

Island of the Blue Dolphins Questions

Remember to answer in complete sentences or points may be deducted.

Chapter 1&2 questions

1. What two things does Karana compare the Aleut ship to and what does the ship really look like?
2. Explain why everyone in the tribe has two names.
3. Why did the Russian men come to the Island?
4. What deal did Captain Orlov and Chief Chowig make?
5. What was the good fortune that befell (happened to) the Indian village?
6. Re-read the last paragraph on page 14. Predict the troubles soon to come for the Ghalas-at village.

Chapter 3&4 questions

1. Where did the Aleuts hunt for the otter?
2. How did the village of Ghalas-at know that Captain Orlov and his hunters were getting ready to leave the island?
3. Why was Karana's father making a new spear?
4. Why do you think Captain Orlov wanted to give the Indian village a chest of beads and necklaces instead of the otter pelts?
5. Read the last paragraph on page 24. Why does Karana believe it was wrong for her father to tell Captain Orlov his secret name?

Chapter 5&6 questions

1. In the beginning of chapter five why was the night described as the "most terrible in all the memory of Ghalas-at" ?
2. Who became the new chief? How did he organize the tribe?
3. What does Kimki decide to do in the spring?
4. Describe the plan the villagers will follow if the Aleut ships are sighted?
5. What does Nanko say about the ship that has come to the island?

Chapter 7&8 questions

1. What is the mark Ulape draws on her face and what does the mark mean?
2. Why was the ship unable to anchor close to shore?
3. What does Karana mean when she says "The boat pitched so wildly that in one breath you could see the ship and in the next breath it had gone"?
4. What does Karana do when she realizes her brother Ramo is not on the ship?
5. How does Ramo die and what does Karan vow to do someday?

Chapter 9&10 questions

1. Why do you think Karana burned down the village?
2. Why does Karana think she should not make weapons? What made her decide to make weapon in the end?

3. Why did Karana decide to not keep the bracelets and beads that she recovered from the chest?
4. When did Karana decide to leave the island and why?
5. After two days in the canoe, Karana needs to decide whether she will continue or whether she will return to the island. List the reasons she thinks she should continue and the reasons she thinks she should turn back and go to the island.

Chapter 11&12 questions

1. How did Karana feel after she returned to the island?
2. How had Karana's ideas about the island changed?
3. How did Karana decide where she would build her new home?
4. How does Karana make her fence? Why does she build this first?
5. What is Karan's problem at the end of chapter 12?
6. Find an example of each: personification (pg 69), simile (pg 70).

Chapter 13&14 questions

1. What was the warning that Karana remembered while preparing to kill a sea elephant?
2. Which bull did Karana hope would win the battle?
3. What was Karana planning to do with the cave?
4. What did Karana mean when she said "Gulls had picked his bones clean, but I found what I had come for."?
5. What did Karana make from the teeth of the bull? How did she do this?

Chapter 15&16 questions

1. How did Karana set up to kill the pack of wild dogs?
2. Why do you think Karana didn't kill the wild dog when she had the chance?
3. What does Karana name the wild dog and what does the name mean?
4. Why isn't Karana lonely any more?
5. What is the "great" discovery that Karana makes?
6. Why does karana say she is happy at the end of chapter 16?

Chapter 17&18 questions

1. Why is Rontu now not the leader of the wild dogs?
2. Why doesn't Karana help Rontu during the battle?
3. How does Rontu act after the fight?
4. How does Karana keep the two birds from flying away once they outgrew their cage?
5. Why does Karana often dress up in her yucca skirt and sandals?

Chapters 18 - 20

1. What evidence shows that Karana took pride in her appearance even though she was alone on the island?
2. How did Karana expand her household? Why was this so important to her?

3. Why was it difficult to spear a devilfish? Why did Karana take on this challenge?
4. How did Karana prepare for winter during the summer months?
5. What scared Karana in the Black Cave and why did she decide never to return?
6. How long had Karana been alone on the island before the Aleuts returned?
7. How did Karana prepare for the Aleuts' arrival?

Chapters 21 - 26

1. How did Karana's life change while the Aleuts were on the island?
2. What evidence showed that the author was critical of the way the Aleuts hunted?
3. How did Karana feel when the Aleuts left the island? Why did she feel this way?
4. How did Karana's feelings toward animals change while she was alone on the island? Why did this change occur?
5. When did Karana stop counting the moons? Why do you think this happened?
6. What did Karana do to cope with the death of Rontu?
7. Why do you think Karana and Tutok befriended one another despite the risks involved?

Chapters 27 – 29

1. What two natural events did the author describe in Chapter 27?
2. How did these events affect Karana's life on the island?
3. Why did Karana seek out the men who landed on her island? How did she feel when they left before seeing her?
4. Who was the man with the gray robe?
5. What were the beads around his neck?
6. Why didn't Karana refer to his occupation by name?
7. Why hadn't anyone come to rescue Karana during all the years she was alone on the island?