

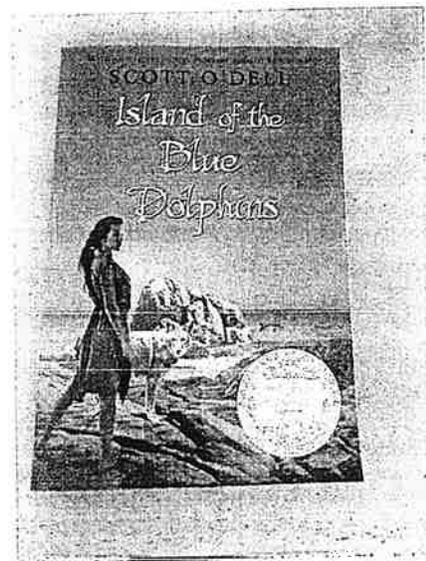
Parents of Incoming 6th Graders,

Your child's summer reading novel is, "Island of the Blue Dolphins."⁹ The novel is part of the 6th grade reading unit, the challenges of childhood. The story centers around the main character, Karana, who is left behind on the island when her tribe decided to leave and sail east. She has to survive on her own as she hopefully waits for the ship to come back.

Your child will answer questions that are focused on various story elements such as character, setting, and plot. The questions are to help monitor your child's understanding of the text, and to ensure they are ready to complete the graded in class assignment at the beginning of school. Responses should be written in complete statements.

Enjoy the summer, but don't forget to read.

Mrs. Debby Soileau



The following questions will help you think about the important parts of each chapter.

Chapter 1

- Do you think that Karana is a responsible person? What about Ramo? How much do you think their ages affect whether or not they are responsible?
- How would you describe the relationship between the islanders and the Aleuts as the story begins?

Chapter 2

- What do the islanders do that contributes to bad feelings between them and the Aleuts?

Chapter 3

- Why might Karana's people need to know exactly when the hunters will leave?

Chapter 4

- If Chief Chowig had not argued with the hunters about payment, what do you think would have happened that day? What might have happened the next time the hunters came to the island?

Chapter 5

- Why do you think Kimki decides that the tribe should leave the island?

Chapter 6

- Why do you think Nanko teases the islanders instead of telling them the good news right away? Can you think of a time when you've done that?

Chapter 7

- The islanders are leaving their home forever on a strange ship. How might you feel if you had to move away from your home? Is there one special thing you would never leave behind, as Ramo will not leave his spear?
- Both Chief Matasaip and Karana have to make difficult decisions about going back for Ramo. The chief decides not to turn back; Karana decides to do so. Do you think either person made the right decision? What would you have done?

Chapter 8

- After Ramo dies, Karana vows to kill all of the wild dogs on the island. Does this seem fair to you?

Chapter 9

- Why do you think Karana burns down the village of Ghalas-at? Would you have made the same decision? Why or why not?
- Karana decides to disobey the law that forbids women from making weapons. Can you think of a situation in which you might have to disobey a law to save your life?

Chapter 10

- Karana undertakes a dangerous journey when she leaves the island by canoe. Why do you think she feels desperate enough to risk her life this way?

Chapter 11

- Why do you think Karana decides that she will never again leave the island unless the white men come for her?
- As Karana chooses a location for her new home, what are some of the issues she has to consider? Do you think she chooses wisely?

Chapter 12

- As Karana builds her new home, how does she protect herself from animals and from the weather? Why do you think she tries to make her life more comfortable?

Chapter 13

- Karana sees two large male sea elephants fighting. Do you think the younger or the older animal will win? Why?

Chapter 14

- What do you think is different about Karana's second home, compared with her first?

Chapter 15

- Why does Karana decide she must kill the leader of the dog pack? What changes her mind?
- Why do you think the leader of the dog pack begins to trust her, rather than wants to harm her?

Chapter 16

- Karana's life changes after she befriends Rontu. Have you ever had a pet or a human friend who has changed your life? If so, can you describe how?

Chapter 17

- When Rontu goes back to the wild dogs, Karana doesn't help him fight. Have you ever had a pet that needed your help? If so, what happened? Were you able to help it?

Chapter 18

- In this chapter, Karana describes a spring season when she is especially happy. Would you have been happy in her situation during that spring?

Chapter 19

- Why does Karana want to spear the devilfish? Why do you think she later decides never to hunt one again?

Chapter 20

- As Karana explores Black Cave, what does she discover there? How does it make her feel? If you were Karana, would you ever return to Black Cave? Why or why not?
- When the Aleuts come, what does Karana do to hide from them?

Chapter 21

- Do you think Karana is more afraid of the Aleut girl or of the hunters?

- Do you think that the Aleut girl is afraid of Karana? Why or why not?

Chapter 22

- How do we know that Karana has come to trust Tutok?
- Why do you think Karana cooks food for Tutok even though she knows Tutok is gone?

Chapter 23

- What does it mean that Karana eventually gives the otter a name, Mon-a-nee?
- Why do you think the otter did not stay in the pool?

Chapter 24

- As time passes, Karana's feelings about killing animals change. How did she once feel, and how does she feel now? Why do you think her feelings change?

Chapter 25

- Karana loses her best friend when Rontu dies. Describe how it might feel to lose a favorite animal.

Chapter 26

- Why do you think Karana tries to catch the wild dog that is Rontu's son?

Chapter 27

- Before the earthquake, what are some of the signs Karana notices that something abnormal is happening to the sea and to the island?

Chapter 28

- The author almost never uses words that describe how Karana is feeling. We can often guess, though, by how he describes what Karana is doing. From his descriptions, what do you think Karana is feeling when she first sees the ship? when she realizes that she doesn't know whose ship it is? when she hears the man calling her? when she realizes that the ship has left without her?

Chapter 29

- The white men want Karana to change into clothes like theirs. Why do you think they do this?
- Do you think Karana will have a better life after she leaves the island? What might her life be like?