy learns to catch fish and volunteers to climb the trees for coconuts.

**Activity:** Island Mystery Report

List ten clues. One must be a "give-away" clue. A student gives a number 1-10. Read the clue for that number. The student can guess or pass. The game continues until the answer is guessed or all clues are read. Example:

1. I am used in building houses.
2. Vinegar is made from part of me.
3. Part of me is used to make cups or bowls.
4. I am found in a tropical climate.
5. I can be used to make soap.
6. I can be as tall as 100 feet.
7. My fruit grows eight to ten inches long.
8. I have a thick husk around my fruit.
9. My shell has three eyes.
10. Palm leaves shade my fruit from the sun.

## CHAPTERS FOURTEEN AND FIFTEEN

A hurricane hits the island. Philip and Timothy lash themselves to a palm tree. Timothy dies protecting Philip with his body. The storm passes leaving Philip so sad that he is "beyond tears."

Activity I: Read pp as a concert reading.

Activity II: A Poetic Description

1. Choose one: The rain, The surf, The wind, The island Example: The rain
2. Place one or two descriptive words before the noun. Example: The pounding rain
3. Tell what the (rain, wind or surf) reminds you of. Example: The pounding rain was a battering ram
4. Tell what it does that a person does. Example: The pounding rain was a battering ram smashing its fist
5. Tell how or where it does the action. Example: The pounding rain was a battering ram smashing its fist against the angry sea.

## CHAPTERS SIXTEEN THRU NINETEEN

Alone Philip buries Timothy and tries to rebuild his island home. He is attacked by wild birds and by a moray eel as he tries to fish. He hears planes overhead and sets the signal fire. A rescue party arrives and Philip is reunited with his parents.

**Activity:** Use this pattern to write about the ways in which Philip changed from the beginning to the end of the novel.

You are changing, changing.

You feel: *describe the atmosphere*

You are: *two adjectives*

You: *two verbs or verb phrases*

You are: *color*

the color of: *name an object the same color*

You are: *give size and shape*

and are: *use participle and prepositional phrase*

You look at the world with different eyes as you: *three verb phrases*

It is: *adjective to move like this*

so: *one adjective and one simile*

You are: *name.*

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