THE JOURNEY OF A LIFETIME

ESSAY & CONTEXTUAL QUESTIONS

2019

LIFE OF PI
**Author’s Note**

1. What is suggested by the author’s comment about fiction being “the selective transforming of reality? The twisting of it to bring out its essence”?

2. Why did the author go to India?

3. Why does the author mail his manuscript for the book about Portugal to a made-up address in Siberia?

4. Who first tells the author about Mr. Patel’s story? How many storytellers does this make in the book so far?

5. What is most significant about the story that the author hears?

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**EXTRACT A:**

He took in my line of work with a widening of the eyes and a nodding of the head. It was time to go. I had my hand up, trying to catch my waiter’s eye to get the bill.

Then the elderly man said, “I have a story that will make you believe in God.”

I stopped waving my hand. But I was suspicious. Was this a Jehovah’s Witness knocking at my door? “Does your story take place two thousand years ago in a remote corner of the Roman Empire?” I asked.

“No.”

Was he some sort of Muslim evangelist? “Does it take place in seventh-century Arabia?”

“No, no. It starts right here in Pondicherry just a few years back, and it ends, I am delighted to tell you, in the very country you come from.”

“And it will make me believe in God?”

“Yes.”

“That’s a tall order.”

“No so tall that you can’t reach.”

My waiter appeared. I hesitated for a moment. I ordered two coffees. We introduced ourselves. His name was Francis Adirubasamy.

“Please tell me your story,” I said.

“You must pay proper attention,” he replied.

“I will.” I brought out pen and notepad.

“Tell me, have you been to the botanical garden?” he asked.

“I went yesterday.”

“Did you notice the toy train tracks?”

“Yes, I did.”

“A train still runs on Sundays for the amusement of the children. But it used to run twice an hour every day. Did you take note of the names of the stations?”

“One is called Roseville. It’s right next to the rose garden.”

“That’s right. And the other?”

“I don’t remember.”

“The sign was taken down. The other station was once called Zootown. They toy train had two stops: Roseville and Zootown. Once upon a time there was a zoon in Pondicherry Botanical Garden.”
1. Place this passage in context by describing where the Author/narrator is and why he is there. (3)

2. a) State the Author/narrator’s line of work. (1)
   b) What does the widening of Mr Adirubasamy's eyes suggest to the Author/narrator about his listener’s opinion of his profession? (2)
   c) Is the Author/narrator’s interpretation of Mr Adirubasamy’s opinion of his profession correct? Give a reason for your answer. (3)

3. Compare the Author/narrator’s religious beliefs to those of Mr Adirubasamy. Support your answer by quoting from the passage. (4)

4. The Author/narrator refers to Christianity (“two thousand years ago”) and Islam (“seventh century/Arabia”) as though they are two entirely separate belief systems. How does this contrast to Pi’s beliefs depicted in the novel as a whole? (2)

5. Using what you know about Mr Adirubasamy’s role in Pi’s life, explain why it is fitting that he be the one to lead the Author/narrator to Pi. (3)

6. “Once upon a time there was a zoo…” Explain how this statement introduces the novel’s important theme of storytelling and the listener/reader’s belief in these stories. (4)

7. What is the outcome of this encounter between the Author/narrator and Mr Adirubasamy? (2)

8. Why do you think the Author/narrator has included this encounter in the Author’s note? (1)

Part One: Toronto and Pondicherry

Chapter 1

1. What is suggested by the fact that the Author’s note was set in italics, and Chapter 1 is set in normal text? (2)
2. Who do we assume is the speaker of Chapter 1? What suggests this? (3)
3. Why did the person speaking in Chapter 1 choose to study the sloth? (4)
4. What can we infer about Mr. Patel from his tone? (5)
5. What is significant about the cities Mr. Patel says he would like to visit? (6)
6. What were Mr. Patel’s two majors in college? What connection does he make between the two? How do they foreshadow what is likely to come later in the novel? (7)
7. What can we infer about the narrator so far? (8)

Chapter 2

1. What do the language and format of this chapter establish for the reader? (1)
2. What is significant about the details the fictional author chooses to reveal about Mr. Patel? (2)

Chapter 3

1. What might the origin of Patel’s name foreshadow? (3)
2. What significant trait did the narrator and Mamaji share? (4)
3. Who is the man Patel calls Mamaji, who teaches Patel how to swim? How have we already met him? (5)
4. What does the name “Mamaji” mean? (6)
5. What distinction does Mr. Patel make between the ocean and the swimming pool? What is the significance of this distinction? (7)
6. In this chapter, we finally learn the full name of our narrator. What is it and how did he get it? (8)
7. What is significant about the narrator’s name?
8. What did Piscine’s father do for a living?

Chapter 4

1. What did Piscine’s father do before he became a zookeeper? What comment does Piscine make about the transition from hotel owner to zookeeper?
2. How does Pi feel about growing up in a zoo? In terms of the Bildungsroman narrative, what might the zoo symbolize?
3. What is Piscine implying when he says that the only “relentless imperatives” felt by animals is avoiding enemies and securing food and water?
4. What is Piscine implying when he says that “a house is compressed territory, where our basic needs can be fulfilled close by and safely”?
5. Does Piscine believe animals are better off in the wild or in a zoo?
6. What comparison does the adult Piscine make between the impulse to “free” animals and invading a person’s home and “freeing” him? Why is this comparison significant?
7. What does Pi mean when he says that “certain illusions about freedom plague” both zoos and religion?

Chapter 5

1. What might be significant about the name Pi chooses for himself?
2. What does Pi mean at the end of this chapter when he says, “in that elusive, irrational number with which scientists try to understand the universe, I found refuge.”
3. What personal characteristics does Pi exhibit in choosing to change his own name?

EXTRACT B:

I repeated the stunt with every teacher. Repetition is important in the training not only of animals but also of humans. Between one commonly named boy and the next, I rushed forward and emblazoned, sometimes with a terrible screech, the details of my rebirth. It got to be that after a few times the boys sang along with me, a crescendo that climaxed, after a quick intake of air while I underlined the proper note, with such a rousing rendition of my new name that it would have been the delight of any choirmaster. A few boys followed up with a whispered, urgent “Three! Point! One! Four!” as I wrote as fast as I could, and I ended the concert by slicing the circle with such vigour that bits of chalk went flying.

When I put my hand up that day, which I did every chance I had, teachers granted me the right to speak with a single syllable that was music to my ears. Students followed suit. Even the St Joseph’s devils. In fact, the name caught on. Truly we are a nation of aspiring engineers: shortly after, there was a boy named Omprakash who was calling himself Omega, and another who was passing himself off as Upsilon, and for a while there was a Gamma, a Lambda and a Delta. But I was the first and the most enduring of the Greeks at Petit Seminaire. Even my brother, the captain of the cricket team, that local god, approved. He took me aside the next week.

“What’s this I hear about a nickname you have” he said.
I kept silent. Because whatever mocking was to come, it was to come. There was no avoiding it.
"I didn't realize you liked the colour yellow so much."
The colour yellow? I looked around. No one must hear what he was about to say, especially not one of his lackeys. "Ravi, what do you mean?" I whispered.
"It's all right with me, brother. Anything's better than 'Pissing'. Even 'Lemon Pie'."
As he sauntered away he smiled and said, "You look a bit red in the face."
But he held his peace.
And so, in that Greek letter that looks like a shack with a corrugated tin roof, in that elusive, irrational number with which scientists try to understand the universe, I found refuge.

1. Describe the "stunt" to which Pi is referring. (3)  
2. "Repetition is important in the training of animals but also of humans."
   a) State the reason Pi knows so much about the training of animals. (1)  
   b) Explain fully how his knowledge of training animals later saves Pi’s life. (3)  
   c) In your view, is Pi suggesting that humans and animals are similar in some respects? Substantiate your response. (2)  
3. a) What does Pi mean by “commonly named boy” in the context of the setting of this section of the novel? (2)  
   b) State why Pi is not a “commonly named boy” with reference to his full name.” (2)  
4. “the details of my rebirth”
   Why did Pi feel that this “rebirth” was necessary? (3)  
5. “we are a nation of aspiring engineers”
   Explain why Pi makes this statement. (2)  
6. Identify the reason that Ravi is described as a “local god”. (1)  
7. What does Ravi’s conversation with Pi reveal about his relationship with Pi? (3)  
8. Pi is described as an “irrational number with which scientists try to understand the universe”. Critically discuss why this statement can be said to be paradoxical. (3)

Chapter 6

1. What does the author’s description of Patel’s kitchen suggest?

Chapter 7

1. What language and imagery does Pi use to describe Mr. Kumar? Why is it significant?  
2. Why does Mr. Kumar love the zoo?  
3. What does the zoo represent to Mr. Kumar?  
4. Why does Mr. Kumar not believe in God?  
5. Why doesn’t Pi argue with Mr. Kumar about the existence of God?  
6. How are atheists like believers, according to Pi?  
7. What problem does Pi have with agnostics?

Chapter 8

1. Why do zoologists “commonly say…that the most dangerous animal in a zoo is man”?  
2. What animal does Pi’s father believe is “even more dangerous than us”?

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3. What does Pi mean when he says, “The obsession with putting ourselves at the center of everything is the bane not only of theologians but also of zoologists”?
4. What is the point of the episode Pi relates about the ravenous tiger and the goat? Why has Martel placed this episode in the same chapter with the discussion of anthropomorphism? What might this episode foreshadow?

EXTRACT C:

Just beyond the ticket booth Father had painted on a wall in bright red letters the question: DO YOU KNOW WHICH IS THE MOST DANGEROUS ANIMAL IN THE ZOO? An arrow pointed to a small curtain. There were so many eager, curious hands that pulled at the curtain that we had to replace it regularly. Behind it was a mirror.

But I learned at my expense that Father believed there was another animal even more dangerous than us, and one that was extremely common, too, found on every continent, in every habitat: the redoubtable species Animalus anthropomorphicus, the animal as seen through human eyes. We’ve all met one, perhaps even owned one. It is an animal that is "cute", "friendly", "loving", "devoted", "merry", "understanding". These animals lie in ambush in every toy store and children’s zoo. Countless stories are told of them. They are the pendants of those "vicious", "bloodthirsty", "depraved" animals that inflame the ire of the maniacs I have just mentioned, who vent their spite on them with walking sticks and umbrellas. In both cases we look at an animal and see a mirror. The obsession with putting ourselves at the centre of everything is the bane not only of theologians but also of zoologists.

I learned the lesson that an animal is an animal, essentially and practically removed from us, twice: once with Father and once with Richard Parker.

1. a) List the techniques Pi’s father uses to draw the zoo visitors’ attention to the mirror. (3)
   b) How do we know the techniques are successful? (1)
2. Using your knowledge of the novel, summarise three points that Pi makes earlier which demonstrate that humans are indeed the most dangerous animals in the zoo. (3)
3. Use your own words to explain what Animalus anthropomorphicus means. (1)
4. Comment on why the words “cute”, “friendly”, “devoted” and so on are written in inverted commas. (2)
5. According to Pi, why do some people attack certain animals in the zoo with walking sticks and umbrellas? (2)
6. “In both cases, we look at an animal and see a mirror.”
   a) Comment critically on what Pi is inferring about people with the use of “in both cases”. (2)
   b) Provide evidence from the second story that Pi tells the Japanese investigators that substantiates Pi’s argument above. Your evidence should include a brief explanation of how the people on the boat exemplify “both cases.” (4)
7. “I learned the lesson that an animal is an animal.”
   a) Describe how Pi’s father goes about teaching Pi and Ravi this lesson. (1)
   b) Why does he teach them this lesson? (1)
   c) What does this lesson show us about the kind of father he is? (2)
   d) Critically discuss how this lesson relates to the theme of anthropomorphism. (3)

Chapter 9

1. What is a “flight distance”?
2. Why is an understanding of animals’ flight distance important to a zookeeper?

Chapter 10

1. What are some of the reasons Pi gives for animals’ wanting to escape from zoos?
2. Why does Pi go into such detail explaining how zoos work?
3. What, according to Pi, does “an animal hate above all else”?

Chapter 11

1. What happened to the leopard that escaped from a zoo in Zurich in the 1930s, and what does the story illustrate?
2. What might Pi mean by the following: “And they expected to find—ha! In the middle of a Mexican tropical jungle, imagine!”

Chapter 12

1. What does the narrator’s saying that Pi Patel “bobs” on the “ocean of memory” foreshadow?
2. Who is Richard Parker who “preys on [Pi Patel’s] mind”?

Chapter 13

1. Why is Mr. Patel still spending so much time discussing animal behavior and how humans gain “control” over dangerous wild animals?
2. Why is social hierarchy important to animals? What does this have to do with the story Mr. Patel is going to tell the narrator?

Chapter 14

1. Why is the animal with the “lowest social standing” also the easiest to train?

Chapter 15

1. What can be inferred from the religious artifacts that the author sees in Patel’s house about the person who lives in that house?
2. What is the tone of his language as he describes the religious objects?

Chapter 16

1. Explain Pi’s concept of the Brahman nirguna.
2. What is Brahman saguna?
3. What does Pi say made him a Hindu?
4. What is the point of Pi’s tale of Krishna and the milkmaids?

Chapter 17

1. What confuses Pi about Christianity?
2. According to Father Martin, what is the key to the entire Christian story?
3. What does Pi like most about Christianity? How does he compare it to his own Hinduism?

Chapter 18

1. Compare the ways Pi comes to know Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam.
2. What first impresses Pi about Islam?

Chapter 19

1. Why does Piscine like praying in the mosque?
2. What, then, do each of Pi’s three religions give to him?

Chapter 20

1. What is ironic about the Muslim baker’s name? What is Martel suggesting by naming him this?
2. What two intensely religious experiences does Pi describe in this chapter? Why are they significant?

Chapter 21

1. What impact is his growing friendship with Mr. Patel having on the fictional author?
2. What do the phrases, “dry, yeastless factuality” and “the better story” suggest?

Chapters 22 – 23

1. The second speaker in Chapter 22 says he “can well imagine an atheist’s last words: “White, white! L-L-Love! My God!” Why does he think that these would be the last words an atheist would utter before death?
2. To whom does Pi refer when he speaks of “the (three) wise men”?
3. What is Pi’s father’s attitude toward religion?
4. What is ironic about the meeting of the three religious men?
5. Briefly outline each religious man’s argument against the other two religions. What is the point of this scene?
6. What is the power of Pi’s response to the competing religious men?
7. On what kind of note does this chapter end?

EXTRACT D:

It was hard to tell whose face was more inflamed. It looked as if might come to blows.
Father raised his hands. "Gentlemen, gentlemen, please!" he interjected. "I would like to remind you there is freedom of practice in this country."
Three apoplectic faces turned to him.

"Yes! Practice-singular!" the wise men screamed in unison. Three index fingers, like punctuation marks, jumped to attention in the air to emphasizing their point.
They were not pleased at the unintended choral effect or the spontaneous unity of their gestures. Their fingers came down quickly, and they sighed and groaned each on his own. Father and Mother stared on, at a loss for words.
The pandit spoke first. "Mr. Patel, Piscine's piety is admirable. In these troubled times it's good to see a boy so keen on God. We all agree on that." The imam and the priest nodded. "But he can't be a Hindu, a Christian and a Muslim. It's impossible. He must choose."
"I don't think it's a crime, but I suppose you're right," Father replied.
The three murmured agreement and looked heavenward, as did Father, whence they felt the decision must come. Mother looked at me.

A silence fell heavily on my shoulders.
"Hmmm, Piscine?" Mother nudge me. "How do you feel about the question?"
"Bapu Gandhi said, 'All religions are true.' I just want to love God," I blurted out, and looked down, red in the face.

My embarrassment was contagious. No one said anything. It happened that we were not far from the statue of Gandhi on the esplanade. Stick in hand, an impish smile on his lips, a twinkle in his eyes, the Mahatma walked. I fancy that he heard our conversation, but that he paid even greater attention to my heart. Father cleared his throat and said in a half-voice, "I suppose that's what we're all trying to do—love God."

I thought it very funny that he should say that, he who hadn't stepped into a temple with a serious intent since I had had the faculty of memory. But it seemed to do the trick. You can't reprimand a boy for wanting to love God.

The three wise men pulled away with stiff, grudging smiles on their faces.
Father looked at me for a second, as if to speak, then thought better, said, "Ice cream, anyone?" and headed for the closest ice cream wallah before we answered. Mother gazed at me a little longer, with an expression that was both tender and perplexed.

1. Quote two separate words from the first three paragraphs that show that the three men are very angry. (2)
2. Explain what Pi’s father means when he says, “there is freedom of practice in this country” (1)
3. In light of the theme of faith, what is Pi’s possible motivation for calling these three men “the wise men”? (3)
4. a) Name the figure of speech in “like punctuation marks”. (1) 
   b) How does this figure of speech affect your understanding of the three men’s statements? (2)
5. Pi says that the men act “in unison”, with “choral effect” and “spontaneous unity of their gestures”. Discuss what this observation of Pi’s shows about the three men. (2)
6. “But he can’t be a Hindu, a Christian and a Muslim. It’s impossible. He must choose.” Compare the three wise men’s views on religion to Pi’s. (4)
7. “I don’t think it’s a crime, but I suppose you are right” Describe Pi’s father’s views on religion. (2)
8. What does Pi’s mother’s response to the situation show about her in the context of the universal values we associate with mothers? (3)
9. State why Pi refers to Bapu Ghandi at this point. (3)
10. Relate to how Pi’s father resolves the confrontation. (2)

Chapters 24 – 25

1. Why does Yann Martel make this chapter about Ravi’s teasing Pi so short, with so relatively few examples and a general dismissal at the end?
2. What ironies does Pi point out in this chapter?

Chapter 26

1. What is the primary conflict in this chapter, represented by Pi, his father, and his mother?
2. What is it that causes Pi’s mother to look weary and to sigh, “Good grief” by the end of this chapter?

Chapter 27

1. In addition to religion, what outside influence begins to impose itself on Pi’s family in this chapter? What plot event is clearly foreshadowed? 2. What biological theory does Mr. Patel’s attitude toward technology resemble? Why is this significant?

Chapters 28 – 29

1. To what does Pi compare his baptism—being sprinkled with a beaker-full of water?
2. What causes the Patel family to leave India?
3. Why does Pi make a point of telling us the animals’ reactions to the political situation in India?

Chapter 30

1. What is the surprise that Pi has for the writer at his home?
2. Why has Pi not mentioned that he is married?
3. What does Pi’s wife do for a living?

Chapters 31 – 32

1. What is the significance of the meeting of the two Mr. Kumars?
2. What point(s) is Pi establishing with his accounts of zoomorphism and unusual cohabitations of prey and predator?
3. Why does zoomorphism occur? What does Pi’s explanation foreshadow?

Chapters 33 – 34

1. What is suggested by Pi’s telling the author that everything from before the family’s emigration was “lost”?
2. What do we learn about Richard Parker from the photograph that Pi shows the author?
3. What is, ironically, the difference between the author’s account (in italics) and Pi’s?

Chapter 35

1. How old is Pi when he and his family embark for Canada?
2. Why is the real reason Pi’s mother worries about the brand names of items available in Canada? How does this advance a theme that has already been suggested?

Chapter 36
1. What surprises the narrator in this chapter?
2. Upon meeting Pi’s son and daughter, the writer says that “this story has a happy ending.” Why does the writer need to say this?

Part Two: The Pacific Ocean

Chapters 37 – 38
1. How does Yann Martel begin this section of the novel on a surprising and suspenseful note?
2. What important part of the plot does Chapter 38 provide?
3. What does Pi mean when he says, “the ship vanished into a pinprick hole on my map”?
4. How does Martel manage to provide a note of humor even during this tense and suspenseful episode?

EXTRACT E:

The ship sank. It made a sound like a monstrous metallic burp. Things bubbled at the surface and then vanished. Everything was screaming: the sea, the wind, my heart. From the lifeboat I saw something in the water.

I cried, "Richard Parker, is that you? It's so hard to see. Oh, that this rain would stop! Richard Parker? Richard Parker? Yes, it is you!"

I could see his head. He was struggling to stay at the surface of the water.

"Jesus, Mary, Muhammad and Vishnu, how good to see you, Richard Parker! Don't give up, please. Come to the lifeboat. Do you hear this whistle? TREEEEE! TREEEEE! TREEEEE! You heard right. Swim, swim! You're a strong swimmer. It's not a hundred feet."

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. Mother, my tender guardian angel of wisdom, where are you? And you, Father, my loving worrywart? And you, Ravi, dazzling hero of my childhood? Vishnu preserve me, Allah protect me, Christ save me, I can't bear it! TREEEEE! TREEEEE! TREEEEE!"

1. Describe the difference in tone between sentence one and sentence two of the extract.
2. “like a monstrous metallic burp”
   a) Identify the figure of speech above.
   b) Identify the phonic device above.
   c) What is the combined effect of this figure of speech and this phonic device?
3. How does Pi’s use of hyperbole in “Everything was screaming: the sea, the wind, my heart” affect your understanding of his emotions at the time?
4. Explain why Pi refers to “Jesus, Mary, Muhammad and Vishnu” when he sees Richard Parker.
5. Who is Richard Parker and how did he get his name?
6. a) Quote from this passage to prove that Pi deliberately makes the listener believe that Richard Parker is a person without explicitly stating that he is not human.
b) To which important theme of the novel does this purposeful ambivalence link? (1)

7. Bearing in mind the second story that Pi later tells the Japanese investigators, comment on why Pi is so desperate for Richard Parker to make it to the lifeboat. (2)

8. “You’re a strong swimmer.”
   a) With regards to the first story that Pi tells the investigators, why is it true that Richard Parker is a strong swimmer? (1)
   b) With regards to the second story that Pi tells the investigators, why is it true that Richard Parker is a strong swimmer? (1)

9. Pi asks Richard Parker to tell him that what has happened is “not real”. Critically discuss the use of this phrase in the context of the novel as a whole. (4)

10. List two techniques that Pi uses to heighten the tension in the last paragraph of this excerpt. (2)

Chapters 39 – 40

1. How is Pi’s survival more an act of Providence than human action?

2. How does Pi’s survival illustrate his belief in the triumph of faith over reason?

Chapter 41

1. How again does Pi attribute his survival more to Providence than human action?

2. How has Martel prepared the reader for the situation in the life boat?

3. Why does Pi conclude the sailors threw him overboard into the lifeboat?

4. Why is it fortunate for Pi that the hyena is in the lifeboat?

Chapter 42

1. With what significant imagery and symbolism does Pi describe the arrival of Orange Juice, the Orangutan?

2. How does he continue to describe the orangutan herself?

Chapter 43

1. Why is Pi so confident that he will be rescued? What does this reveal about his personality?

2. How does Pi characterize the hyena?

3. What surprising fact about the hyena does Pi share?

EXTRACT F:

Yet every time the hyena paused at the stern bench, my heart jumped. And as much as I wanted to direct my attention to the horizon, to where my salvation lay, it kept straying back to this maniacal beast.

I am not one to hold a prejudice against any animal, but it is a plain fact that the spotted hyena is not well served by its appearance. It is ugly beyond redemption. Its thick neck and high shoulders that slope to the hindquarters look as if they've come from a discarded prototype for the giraffe, and its shaggy, coarse coat seems to have been patched together from the leftovers of creation. The colour is a bungled mix of tan, black, yellow, grey, with the spots having none of the classy ostentation of a leopard's rosettes; they look rather like the symptoms of a skin disease, a virulent form of mange. The head is broad and too massive, with a high forehead, like that of a bear, but suffering from a receding hairline, and with ears that look ridiculously mouse-like, large and round, when they haven't been torn off in battle. The mouth is forever open and panting.
The nostrils are too big. The tail is scraggly and unwagging. The gait is shambling. All the parts put together
look doglike, but like no dog anyone would want as a pet.

But I had not forgotten Father's words. These were not cowardly carrion-eaters. If National Geographic
portrayed them as such, it was because National Geographic filmed during the day. It is when the moon rises
that the hyena's day starts, and it proves to be a devastating hunter. Hyenas attack in packs whatever animal
can be run down, its flanks opened while still in full motion. They go for zebras, gnus and water buffaloes, and
not only the old or the infirm in a herd-full-grown members too. They are hardy attackers, rising up from
buttings and kickings immediately, never giving up for simple lack of will. And they are clever; anything that can
be distracted from its mother is good. The ten-minute-old gnu is a favourite dish, but hyenas also eat young
lions and young rhinoceros. They are diligent when their efforts are rewarded. In fifteen minutes flat, all that will
be left of a zebra is the skull, which may yet be dragged away and gnawed down at leisure by young ones in the
lair. Nothing goes to waste; even grass upon which blood has been spilt will be eaten.

Hyenas' stomachs swell visibly as they swallow huge chunks of kill. If they are lucky, they become so full they
have difficulty moving. Once they've digested their kill, they cough up dense hairballs, which they pick clean of
edibles before rolling in them. Accidental cannibalism is a common occurrence during the excitement of a
feeding; in reaching for a bite of zebra, a hyena will take in the ear or nostril of a clan member, no hard feelings
intended. The hyena feels no disgust at this mistake. Its delights are too many to admit to disgust at anything.

1. Place this passage in context. (2)
2. “every time the hyena paused at the stern bench”
   a) What is the hyena pausing from? (1)
   b) Why is Pi afraid every time it pauses at the stern? (1)
3. “to where my salvation lay”
   What does this tell you about Pi’s frame of mind at this point in the novel? (2)
4. Write in your own words what Pi means by “it is ugly beyond redemption”. (1)
5. “they look rather like the symptoms of a skin disease, a virulent form of mange”
   a) Identify the figure of speech used here. (1)
   b) How does this figure of speech affect your perception of the hyena? (2)
6. “I had not forgotten father’s words”
   What did Pi’s father tell him about hyenas? (3)
7. Why do you think Pi provides us with a description of the hyena’s hunting tactics? (2)
8. Compare Pi’s description of the hyena with the descriptions of the other animals on the
   lifeboat. (4)
9. With reference to the second story that Pi later tells the Japanese investigators, critically
discuss why Pi has included details about the hyena’s looks, hunting tactics and revolting
eating habits. (4)
10. Describe what the hyena does during the night. (2)

Chapter 44
1. Why does Pi dislike the nighttime worst of all?
2. What happens to the flies?

Chapter 45
1. What evidence is presented that Pi’s ordeal is beginning to skew his former values? Why is
   this change significant?
2. Why does Pi laugh at the sight of Orange Juice’s seasickness?
Chapter 46
1. Explain why Pi is not able to identify a “worst night”?
2. What is implied by Pi’s now talking about refusing to label a “worst night”?
3. What occurs during this night to make it a candidate for “worst night”?
4. How does Martel enhance the emotional impact of this chapter?

Chapter 47
1. What is the point of knowing that Orange Juice was a discarded pet?
2. What does Pi focus on while watching the fight between Orange Juice and the hyena, especially while Orange Juice is being killed?
3. When does Pi discover Richard Parker?
4. What is significant about the fact that Richard Parker and Orange Juice have names, but the zebra and the hyena do not?

Chapters 48 – 49
1. How did Richard Parker get his name?
2. What surprises Pi about the discovery of Richard Parker?
3. When staring at the hyena, what terms does Pi begin to use when speaking of himself? Why is this significant? What might it foreshadow?
4. On what note does this chapter end? What kind of shift does this represent?

Chapter 50
1. Structurally, why is this the chapter Martel chooses to describe the life boat in detail?
2. How likely is the adult Pi, years after the event, to remember such specific details? Is it important whether or not these details are factual? Why or why not?
3. Compare and categorize the animals with which Pi’s boat is populated.

Chapter 51
1. What is ironic about the location of the storage locker?
2. Why does Martel employ so much hyperbole in Pi’s description of the water and the rations in the locker?
3. Why is Pi so grateful for the supplies he finds? What does he confess he felt about them?

Chapter 52
1. What is the purpose of this chapter?
2. How accurate can we assume Pi’s memory is of the contents of the storage locker? Does it matter?

Chapter 53
1. What is ironic about the rejuvenation the food and water bring to Pi?
2. What change in Richard Parker coincides with Pi’s regaining his own strength and lucidity?
3. What turns Pi’s outlook around just as he is at the depth of his sorrow?
4. Analyze the language Pi uses to describe Richard Parker.
5. What is ironic about Pi’s obvious admiration of the tiger?
"I'm going to die," I blubbered through quivering lips.
Oncoming death is terrible enough, but worse still is oncoming death with time to spare, time in which all the happiness that was yours and all the happiness that might have been yours becomes clear to you. You see with utter lucidity all that you are losing. The sight brings on an oppressive sadness that no car about to hit you or water about to drown you can match. The feeling is truly unbearable. The words Father, Mother, Ravi, India, Winnipeg struck me with searing poignancy.
I was giving up. I would have given up-if a voice hadn't made itself heard in my heart. The voice said, "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."
My face set to a grim and determined expression. I speak in all modesty as I say this, but I discovered at that moment that I have a fierce will to live. It's not something evident, in my experience. Some of us give up on life with only a resigned sigh. Others fight a little, then lose hope. Still others-and I am one of those-never give up. We fight and fight and fight. We fight no matter the cost of battle, the losses we take, the improbability of success. We fight to the very end. It's not a question of courage. It's something constitutional, an inability to let go. It may be nothing more than life-hungry stupidity.
Richard Parker started growling that very instant, as if he had been waiting for me to become a worthy opponent. My chest became tight with fear.
"Quick, man, quick," I wheezed. I had to organize my survival. Not a second to waste. I needed shelter and right away. I thought of the prow I had made with an oar. But now the tarpaulin was unrolled at the bow; there was nothing to hold the oar in place. And I had no proof that hanging at the end of an oar provided real safety from Richard Parker. He might easily reach and nab me. I had to find something else. My mind worked fast. I built a raft.

1. Using your knowledge of the story, explain why Pi believes he is going to die at the beginning of this extract. (3)
2. "Time in which all the happiness that was your and all the happiness that might have been yours becomes clear to you" Relate what past and future happiness Pi has lost. (3)
3. "I have survived so far, miraculously. Now I will turn miracle into routine. The amazing will be seen every day." What is the outcome in Part 2 of Pi's decision, quoted above? (3)
4. In retrospect there are subtle clues in Part 2 that Pi is also the tiger, Richard Parker. Discuss how Pi's use of language in the paragraphs "My face set to a grim...tight with fear" hints at this. (3)
5. Explain how Pi will prove himself "a worthy opponent" for Richard Parker in the rest of Part 2. (3)
6. Describe how Pi builds his raft. (3)
7. Comment on how the style of the paragraph starting, "Quick, man, quick" emphasizes that Pi is in a desperate rush to save himself from the tiger. (3)
8. Identify and discuss significant themes evident in this extract. (4)
Chapter 54
1. What narrative technique, a version of which he used in Chapter 52, does Martel use in this chapter?
2. At what plan does Pi finally arrive?

Chapter 55
1. The transition between Chapters 54 and 55 introduces a technique that Martel will use several times throughout the rest of the novel. What shift in emotions and tone occurs between the end of the one chapter and the beginning of the next?

Chapter 56
1. What does Pi consider to be “life’s only opponent”? How is this consistent with other character traits we know Pi to possess?
2. Given what Pi tells the author about fear, why is he telling the author his story?

Chapter 57
1. What is prusten?
2. What is the significance of Richard Parker’s prusten in this chapter?
3. Compare the end of this chapter with the beginning of Chapter 56. What is ironic about Pi’s thinking?
4. How has Pi prepared us for his decision to “tame” Richard Parker? What do we already know will be the result?

Chapter 58
1. Why does Pi tell us the highlights from the survival guide he finds on the lifeboat?
2. What is significant, in terms of Pi’s coming of age, about the fact that he decides no longer to dwell on being rescued? How might the survival manual symbolize this?

Chapter 59
1. Why does Pi go into such laborious detail about the effect of the drag of the raft on the lifeboat?
2. In what ways does Pi realize that he is not alone?
3. Why hadn’t Pi noticed the abundance of life in the ocean before? What does he say is the best way to experience wildlife?
4. What is the effect of the personification Pi uses to describe the sunset over the Pacific?

Chapter 60
1. What is suggested by Pi’s reference to the Hindu story of the sage Markandeya?
2. What does viewing the ocean at night teach Pi about his predicament?
3. Which two of his faiths does Pi draw on during his nighttime epiphany?

Chapter 61
1. Thematically, why does this chapter immediately follow Chapter 60?
2. What is almost Providential about the arrival of the school of flying fish?
3. How do Pi’s myriad faiths interact in this chapter?
4. Why, according to Pi, did he weep over the having to kill the flying fish, yet he killed the dorado triumphantly? What is significant about Pi’s second explanation?
Chapter 62
1. What effect does Martel create by having Pi tell the author, “I spied with my little eye a tiger”? How is this effect achieved?
2. In what ways are the solar stills “sea cows”?
3. Why does Richard Parker go back under the tarpaulin when Pi blows his whistle?

Chapter 63
1. How long was Pi shipwrecked?
2. Why does Pi bother to tell us how long others have lasted at sea?
3. Why does Martel rely yet again on the list as his narrative technique?
4. What role does prayer play in Pi’s routine? What does this emphasize about his character?
5. What is significant about Pi’s admission to not keeping track of time?

Chapters 64 – 65
1. How is Pi’s utter inability to control, or even to observe, where his boat goes an ironic contradiction of an earlier realization of his?

Chapters 66 – 67
1. What does the end of this chapter suggest?
2. What benefits does Pi derive from the tiny forms of sea life that develop on and around the raft and life boat?
3. Of what thematic significance is the development of sea life around the raft and boat?

Chapters 68 – 69
1. Explain Pi’s circle references and how he determines his odds of being rescued by a ship.
2. What does Pi express about the ambivalence of smell-induced memory?

Chapters 70 – 71
1. On what note does Chapter 70 end? What theme does this emphasize?
2. What narrative technique does Martel again return to while discussing Pi’s mastery of Richard Parker?
3. What is the goal of Pi’s training methods?
4. What do Pi’s concerns about not making Richard Parker too sick and making certain the tiger has enough food and water suggest about Pi’s character? What is ironic about this?

Chapter 72
1. Why, according to Pi, did Richard Parker not really want to attack him?
2. How does Pi finally gain the mastery over Richard Parker that he has desired?

Chapter 73
1. What does having a book represent to Pi?
2. Why is Pi so moved by the Gideon Bible he once found in a Canadian hotel room?
3. Why does Pi begin to keep his diary?

Chapter 74
1. Why is it significant that Pi is able to maintain some form of religious devotion even without the trapping of religion?
2. Why does Pi say it was hard to maintain faith?
3. What is the primary theme of this chapter?

Chapters 75 – 76
1. What is the most significant contrast between these two chapters? What theme is Martel emphasizing with Pi’s detailed discussion of feces?

Chapter 77
1. Of what is Pi’s adoration of turtle flesh, eggs, and the versatility of turtle shells reminiscent?
2. When the biscuits are finished, what does Pi turn to for food?
3. Why does Pi find that the connection between food and emotional well-being is frightening?

Chapter 78
1. What effect is Martel achieving by opening this chapter with descriptions of the “many skies” and “many seas”?
2. Explain the mathematical allusion Pi makes.
3. What does Pi say is “the worst pair of opposites” for someone stranded at sea?

Chapters 79 – 80
1. What is the significance of Richard Parker’s encounter with the shark?
2. To what is Pi alluding when he thanks “Jesus-Matsya” after catching the big fish?
3. How does Pi establish his mastery of Richard Parker in this episode?

Chapters 81 – 82
1. What is the actual key to Pi’s “dominance” over Richard Parker?
2. At what heartbreaking realization does Pi arrive in Chapter 82? Why is this development significant?

Chapter 83
1. What is the significance of this storm at this point in Pi’s narrative?
2. On what note does this chapter end?

Chapters 84 – 85
1. What is the point of Pi’s fantasy about the whales?
2. Why is Pi so positively affected by the lightning storm?

Chapter 86
1. What is suggested by the fact that no on the oil tanker sees Pi?
2. At the end of this chapter, Pi tells Richard Parker that he loves him. Why does Pi love Richard Parker?

EXTRACT H:

"Richard Parker, a ship!"

I had the pleasure of shouting that once. I was overwhelmed with happiness. All hurt and frustration fell away and I positively blazed with joy.
"We've made it! We're saved! Do you understand, Richard Parker? WE'RE SAVED! Ha, ha, ha, ha!"

I tried to control my excitement. What if the ship passed too far away to see us? Should I launch a rocket flare? Nonsense!

"It's coming right towards us, Richard Parker! Oh, I thank you, Lord Ganesha! Blessed be you in all your manifestations, Allah-Brahman!"

It couldn't miss us. Can there be any happiness greater than the happiness of salvation? The answer-believe me-is No. I got to my feet, the first time in a long time I had made such an effort.

"Can you believe it, Richard Parker? People, food, a bed. Life is ours once again. Oh, what bliss!"

The ship came closer still. It looked like an oil tanker. The shape of its bow was becoming distinct. Salvation wore a robe of black metal with white trim.

"And what if...?"

I did not dare say the words. But might there not be a chance that Father and Mother and Ravi were still alive? The Tsimtsum had had a number of lifeboats. Perhaps they had reached Canada weeks ago and were anxiously waiting for news from me. Perhaps I was the only person from the wreck unaccounted for.

"My God, oil tankers are big!"

It was a mountain creeping up on us.

"Perhaps they're already in Winnipeg. I wonder what our house looks like. Do you suppose, Richard Parker, that Canadian houses have inner courtyards in the traditional Tamil style? Probably not. I suppose they would fill up with snow in winter. Pity. There's no peace like the peace of an inner courtyard on a sunny day. I wonder what spices grow in Manitoba?"

The ship was very close. The crew better be stopping short or turning sharply soon.

"Yes, what spices...? Oh my God!"

I realized with horror that the tanker was not simply coming our way-it was in fact bearing down on us. The bow was a vast wall of metal that was getting wider every second. A huge wave girdling it was advancing towards us relentlessly. Richard Parker finally sensed the looming juggernaut. He turned and went "Woof! Woof!" but not doglike-it was tigerlike: powerful, scary and utterly suited to the situation.

"Richard Parker, it's going to run us over! What are we going to do? Quick, quick, a flare! No! Must row. Oar in oarlock...there! HUMPF! HUMPF! HUMPF! HUMPF! HUMPF! HUMPF!"

The bow wave pushed us up. Richard Parker crouched, and the hairs on him stood up. The lifeboat slid off the bow wave and missed the tanker by less than two feet.

The ship slid by for what seemed like a mile, a mile of high, black canyon wall, a mile of castle fortification with not a single sentinel to notice us languishing in the moat. I fired off a rocket flare, but I aimed it poorly. Instead of surging over the bulwarks and exploding in the captain's face, it ricocheted off the ship's side and went straight into the Pacific, where it died with a hiss. I blew on my whistle with all my might. I shouted at the top of my lungs. All to no avail.

Its engines rumbling loudly and its propellers chopping explosively underwater, the ship churned past us and left us bouncing and bobbing in its frothy wake.
1. List reasons for Pi’s numerous expressions of joy in the first seven paragraphs. (3)
2. Relate evidence from the first seven paragraphs that show that Pi has suffered. (2)
3. Explain how the repetition of Pi’s bliss makes the ship’s passing more dramatic. (3)
4. “And what if…”
   a) Complete Pi’s sentence with the words you think he meant to say. (1)
   b) Suggest why Pi does not finish his sentence. (2)
5. State the images which make the ship sound like priest and a place of refuge. (2)
6. Comment critically on why Richard Parker sees Pi as “the alpha here, this odd unpredictable tiger”. (3)
7. “unfettered, infinite…The feeling flooded”
   a) Identify and explain the figure of speech in the above quotation. (3)
   b) Identify and explain the effect of the literary device(s) in the above quotation. (3)
8. Comment on the significance of Pi’s declaration of love for Richard Parker in light of the fact that Pi is actually Richard Parker. (3)

Chapters 87 – 88
1. What is the significance of Pi’s newfound method of “escape”? (1)
2. What is the point of Pi’s encountering the trash? (2)

Chapters 89 – 90
1. What is the point of Pi’s having run out of ink before he ran out of paper? (2)
2. What is the symbolic significance of blindness? What might this suggest about Pi? (3)
3. What saddens Pi the most about his continual deterioration? (2)
4. What clue do we have that Pi’s account of the episode with the blind Frenchman might not be precisely factual? (2)
5. What theme does Pi’s story about the man finding the banana and feeling better suggest? (2)
6. What happens emotionally to Pi with the death of the Frenchman? (2)

Chapter 91
1. What is significant about how Pi recovers from his blindness? (2)
2. What climactic event occurs in this chapter? (2)

Chapter 92
1. How does Pi justify the episode he is about to tell about his time on the island? (2)
2. Why does Pi rely so heavily on the survival manual’s instructions when disembarking onto the island? (2)
3. List some of the mysteries Pi comes to discover about the island. (2)
4. Why does Richard Parker continue killing animals, even after he is no longer hungry? (2)
5. What is the likely symbolic significance of this island? (2)
6. Structurally, why do you think the author chose to place the island episode where he did in the novel? (2)

EXTRACT I:

I made an exceptional botanical discovery. But there will be many who disbelieve the following episode. Still, I give it to you now because it’s part of the story and it happened to me.
I was on my side. It was an hour or two past noon on a day of quiet sunshine and gentle breeze. I had slept a short while, a diluted sleep that had brought no rest and no dreams. I turned over to my other side, expending as little energy as possible in doing so. I opened my eyes.

In the near distance I saw trees. I did not react. I was certain it was an illusion that a few blinks would make disappear.

The trees remained. In fact, they grew to be a forest. They were part of a low-lying island. I pushed myself up. I continued to disbelieve my eyes. But it was a thrill to be deluded in such a high-quality way. The trees were beautiful. They were like none I had ever seen before. They had a pale bark, and equally distributed branches that carried an amazing profusion of leaves. These leaves were brilliantly green, a green so bright and emerald that, next to it, vegetation during the monsoons was drab olive.

I blinked deliberately, expecting my eyelids to act like lumberjacks. But the trees would not fall. I looked down. I was both satisfied and disappointed with what I saw. The island had no soil. Not that the trees stood in water. Rather, they stood in what appeared to be a dense mass of vegetation, as sparkling green as the leaves. Who had ever heard of land with no soil? With trees growing out of pure vegetation? I felt satisfaction because such a geology confirmed that I was right, that this island was a chimera, a play of the mind. By the same token I felt disappointment because an island, any island, however strange, would have been very good to come upon.

Since the trees continued to stand, I continued to look. To take in green, after so much blue, was like music to my eyes. Green is a lovely colour. It is the colour of Islam. It is my favourite colour.

The current gently pushed the lifeboat closer to the illusion. Its shore could not be called a beach, there being neither sand nor pebbles, and there was no pounding of surf either, since the waves that fell upon the island simply vanished into its porosity. From a ridge some three hundred yards inland, the island sloped to the sea and, forty or so yards into it, fell off precipitously, disappearing from sight into the depths of the Pacific, surely the smallest continental shelf on record.

I was getting used to the mental delusion. To make it last I refrained from putting a strain on it; when the lifeboat nudged the island, I did not move, only continued to dream. The fabric of the island seemed to be an intricate, tightly webbed mass of tube-shaped seaweed, in diameter a little thicker than two fingers. What a fanciful island, I thought.

1. Describe what it is about the “botanical discovery” that makes Pi call it “exceptional”.
2. “Still, I give it to you now because it’s part of the story and it happened to me”. Explain what the effect of the tone of this sentence is on the reader.
3. It is hard to believe that, in such a dire situation, Pi can sound as if he is on holiday. Agree or disagree with the above statement by referring to the second paragraph and to the whole novel.
4. Suggest reasons why Pi would “be thrill[ed] to be deluded in such a high-quality way”.
5. “I blinked deliberately, expecting my eyelids to act like lumberjacks. But the trees would not fall.” Identify and explain the above figure of speech.
6. “To take in green, after so much blue, was like music to my eyes.” Discuss the writer’s use of the mangled idiom in the above sentence.
7. “Green is a lovely colour. It is the colour of Islam. It is my favourite colour.” Comment on the significance of the colours green and orange in terms of the theme of survival.
8. List the evidence form the last paragraph which proves that Pi still does not believ in the
Chapters 93 – 94
1. Why does Pi and Richard Parker’s parting bother Pi so much?
2. Why, according to Pi, is it important to “conclude things properly”?
3. Why does Pi say he turned to God after leaving the island?

Part Three: Benito Juarez Infirmary, Tomatlan, Mexico

Chapters 95 – 96
1. Why have members of the Japanese Ministry of Transport come to interview Pi?
2. What is significant about the numerous difficulties the Japanese men experience in their attempt to get to Pi and interview him? What do we learn about them in their private exchanges in Japanese that the author includes in his transcript?

Chapters 97 – 98
1. What is the purpose of Chapter 97?
2. What element has Martel reintroduced into the novel by presenting translations of the interviewers’ Japanese side remarks in his transcript of Pi’s interview?
3. What types of characters are the two interviewers?
4. Why do you suppose Pi hoards the cookies?

Chapter 99
1. What point about how people live their lives does Pi make when Okamoto asks why no one else has ever seen the island of algae?
2. Thematically, what is the significance of the rapid and witty exchange between Pi and Mr. Okamoto about the truth of Pi’s story? What viewpoints are represented by Pi and the interviewers?
3. How does Pi defend the story of his survival when Mr. Okamoto challenges it as unbelievable? What is his response when Mr. Okamoto protests that he believes only what he sees?
4. If we accept the Richard Parker story as an allegorical account of the factual, literal story, what do each of the characters in the allegory represent?
5. What is ironic about the presence of the interviewers in this novel? Why did Martel include them?

EXTRACT J:

Mr. Okamoto: "Mr. Patel, we don't believe your story."
"Sorry-these cookies are good but they tend to crumble. I'm amazed. Why not?"
"It doesn't hold up."
"What do you mean?"
"Bananas don't float."
"I'm sorry?"
"You said the orang-utan came floating on an island of bananas."
"That's right."
"Bananas don't float."
"Yes, they do."
"They're too heavy."
"No, they're not. Here, try for yourself. I have two bananas right here."

Mr. Chiba: "Where did those come from? What else does he have under his bedsheets?"

Mr. Okamoto: "Damn it. No, that's all right."
"There's a sink over there."
"That's fine."
"I insist. Fill that sink with water, drop these bananas in, and we'll see who's right."
"We'd like to move on."
"I absolutely insist."
[Silence]

Mr. Chiba: "What do we do?"

Mr. Okamoto: "I feel this is going to be another very long day."

[Sound of a chair being pushed back. Distant sound of water gushing out of a tap]

Pi Patel: "What's happening? I can't see from here."

Mr. Okamoto [distantly]: "I'm filling the sink."
"Have you put the bananas in yet?"
[Distantly] "No."
"And now?"
[Distantly] "They're in."
"And?"
[Silence]

Mr. Chiba: "Are they floating?"
[Distantly] "They're floating."
"So, are they floating?"
[Distantly] "They're floating."
"What did I tell you?"

Mr. Okamoto: "Yes, yes. But it would take a lot of bananas to hold up an orang-utan."
"It did. There was close to a ton. It still makes me sick when I think of all those bananas floating away and going to waste when they were mine for the picking."
"It's a pity. Now, about-"
"Could I have my bananas back, please?"

Mr. Chiba: "I'll get them."

[Sound of a chair being pushed back]
[Distantly] "Look at that. They really do float."

Mr. Okamoto: "What about this algae island you say you came upon?"

Mr. Chiba: "Here are your bananas."

Pi Patel: "Thank you. Yes?"
"I'm sorry to say it so bluntly, we don't mean to hurt your feelings, but you don't really expect us to believe you, do you? Carnivorous trees? A fish-eating algae that produces fresh water? Tree-dwelling aquatic rodents? These things don't exist."
"Only because you've never seen them."
"That's right. We believe what we see."
"So did Columbus. What do you do when you're in the dark?"
"Your island is botanically impossible."
"Said the fly just before landing in the Venus flytrap."
"Why has no one else come upon it?"
"It's a big ocean crossed by busy ships. I went slowly, observing much."
"No scientist would believe you."
"These would be the same who dismissed Copernicus and Darwin. Have scientists finished coming upon new plants? In the Amazon basin, for example?"
"Not plants that contradict the laws of nature."
"Which you know through and through?"
"Well enough to know the possible from the impossible."

1. Place this extract in context. (3)
2. Account for the different fonts used in this extract, and elaborate on the other fonts used in the novel. (3)
3. State clearly which story it is that Mr Okamoto does not believe. Support your answer with evidence from the text. (3)
4. “Sorry – these cookies are good but they tend to crumble. I’m amazed. Why not? What does Pi’s response to Mr Okamoto reveal about Pi’s attitude and how does it create humour? (3)
5. Suggest why the officials focus on the floating bananas first and discuss the effect of their doing so. (3)
6. What is the writer’s intention in repeating the bracketed words: [Silence] and [Distantly]? (3)
7. Evaluate the Japanese officials’ response to the traumatized Pi, with close reference to the text. (4)
8. “Said the fly just before landing in the Venus flytrap.” Comment on the effectiveness of Pi’s use of the above illustration to make his point. (3)

Chapter 100

1. Why does Martel never explain the cause of the ship’s sinking? (3)
2. What is interesting about the fact that this book ends at Chapter 100? (3)
3. Why is it significant to the theme that the unnamed author learns of Pi’s second story from the Japanese interviewers? (3)
4. What is suggested by the closing line of Mr. Okamoto’s letter to the author? (3)

ESSAY QUESTIONS

Question 1:
“The relationship with deity and questions relating to worship and commitment are issues addressed in the ‘Life of Pi’.

In an essay of 400-450 words discuss Pi’s relationship with religion in the novel Life of Pi. [25]

Question 2:
Pi’s full name, Piscine Molitor Patel, was inspired by a Parisian swimming pool that “the gods would have delighted to swim in”. The shortened form refers to a mathematical symbol or concept.

Write an essay of 400-450 words in which you discuss the significance of both Pi’s names in relation to a theme in the novel. [25]
Question 3:
In *Life of Pi*, religion plays an important role in Pi's life.

Critically assess the validity of the above statement.
Your response should take the form of a well-constructed essay of 400-450 words (2-2½ pages).

Question 4:

The pandit spoke first. “Mr Patel, Piscine’s piety is admirable. In these troubled times it’s good to see a boy so keen on God. We all agree on that.” The Imam and the priest nodded. “But he can’t be a Hindu, a Christian and a Muslim. It’s impossible. He must choose.” (Chapter 23, p. 75)

In an essay of 400-450 words discuss Pi’s religious views. Comment on how Pi came to believe in Hinduism, Christianity and Islam, his opinion of each religion, how it is possible for him to follow more than one religion, as well as how others perceive his unorthodox practices.

Question 5:

“Pi Patel”s life in Pondicherry gives him a solid foundation for coping with the hardships he faces as a castaway.”
Discuss the validity of this statement in an essay of about 400 - 450 words.

Question 6:

Ultimately, *Life of Pi* shows us that the will to survive is powerful. Pi is resourceful and resilient in the face of enormous odds.
Examine how Pi ensures his survival under trying circumstances.

Question 7:

The story of the various animals on the lifeboat is merely a way for Pi to protect himself from the horrors he discovers humans are capable of when under extreme conditions. Evaluate this statement in the light of the second story that Pi gives the Japanese investigators.

Question 8:

Martel has used an inventive style of narration in order to make his novel more authentic. Discuss to what extent his use of multiple narrators and his blend of fact and fiction are successful.

Question 9:

“At times he gets agitated. It’s nothing I say. (I say very little). It’s his own story that does it. Memory is an ocean and he bobs on the surface. I worry that he’ll want to stop. But he wants to tell me his story. He goes on. After all these years, Richard Parker still preys on his mind.”
Discuss to what extent the much older adult Pi has recovered from the shipwreck ordeal and to what extent he still suffers from post-traumatic stress.
Question 10:

As Pi grows up in Pondicherry, he is fortunate to have a number of older men who act as mentors. Choose any three of them and discuss the role that each one plays in forming Pi’s understanding of the world.

[25]

Question 11:

The names of the characters in the novel are significant. Critically discuss the names of the protagonist, Piscine Molitor Patal aka Pi, as they relate to the themes of the novel.

[25]

Question 12:

“Many people seem to lose God along life’s way. That was not my case.”
Discuss to what extent this novel is a story about faith.

[25]
Life of Pi – QUESTION BOOK SUGGESTED ANSWERS

Author’s Note
1. The author is suggesting that, while the story he is about to tell is true, or reflects reality, it is fiction and will not be a literal account of “what really happened,” but a “twisting” of the facts to bring out their “essence.”
2. He had written a book that was published in Canada, but it was not very well received. Feeling defeated and restless, he decided to go to India to work on his next novel.
3. He thinks that his novel is worthless, so as a mark of his defeat, he mails his manuscript to a place that does not exist.
4. Mr. Adirubasamy, a man he meets in a coffee house, tells the author the story. We now have a tale based on a story heard from a stranger in a coffee shop, retold by an author we cannot be sure of.
5. Mr. Adirubasamy says that the story the author is about to hear, and which we are about to read, “will make you believe in God.”

EXTRACT A:

1. The Author/narrator is travelling through India after failing to write a successful novel. He finds himself in the small Indo-French town of Pondicherry. He is at the Indian Coffee House on Nehru Street in Pondicherry. (ANY THREE)
2. A) The author/narrator is a writer
   B) The Author/narrator suspects that his listener is surprised to hear that he is a writer and that he does not really respect or admire writers as he would a doctor or a lawyer.
   C) No. He interprets Mr Adirubasamy’s reaction as condemnatory and thinks that their conversation is thus over but Mr Adirubasamy wants to tell him a story which suggests that he is eager to share Pi’s incredible tale with a fellow storyteller who will then share it with others. OR
   Yes. (A positive response is unlikely but will be marked on its merits).
3. To Mr Adirubasamy, faith in God is simply/uncomplicated. This is seen in his emphatic statement that the story will make his listener believe/ in his reply “not so tall that you can’t reach” which implies that faith is within every person’s grasp. In contrast the narrator says that he “was suspicious” as to whether the speaker was a Jehovah’s Witness or a Muslim evangelist. This shows that he is afraid Mr Adirubasamy is attempting to convert him to a particular religion. / His comment that the story’s potential to make him believe in God is a “tall order” suggest that he is not a man of faith or belief in God.
4. To Pi, belief in God is not limited to one particular religion. He sees all the religions that he practices as broadening and deepening his faith rather than placing limitations on what he may believe in.
5. Francis Adirubasamy teaches Pi to swim and is described as a great storyteller – both gifts that Pi uses to survive during his time on the lifeboat.
6. Most fairy tales begin with the words “Once upon a time”. When we read/listen to a fairy tale we know that it is not true/it is a made-up story, nevertheless we temporarily suspend our disbelief and engage with the story. Here Mr Adirubasamy uses the words to introduce a story which he believes to be true and which he thinks will make the listener believe in God. He is not encouraging the Author/narrator to suspend his disbelief – in fact, he tells him to “pay proper attention” – but rather to believe the story (ANY FOUR).
7. The Author/narrator takes down notes of Mr Adirubasamy’s story about Pi. He goes back to Canada to search for Pi. / On Mr Adirubasamy’s urging, the Author/narrator phones Pi and sets up an interview. He interviews Pi over the following year and once he listens to a tape recording from the Japanese Ministry of Transport, comes to agree with Mr Adirubasamy that Pi’s story is indeed one to “make you believe in God.” (ANY TWO)
8. The Author/narrator includes it in order to give Pi’s story credibility. / It explains how the Author/narrator came to know about Pi.
Part One: Toronto and Pondicherry

Chapter 1
1. The differences in text suggest that the first-person speakers in each section are different people.
2. The speaker is Mr. Patel. Structurally, the author’s note ended with the introduction to Mr. Patel’s story, which the author says he will allow Mr. Patel to tell in his own voice. Then Chapter 1 begins with that story.
3. Mr. Patel begins his story by saying that his suffering left him sad and gloomy. He chose to study the sloth because its “demeanor—calm, quiet and introspective—did something to soothe [his] shattered self.”
4. He seems to be a gentle, intensely emotional person. He expresses love for a boy who beat him in a scholarship competition, and he tells us that he once fainted when a faucet was turned on because the experience was so shocking. He is also very interested in and knowledgeable about animals.
5. Mecca is the holiest city of Islam, one of Pi’s three religions; Varanasi is a holy city in the Hindu faith, another of Pi’s three religions; Jerusalem is holy to Muslims and Christians, Christianity being the third of Pi’s three religions. Paris is a reputedly beautiful and romantic city. Oxford is the site of the great English university and a world-famous seat of academics.
6. Patel majored in both zoology and religious studies. He compares religious-studies majors—people who analyze religion, but will not commit to believing in God—to sloths; they are confused and hesitant. Sloths, on the other hand, remind him of God. Mr. Patel sees design, order, and beauty in the natural world. The combination of the two majors suggests that animals, God, and faith will play roles in the story Mr. Patel has to tell.
7. We can infer that he has suffered great hardship and loss (“My suffering left me sad and gloomy”). He came from India (“I have nothing to go home to in Pondicherry”). We can also guess that the story he has to tell involved illness or injury (“The doctors and nurses at the hospital in Mexico were incredibly kind to me”).

Chapter 2
1. This chapter is again in italics and written in the third person point of view. This establishes that Yann Martel is using plain text and first-person narration for Mr. Patel to tell his story, and italics in the third person for the fictional author’s insertions.
2. Essentially, the author confirms Mr. Patel’s gentle nature and possibly nervous demeanor.

Chapter 3
1. Patel’s story is most likely going to involve water.
2. They both loved swimming.
3. Mamaji is Francis Adirubasamy, the man who told the fictional author, “I have a story that will make you believe in God.”
4. In Tamil, an Indian dialect, “Mama” means “uncle.” “Ji” is a suffix that “indicates respect and affection.” Although not related to Mr. Patel, Mamaji was like a beloved uncle to him.
5. The ocean is chaotic and uncontrollable, while the swimming pool has a “proper rectangularity and [a] formal flatness.” The significance is that the chaotic and uncontrollable nature of the ocean is going to figure strongly into this story.
6. The narrator is Piscine Molitor Patel. He was named after Mamaji’s favorite pool in Paris, France, the Piscine Molitor.
7. Piscine was named after a famous swimming pool, and he loves to swim.
8. Piscine’s father was a zookeeper.

Chapter 4
1. His father ran a hotel; according to Piscine, running a zoo is not very different, although the “guests” are much more demanding.
2. Pi loves living in a zoo. He calls it “Paradise on earth,” indicating that this is the idyllic, Edenic period of Pi’s life, before his story of maturation.
3. Piscine is implying that “freedom” is not a high priority for animals, and that those humans who criticize zoos for depriving animals of this “freedom” do not understand the truth of the situation.
4. Piscine is essentially comparing a house to a zoo. Just as humans—who once roamed “free” in jungles and on plains—have adapted satisfactorily to sheltered lives, so too do animals—especially those born in captivity—adapt to habitations in which all of their needs are met.

5. Piscine clearly believes that animals are better off in a zoo. In a zoo, animals have regular medical care, plenty of food, and a well-needed schedule. In the wild, they lead lives of “compulsion and necessity.”

6. Pi says that no person with “all the usual ties—to family, to friends, to society” would willingly choose to be cut loose from these things. This is significant because this is exactly what will happen to Pi.

7. Just as people who do not understand believe zoos imprison animals and deprive them of happiness, many people who do not understand believe religion deprives people of their freedom.

Chapter 5

1. Pi is the ratio of a circle’s radius to area and diameter to circumference. Circles will play an important role in this novel, with Pi eventually realizing he is the center of his own circle.

2. Another important theme in this book is the question of order in the universe; Pi says many times that stories are our way of making sense of a baffling existence.

3. He shows a will to survive and the ability to take control of a situation. These qualities will help him later in the book.

EXTRACT B:

1. When it was his turn to identify himself to a new teacher on his first day in secondary school, instead of stating his name, Pi raced to the blackboard and wrote out his full name and then added “known to all as Pi Patel”, double underlining the Pi and adding the mathematical symbol, its numerical value and drawing a circle with its diameter.

2. A) His father owns and runs the Pondicherry Zoo.
   B) When Pi is stranded on the lifeboat with the tiger, he knows that his only hope of survival is to make Richard Parker fear him so he trains him to associate the whistle with seasickness, to see him as a provider of food and water, and to keep out of his territory so he marks the tarpaulin with his own urine.
   C) Yes. By stating that both animals and humans are trained using repetition he implies that we are similar in the way we learn and respond/that humans and animals have some aspects in common/that humans have some animal-like qualities.

3. A) This section of the novel is set in Pondicherry India. A “commonly named boy” in this context would be a boy with a typically Indian name.
   B) Piscine is not an Indian name but a French one. He was named Piscine Molitor after a fabulous French swimming pool.

4. The name Piscine led to cruel and merciless teasing from the other children because they deliberately mispronounced it as “pissing” and constantly made rude jokes about urinating. Even his primary school teachers slipped up and mispronounced his name.

5. Following Pi’s lead, the other boys also give themselves names which are letters in the Greek alphabet. These are used as symbols in engineering.

6. He is captain of the cricket team.

7. Ravi is used to being popular (the work “lackeys” tells us this) older brother who has a say in Pi’s life at school (It’s all right with me). However he is not particularly mean and their banter is typical of the kind of good-natured teasing that many siblings participate in.

8. It seems contradictory to base our understanding of the universe on a number that is not a rational number. This suggests that there must be something illogical or irrational behind the workings of the universe.

Chapter 6

1. The author notes that Patel’s kitchen is jammed with far more food than he could eat, as if he is hoarding food against some possible disaster.
Chapter 7

1. Pi says, “[Mr. Kumar’s] construction was geometric: he looked like two triangles, a small one and a larger one, balanced on two parallel lines.” Mr. Kumar represents the world of abstract reasoning. Like Pi, whose name also represents an important geometric ratio, Mr. Kumar is associated with these theoretical concepts.

2. To Mr. Kumar, an avowed atheist, every animal in the zoo is a “triumph of logic and mechanics” and a symbol of the nature of science.

3. The zoo reassures Mr. Kumar that the universe is orderly. He seems to think that it is people, with their emotions and irrationality, who cause problems.

4. As a rationalist, Mr. Kumar looks for the cause to every effect. His story about having polio as a child illustrates his rational approach. What God would have let a boy suffer from such a disease? Meanwhile, it was not God who saved him, but medical science.

5. Pi is afraid that Mr. Kumar’s rational words will take a hold of him the way the polio virus took hold of the young Kumar. Pi does not want Kumar’s rationality to destroy his faith. He says, “What a terrible disease that must be if it could kill God in a man.”

6. Atheists also follow their reason; once they reach the bounds of reason, they “leap” by proclaiming that there is no God. Believers also go to the edge of reason, then find God beyond this edge.

7. Agnostics are unable to commit to any position. They live in a state of perpetual doubt.

Chapter 8

1. Man is the one who causes problems in zoos by tormenting the animals. Human beings will feed dangerous items to animals just to see what the animals will do. Pi’s father insists, however, that the anthropomorphized animal is the most dangerous of all. People must not make the mistake of believing that animals are like humans, with human understanding and emotions.

2. A central theme of the book is the inability of humans to understand the natural world or God except through the lens of human experience and reason. The truth is, however, that we can really understand neither by comparing them to ourselves.

3. The brutal death of the goat graphically illustrates the viciousness of natural world. Set beside the discussion of anthropomorphism, it illustrates that wild animals are not humans with the same emotions and rational thought processes. Martel might be foreshadowing an incident in which human nature and brute animal nature meet one another—possibly dealing with a tiger.

EXTRACT C:

1. A) HE paints the word in bright red letters that grab the viewer’s attention. He poses a question that makes the visitors curious as to what the answer could be. He has an arrow pointing to a curtain, which also stimulates curiosity because the answer is hidden.
   B) The curtain has to be replaced regularly because it gets damaged from over use.

2. People feed dangerous objects to the animals. At times people are actively cruel, for example they smash birds’ beaks, break monkeys’ arms and deliberately injure the animals in other ways. Some animals are stolen for food or for religious reasons. Others are fed the wrong food by foolish people with good intentions. People also do silly things that endanger themselves such as the lady who waved her sari in the lion’s face and was subsequently caught by the lion. (ANY THREE)

3. It means to give human qualities to animals/to see animals in a human light/to view animals as thinking and behaving the way people do.

4. The Author/narrator is indicating that animals are not really cute or friendly or devoted. These are characteristics that have attributed to animals.

5. They attack these animals because they see them as vicious since they kill the animals these people consider to be cute.

6. A) Pi is inferring that people are both “loving”, “devoted”, etc. as well as “bloodthirsty”, “depraved” etc. When people give these attributes to animals, they are merely transferring these elements of their own personalities to them.
   B) On the boat, Pi’s mother is loving and protective, not only towards Pi but also to the poor wounded Taiwanese sailor. Pi’s mother represents what is good about humans through her compassion towards the sailor and Pi. The cook is vicious and bloodthirsty / represents what is evil as is seen in his cannibalizing of the Taiwanese sailor and the murder of Pi’s mother. Pi shows us
that humans are capable of both good and evil. He helps his mother to care for the sailor but also kills and eats the cook in order to save his own life.

7. A) Pi’s father puts a goat in a tiger’s cage and forces the boys to watch the tiger eat the goat.
   B) He wants them to realise how dangerous tigers are.
   C) He loves his sons and wants to protect them, even if it means showing them something harsh or cruel.
   D)Although Pi gives Richard Parker human attributes throughout the story of his ordeal on the lifeboat, his choice of a tiger to represent himself shows us that there is something vicious and animal-like in all humans.

Chapter 9
1. A “flight distance” is “the minimum distance at which an animal wants to keep a perceived enemy.” Put more simply, “flight distance” refers to how close an animal will allow an enemy to get to it before it flees.
2. A caged animal that cannot flee when its enemy is too close experiences extreme stress. It is in the animal’s best interest—physically and emotionally—for the zookeeper to minimize the animal’s flight distance so it can tolerate being observed by humans at close range.

Chapter 10
1. He says that animals whose enclosures are not just right may try to escape, as may wild animals suddenly brought into captivity. But animals may also try to escape for no good reason, as a result of the “measure of madness” built into all living things.
2. The zoo was an important part of Pi’s growing up. The entire book is a study of the behaviors of humans and animals in unnatural and unexpected circumstances.
3. the unknown

Chapter 11
1. Although hunting dogs were set loose to chase her and traps were set to catch her, the escaped leopard lived for two months in the area around the city. Pi says that the fact that this leopard lived so long without being seen and did not attack anyone while she was out proves that escaped animals are not dangerous and are actually just trying to fit into the new environments in which they find themselves.
2. Pi has been saying that even cities house more forms of wildlife than people can imagine. Here he seems to be saying that some unusual creature was able to hide in the Mexican jungle without being found.

Chapter 12
1. The narrator is foreshadowing the telling of Pi’s story, when, as a teenager, Pi floated in a life boat on the Pacific Ocean for two hundred twenty-seven days.
2. At this point, we cannot know with any certainty, but we should recognize the allusion to the Richard Parker in the Poe story—a young boy who was shipwrecked and killed by the other people on his life boat, who survived by eating him. We can only assume that Patel is either haunted by the Poe character, or that Richard Parker was one of the persons whom Pi encountered during his adventure at sea—possibly someone on the ship or on his life boat.
   The fact that he still “preys on” Pi’s mind suggests that Parker came to some horrible end that somehow involved Pi.

Chapter 13
1. Clearly the story is going to have a great deal to do with a wild animal in unfamiliar territory and a human’s need to establish control over it.
2. Social hierarchy is important because much of animal survival depends on knowing precisely where it fits in that hierarchy. The story Patel is going to tell the narrator most likely has to do with animal territorialism and dominance.
Chapter 14
1. The animal with the lowest social standing has the most to gain from associating with the alpha member of the group.

Chapter 15
1. The narrator describes the house as a temple. There are items in this house from three different religions; all three appear to be equally revered. There are depictions of the Hindu god Ganesha, the Buddhist deity Krishna, and Jesus Christ, the central figure of Christianity. The person whose house this is appears to be a devotee of three of the major religions of the world: Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity.
2. At least some of the artifacts make the narrator smile. He seems to have a positive view of these objects and of the breadth of Pi’s faith.

Chapter 16
1. Brahman nirguna is the fundamental spiritual essence, which is beyond human understanding.
2. Brahman saguna is Brahman, or God, made manifest in physical things. Unlike Brahman nirguna, Brahman saguna can be understood by human beings.
3. He says that the rich sensory details of Hinduism made him love the religion from the start. But he is also a Hindu in his religious philosophy.
4. Being divine, Krishna was able to love all of the milkmaids at once, but, as soon as the girls became possessive, each wanting Krishna for her own, he would vanish. The point is that no one faith can “possess” God, claim Him for its own. If we start to believe that God belongs only to us, we lose our connection with Him.

Chapter 17
1. Pi can understand and appreciate the Christians’ concept of God suffering challenges, but he cannot comprehend a deity’s being willing to subject Himself to abject humiliation. To Pi, that is amazingly un-godlike.
2. Love
3. Pi is impressed by Christianity’s humanity. He is “compelled” by the idea that Christ is God incarnate. He likes the idea that God is accessible to all people because His son was human. Hinduism, then, provides Pi with a spiritual sense of the interconnectedness of all living things, and Christianity offers him a means to approach God.

Chapter 18
1. Pi is, at first, frightened by both Christianity and Islam. To him, Christianity has a “reputation for…violence.” He is so wary of it, in fact, that he is afraid to go into the church. If Christianity has this reputation, “Islam has a reputation that is worse.” Pi learns about each religion by one-on-one interaction with members of that religion. His aunt and mother take him to the Hindu temple when he is small; he strikes up a friendship with the priest who teaches him about Christianity; and he likewise meets a Muslim baker who teaches him about Islam.
2. Pi’s first impression of Islam is its immediacy. When the baker hears the call to prayer, he immediate rolls out his prayer matt and begins praying. To Pi, Muslim prayer is “quick, necessary, [and] physical...”

Chapter 19
1. Pi finds the Islamic method of prayer, which involves kneeling and bringing his head down to the ground, to be physically satisfying.
2. Hinduism gives Pi his spiritual sense and his respect for all life. Christianity gives him a sense of humility and a closeness to God. Islam gives Pi a physical and satisfying means of expressing and practicing his faiths.

Chapter 20
1. The Muslim baker has the same name, Mr. Kumar, as Pi’s favorite teacher—the biology teacher and atheist who loved the zoo. Martel is most likely suggesting parallels between atheism and faith, and
faith and reason. The two vastly different Mr. Kumars also parallel Pi's ultimate decision to major in zoology and theology.

2. One occurs when he is riding his bicycle back from the Muslim Mr. Kumar's house. Pi looks around at the trees, sea, and sky and suddenly sees how everything is connected. The second experience takes place much later, in Canada. Pi sees snow falling in the sunlight, and within the snow is the Virgin Mary. Both of these experiences take place in natural settings. The sense of all things’ interconnectedness is a chief belief of Hinduism while a vision of the Virgin Mary is undeniably Christian. These two events underscore the depth of Pi's belief in multiple religions.

Chapter 21

1. Patel’s life is so full, so meaningful, and Patel himself is so full of life that the author is now—more than ever—convinced of the hollowness of his own life.
2. The author, having just finished another visit with Patel, is most likely thinking about what Pi has said to him. Here we have the suggestion that the “better” story is not necessarily the “factual” one, that there might be something lacking in the relating of mere facts. Perhaps the story Patel is telling the narrator is not precisely factual.

Chapters 22 – 23

1. Pi, of course, would believe that an atheist would come to believe in God at the time of death.
2. Pi is talking about the priest, the imam, and the pandit.
3. Pi’s father has a completely pragmatic attitude toward religion. While he is not a man of faith himself, he has two small Hindu shrines at his zoo for public relations.
4. Rather than acting like men of God, faith, and love—practicing the principles each has been teaching Pi—they act like competitors with Pi as the prize.
5. The priest asserts that Christianity is an all-exclusive religion—“There’s salvation only in Jesus.” Further, he discounts Hindus as “idolaters,” and dismisses Muhammad as an “illiterate merchant.” The pandit insists that both Islam and Christianity are foreign, colonialist faiths imposed upon the native Hindus. The Imam asserts that Hinduism, with its caste system, is a system of slavery. He further insists that both Hindus and Christians are idolaters. The point of this scene is clearly that, while Pi has seen beauty and truth in all three faiths—and obviously does not see them as mutually exclusive—the three religious men devote much more energy to denigrating the other religions than pointing out the beauties of their own.
6. The power of Pi's response lies in its simplicity. Pi simply wants to “love God.”
7. The chapter ends on a mildly humorous note. The three religious men walk away, essentially dissatisfied that none of them has “won.” Pi's father has uttered a statement that Pi finds ridiculously out of character for him, the mother smiles warmly at her son—amused, but not upset—by her son’s ecumenicalism, and life returns quickly to a pleasant routine of ice-cream sandwiches and Sunday afternoon walks.

EXTRACT D:

1. Inflamed; apoplectic
2. India allows its citizens to practice/follow whatever religion they choose to. / In India there is no legal persecution on the basis of faith. / There is supposed to be religious tolerance.
3. Pi respects and admires the wisdom of all three men. It is also reference to the “three wise men” of the Christian nativity story. These men were not Christians but they recognised Jesus as God, showing that different beliefs are all in search of God.
4. A) simile
   B) The simile suggest that their fingers are like exclamation marks showing that the men are emphatic or determined to prove that they are correct.
5. The fact that all three say exactly the same thing at the same time and use precisely the same gestures shows that they are more similar than they like to think.
6. The three men believe that their respective religions are the one and only truth/path to God. They believe that all other religions are wrong and view them with suspicion and mistrust. Pi, on the other hand, feels a strong connection to the Divine and experiences all the religions that he practices as strengthening his faith. To him the symbols and rituals of each religion are a means to maintaining a connection to the universal divine presence, rather than having meaning in and of themselves/the individual dogmas are less important than the experiences of love and connection.

7. Pi’s father is not religious at all; he has embraced the modern, secular India. He does not understand Pi’s fascination with religion but recognizes that Pi has the right to practice as he chooses.

8. Pi’s mother is the archetypal maternal figure. She loves her son and wants him to be happy. Thus when the others look heavenward for answers she looks to Pi and asks him how he feels i.e. she wants him to do what is right for himself and not what other people want him to do.

9. Ghandi’s statue happens to be nearby. Because Mahatma Ghandi is respected by most Indians as a great political and spiritual leader, his words carry some weight. Since Ghandi said that “All religions are true”, it strengthens Pi’s argument that he can follow all three religions.

10. Mr Patel asserts that they are all trying to love God- which puts an end to the confrontation since one cannot argue with that. The three men leave and Pi and his parents eat ice cream.

Chapters 24 – 25
1. The adult Pi already knows the end of the story he is telling. Memory of his brother and their relationship is painful.
2. First, Pi mentions the irony of mere humans believing they need to defend and protect the Almighty. Then, he reflects on the irony that, now that it is known he is a practitioner of more than one religion, he is made to feel unwelcome at all of them.

Chapter 26
1. The primary conflict is among faith, apathy, and reason. Pi represents faith, and he sees the similarities in the three religions rather than the differences. Pi’s father represents bafflement or apathy. He makes a vague attempt to protest Pi’s position but ultimately simply sends Pi away. Pi’s mother represents reason. She tries to reason with Pi, offer analogies, and ultimately exhausts herself in her inability to dissuade him from his beliefs.
2. She is exhausted from trying to debate a matter of faith from a rational standpoint.

Chapter 27
1. Politics, especially the political situation in India, begins to impose itself on the lives of Pi’s family. The family’s emigration to Canada is clearly foreshadowed.
2. Mr. Patel says that one must adapt to new technology or go the way of the dinosaur, echoing Darwin’s theory of evolution. This is significant because it equates human society and the need for the species to adapt with the natural world and the need to be able to adapt.

Chapters 28 – 29
1. He compares it to a refreshing monsoon rain.
2. Mr. Patel is alarmed by the fact that Mrs. Ghandi, the president of India, completely destroys the government of Tamil Nadu, the Indian state that includes Pondicherry. He thinks that Mrs. Ghandi has too much power and will eventually turn India into a police state. He thinks that he has no choice but to leave India.
3. The fact that the animals neither know nor care about world politics illustrates the irrelevance of such matters to real life.

Chapter 30
1. The writer meets Pi’s wife, Meena. Until now, the writer did not know that Pi was married.
2. The writer says that “life has taught [Pi] not to show off what is most precious to him.” Along with the hints we had earlier, this is further evidence that Pi has experienced a great loss.
3. Meena is a pharmacist.
**Chapters 31 – 32**

1. Mr. Kumar, the teacher, represents pure science. In the past, he has asserted that he does not believe in God, only in science. Mr. Kumar, the baker, is a devout Muslim. He thinks that God manifests himself in nature. Both men admire the zebras, so their meeting represents the symbolic meeting of science and spirituality.

2. Clearly the novel is going to involve an odd cohabitation and the creation of a “herd” by an odd combination of creatures.

3. Pi thinks that zoomorphism happens because it is the only way for animals to make sense of their lives. For example, in the story Pi tells about the lion cubs bonding with a dog, he says that if the lions knew that their mother was dead, they would be sad. By bonding with another mother, even if it is a dog, they can better cope with their situations. Again, this explanation foreshadows a series of events involving loss and the need for those left behind to rebuild new groups and make sense of their lives.

**Chapters 33 – 34**

1. Again, all of the evidence so far indicates that, between India and Canada, Pi experienced a tremendous loss and a severe break with his past.

2. We learn nothing. We are not given so much as a physical description or a mention of age, size, etc.

3. Pi’s account is factual and detailed. The author’s account is sentimental.

**Chapter 35**

1. He is 16 years old.

2. Concern over the brand names available is Mrs. Patel’s way of expressing her apprehension about leaving everything familiar behind and facing an entirely new life in a new country and culture. Just as Pi said earlier that an animal removed from its known environment will become anxious, Pi’s mother, preparing to leave her familiar surroundings, is reacting in a similar manner.

**Chapter 36**

1. Pi has a son, a daughter, and a dog. The narrator said earlier that Pi hides everything precious to him; he seems to have kept his family hidden.

2. Some great tragedy has been hinted at, so the scene of cozy domestic life may be coming after some family tragedy.

**Part Two: The Pacific Ocean**

**Chapters 37 – 38**

1. The section begins with Pi encouraging Richard Parker and urging him to swim to the life boat. Then, it is suddenly revealed, almost as Pi himself realizes it, that Richard Parker is a Bengal tiger, and now Pi must share the life boat with him.

2. This chapter contains mostly exposition, the story of how the ship sank and Pi came to be the only survivor.

3. Pi has told us he bought a map of the world to chart the family’s voyage. His comparison of the ship’s sinking to a “pinprick” suggests the smallness of the ship compared to the vastness of the Pacific Ocean.

4. The final several sentences, in which Pi says he trusted the crew and then admits casually, “Only when they threw me overboard did I begin to have doubts” are mildly humorous.
1. Sentence one is bluntly factual whole sentence two is poetic/makes use of figurative language.
   A) simile
   B) Alliteration
   C) The simile compares the sound the ship makes as it sinks to something that is being devoured
      and then belched out. The alliteration of the “m” emphasizes the creature/monster-like attributes of
      the metal ship. The combined effect is of something sinister or malevolent.

3. The wind might be making a screaming sound but neither the sea nor his heart can literally scream.
   These hyperbolic personifications deliberately exaggerate the screaming and convey to the reader
   Pi’s intense distress as the ship sinks.

4. Pi adheres to Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. Therefore, in his joy at seeing Richard Parker alive
   he calls out to important figures from all three these religions.

5. Richard Parker is a Bengal tiger who was mistakenly named after the hunter who found him.

6. A) “You’re a strong swimmer” / “He had seen me” / “He looked panic-stricken” / “He looked small and
    helpless.” / “Can you believe what happened to us?” / “Tell me it’s a bad dream”
   B) Anthropomorphism

7. In the second story, Pi is actually the tiger / Richard Parker symbolizes Pi. In this version of the
   story, Pi is desperate for Richard Parker to make it to the lifeboat because he himself wants to
   survive.

8. A) Tigers are good swimmers
   B) Pi is a very strong swimmer because Mamaji taught him to swim well.

9. In both versions that Pi gives the Japanese investigators, the ship sinks, therefore the loss of Pi’s
   family is real and his longing for this not to be true is what prompts him to say this. However, this
   version where he talks to Richard Parker is “not real” because Richard Parker is a character that Pi
   has created to distance himself from the horrible events that later take place on the lifeboat. In
   addition, since this novel is a work of fiction, none of the story is real in the usual sense of the word.
   This all links to the theme of storytelling in the novel where stories may be inventions but they may
   also be true or contain truth (ANY FOUR).

10. Rhetorical question (“can you believe…?”) Repetition (“Tell me.; Tell me…; Tell me…”); listing each
    family member appeal to each god; exclamation marks; the whistle screeches in capital letters (ANY
    TWO)

Chapters 39 – 40
1. The life boat Pi falls into is still attached to the ship and will sink when the ship sinks. It is only when
   the zebra jumps into the boat that the animal’s weight and the force of his falling detaches the boat from
   the ship so Pi will be safe.

2. Pi notes that he is orphaned and alone, has a tiger in front of him, sharks beneath him, and a storm
   raging all around him. He says that if he had thought rationally about it, he would have given up, but
   that “God only knows” why he struggled to survive.

Chapter 41
1. He begins the chapter by saying that it was the elements that allowed him to live.
2. First of all, there is all of Pi’s previous talk about survival, animals’ ability to adapt to changed
   surroundings, and odd animal cohabitations. In this episode, Pi finds himself on a lifeboat with a zebra
   and a tiger. Earlier, Pi told us the story of his father’s starving a tiger to demonstrate how dangerous an
   animal it was. He also told us earlier about the two Mr. Kumars being intrigued by the zebra.

3. Pi decides that, rather than trying to save him, the sailors threw him overboard because there was a
   hyena in the lifeboat. He thinks that they wanted him to be the bait to get the hyena out of the boat so
   they could use it.

4. If the hyena had not been in the lifeboat, the sailors would probably not have thrown Pi overboard. If
   they had not thrown him into the lifeboat, he would have stayed on the ship and “surely would have
   drowned.”
Chapter 42
1. Pi describes her arrival in terms suggesting she is a sun goddess or the Virgin Mary, an icon of benevolence and nurturing love.
2. He calls her a matriarch and the “mother of two fine boys.”

Chapter 43
1. Pi is still a child mentally and emotionally and has a child’s trust. He imagines cities around the world hearing of the disaster and immediately launching rescue attempts.
2. Pi, who has demonstrated his love, respect, and understanding of all animals, characterizes the hyena as unintelligent (almost insane in its irrational running around the perimeter of the boat), ugly, and disgusting in its eating and hygienic habits. The hyena seems to have no redeeming qualities whatsoever.
3. Most people believe that the hyena is a scavenger, a carrion eater, when in fact the hyena is a voracious predator.

EXTRACT F:

1. It is the day after the Tsimtsum has sunk. Pi is on a lifeboat with an injured zebra, a seasick orangutan and a ravenous hyena. (Richard Parker is also on the boat under the tarpaulin but Pi does not know that yet.
2. A) It pauses from its yipping and running in anti-clockwise circles/laps of the zebra inside the lifeboat.
   B) Pi is afraid that the hyena is going to attack the zebra, which is lying at the stern.
3. At this point Pi is still hoping to be rescued/ thinks that people are aware of the ship’s sinking and will be scouring the ocean looking for him. He has not yet given in to despair and hopelessness.
4. It is so ugly that there is absolutely nothing beautiful about it / This creature is so hideous that it does not have any lovely features / nothing good can be said about its looks.
5. A) simile
   B) By comparing the hyena’s spots to an unsightly skin disease, Pi creates a sickening visual image. This makes the reader perceive the hyena as disgusting / hideous / loathsome.
6. His father told him that hyenas have the strongest jaws in nature. They are not cowardly and they do not eat only carrion. They will even start eating you when you are still alive (ANY THREE).
7. He wants the reader to understand how ruthless and cruel the hyena is. He also wants us to see how strong, determined and clever the hyena is when it comes to hunting and killing its prey.
8. They hyena is consistently describes as ugly and every detail about its looks and character is reprehensible/disgusting. In contrast, the zebra is described as magnificently beautiful. (ONE point about each animal on the lifeboat).
9. In the second story the hyena represents the French cook. Pi describes him as an ill-tempered, hypocritical brute. The description of the hyena’s hideous looks does not mean that the cook is literally ugly – it is a reflection of his internal ugliness. The hyena’s voracious appetite for any kind of food represents how the cook was willing to eat anything aboard from flies to rats. The reference to the hyena’s cannibalism is a foreshadowing of how the cook cannibalizes the Taiwanese sailor. By describing the hyena’s cleverness at distracting mothers from their young, Pi also prepares the reader for how the cook will sneakily cheat Pi and his mother into helping him cut off the sailor’s leg as well as how the cook will offer Pi food behind his mother’s back. The disgusting details of the hyena’s habits all create a composite picture of a reprehensible creature whom the reader is supposed to hate / be repulsed by much like we should find the behaviour of the cook (from cannibalism to murder) grateful. (hyena is French cook + three points showing similarities between the hyena and cook.)
10. Despite Orange Juice attempting to protect the zebra, the hyena bites off the zebra’s leg while it is still alive. Then it devours the rest of the animal while it suffers immensely. The hyena eventually decapitates Orange Juice (ANY TWO).
Chapter 44
1. Pi hates to be on the boat at night. For one thing, a rescue ship cannot see him at night. For another, the hyena, a nocturnal animal, may be more active in the dark. This is especially worrisome, since the hyena is also the biggest threat to Pi.
2. The hyena eats them.

Chapter 45
1. Pi, already established as an animal-lover, feels little sympathy for the zebra, first suffering with a broken leg, now suffering from the leg’s having been bitten off by the hyena. He admits that he is suffering so much himself, he has no energy left to feel sympathy for another suffering creature. Any change of values as a result of hardship is significant in literature, especially in a novel that is adhering to the form of a bildungsroman.
2. The orangutan is the most human of all of the animals on the boat, and Pi is probably able to relate to her better. Her seasickness looks like a parody of human seasickness, and he loses his own sickness as he watches her.

Chapter 46
1. Pi explains that he has had so many bad nights that, in its own way, each of them was the worst.
2. The implication is clear that he is going to follow with a discussion of one of those “worst nights.”
3. This is the night that Pi accepts the probability that his family is dead.
4. Martel has Pi unable to continue his story when he is discussing the impact of losing his family.

Chapter 47
1. Pi is pointing out that the orangutan is the closest to human of all of the animals. She has been domesticated and learned to love a human family as her own.
2. Pi focuses on the fear in the orangutan’s eyes and how nearly human it is.
3. Pi is on his way to kill the hyena after the hyena has killed Orange Juice.
4. Naming animals might suggest the extent to which they are valued by humans. The author may have named Richard Parker and Orange Juice to show their relationship to the Patel family. Richard Parker and Orange Juice might also represent more “humanized” animals while the hyena and the zebra represent less-domesticated animals.

Chapters 48 – 49
1. A hunter was sent to kill a rogue panther in Bangladesh. As he was keeping watch one night, he saw, instead, a tiger and her cub. He captured both tigers. When the paperwork was written up for the sale of the animals, the clerk mistakenly typed the hunter’s name, Richard Parker, as the name of the cub. That is the name with which the cub came to the Pondicherry Zoo.
2. Pi wonders how he could have gone so long (two and one half days) without seeing such a large animal on such a small boat.
3. Why is this significant? What might it foreshadow? Pi begins to speak of himself in animal terms. He wonders whether the hyena regards him as the “super-alpha” or the leader of the pack. This is significant because earlier, Pi was too absorbed in his own suffering to be overly sympathetic to the suffering of the zebra. Now his is hoping to be identified as a leader among the animals. This might foreshadow a further devolution from human to animal as Pi’s survival crisis continues.
4. The chapter ends on a thoroughly practical, pragmatic note. Pi, who all along has indulged in philosophical musings and has tried to explain every aspect of animal behavior and the interaction between animals, is now concerned simply with not dying of thirst.

Chapter 50
1. In the previous chapter, Pi lost his inquisitive, philosophical bent and began to worry only about the practical. That is carried over into this chapter’s description of the life boat.
2. On the one hand, having survived the ordeal, it is entirely possible that Pi would remember every detail for the remainder of his life. On the other hand, even during the occurrence itself, Pi is not in the clearest mental state, so his memory might indeed be clouded. Whether or not his account is factual, however, is probably not important, as he is certainly giving us the essential truth of his experience. This will be a recurring issue in the novel, especially after Pi finally reaches land.
3. Originally, there were four animals: two named and two unnamed, two predators and two prey, and three noble and beautiful animals and one hideous animal. **Hyena:** unnamed, hideous predator **Zebra:** unnamed, beautiful prey **Orange Juice:** named, beautiful prey **Richard Parker:** named, beautiful predator

**Chapter 51**
1. The storage locker is under the tarpaulin, in Richard Parker’s “den.” In order for Pi to access those supplies provided to preserve his life, he will have to risk his life by exposing himself to the tiger.
2. Martel is emphasizing the extent of Pi’s suffering and deprivation prior to his finding the locker.
3. Pi confesses that he felt as though the supplies were put in that locker especially for him.

**Chapter 52**
1. In Pi’s situation, even the smallest and most ordinary item becomes precious. This is also a pause in Pi’s narrative to illustrate that mundane pragmatic details have become the focus of Pi’s life, not great philosophical and spiritual questions.
2. As in the previous chapter, it is ambiguous whether the adult Pi could remember such minute details clearly and accurately. But the complete accuracy of the details is unimportant in that Pi is simply showing us both the abundance—and the finiteness—of his survival materials.

**Chapter 53**
1. While, on the one hand, Pi is refreshed and strengthened, on the other hand, he is now more aware of his predicament, and better able to mourn the loss of everything he has known and everything he might ever accomplish.
2. Just as Pi has regained his strength, Richard Parker, who had been listless and passive up until now, suddenly regains his strength as well and attacks and kills the hyena.
3. Without really thinking about it, Pi begins to pray. He makes a promise to himself and to God that “as long as God is with [him], he will not die.”
4. Pi describes the tiger as a wondrous beast, something created by an artist. He says that the tiger’s stance is like a pose, a “display of mighty art.” There is a “lithesome grace” to the tiger’s stance and presence. Pi describes the tiger’s coat with words like, “flame-colored,” “glossy,” and “incomparably beautiful.”
5. While Pi obviously admires the tiger’s physical beauty and power, it is clear that Pi considers the tiger to be the greatest threat to his survival.

**EXTRACT G:**

1. He feels desperate and afraid because he realizes the dangerous reality of being stuck on a boat with a tiger. At this point he has no other survival plan/he has not yet decided to help Richard Parker to survive (Plan 7) or even to try to kill him (first 6 plans).
2. He has lost his family, his past life in India and his future life in Canada. (Accept also the zoo animals.)
3. Having miraculously survived thus far, Pi decides that he will continue to achieve remarkable things daily. He does this by making the tiger submit to him, and feeding the tiger and himself on fish and turtles. (Accept other incredible events of Part 2)
4. Pi’s will to live is very much connected with his Richard Parker psyche and he describes his will to live as “fierce”, a word associated with predators. The tiger is one who kills the hyena, who literally fights to survive, and Pi repeats the word “fight” five times. He does not ascribe this will to fight to courage, a manmade concept, but to “life-hungry stupidity”, which sounds very much synonymous with animal instinct. Even the word “life-hungry” sounds predator-like or like animal bloodlust. Even the fact that Richard Parker growls at “that very instant” makes it sound as if the moment Pi decides to live, Richard Parker makes his presence felt again, thereby connecting them as characters (ANY THREE).
5. He will build a raft to distinguish their separate territories. He will blow the whistle as a form of whipping Richard Parker into submission. The tiger will behave in submissive ways such as avoiding eye contact and staying out of Pi’s way He will make Richard Parker dependent on him by...
providing food and water. He will not only survive the tiger, but he will keep the tiger alive (ANY
THREE).
6. He uses oars, the life jackets and the lifebuoy. He weaves the oars through the life jackets’ arms
and ties the oars with rope to the life buoy and then ties it to the lifeboat.
7. The sentences are short. The repetition in the short phrase “Quick man, Quick” sounds like a man in
a rush to do something. Many of the words are monosyllabic so that the lines read fast, for example:
“I thought of the prow I had made with an oar.” (NO MARKS OF DICTION, ONLY STYLE)
8. The themes are survival and faith. Pi is about to lose all hope when he finds the will to survive and
believe in the impossible, the “miraculous” and the “amazing”, almost as if he finds his faith and his
plea becomes a prayer, “as long as God is with me, I will not die. Amen.”

Chapter 54
1. Much of this chapter is a list—this one, a list of various plans Pi can use to get rid of the threat of
Richard Parker.
2. Pi finally arrives as what he considers to be the simplest, yet most effective, of all plans. He will
simply let nature take its course and, eventually, the tiger will die of thirst.

Chapter 55
1. The previous chapter ends on a mildly positive note, with Pi believing, at night, that he has devised a
plan to survive. The next chapter brings the daylight when Pi realizes the foolishness of his plan and
once again doubts his ability to survive.

Chapter 56
1. Pi says that fear is the only thing that can “defeat life.” This is consistent with Pi’s being a person of
faith.
2. Pi says that the only way to conquer fear is to express it, to fight to find the words with which to
articulate it. It is probable that he is telling this story to the author precisely to keep his fear at bay and
prevent it from devouring him.

Chapter 57
1. Prusten is a very soft noise that tigers make to signal an observer that they mean no harm.
2. The prusten signals to Pi that, as long as he is well fed and watered, the tiger will not prove to be an
immediate threat. It also signals how much of the untamed nature of a wild animal is based on meeting
that animals’ physical needs.
3. In the beginning of Chapter 56, Pi reflects on the dangerous and demoralizing nature of fear. At the
end of this chapter, he is hoping to use Richard Parker’s fear of the water to keep himself alive.
4. In Chapters 13 and 14, Pi described the process of “taming” wild circus animals. We know that such
animals are never really tamed, but they are convinced that the human is the Alpha animal and they
are “socially inferior” to the Alpha.

Chapter 58
1. Pi has already demonstrated affection for lists. This is also probably an attempt on Mertel’s part to
introduce some humor into the tense situation.
2. In terms of his coming of age, Pi is beginning to learn to rely on himself rather than on outside help.
This might be suggested by the utter uselessness of the survival manual. Pi is going to have to learn
his own way.

Chapter 59
1. The drag of the raft on the life boat and the way the life boat rocks is important because Richard Parker
is prone to seasickness. If Pi can control when the tiger is ill, he can guarantee himself access to the
storage locker with the survival supplies.
2. Pi is floating on a sea that is teeming with life.
3. While on board the Tsimtsum, he was traveling too fast. Only dolphins could keep up with the ship. He
says that the best way to see wildlife is “on foot,” (i.e., slowly) and “quietly.” It is only by slowing down
that a person can actually see the intricate details of nature.
4. By personifying Nature, and events in the Natural world, Pi emphasizes that he is not alone. He has also begun to realize that his life and death are not important to the universe. As he lets go of his own importance, he begins to perceive the rhythm, beauty, and harmony of the universe. This is also why he can appreciate the beauty and nobility of Richard Parker without factoring in his own well-being.

Chapter 60
1. The sage Markandeya is (accidentally) granted a glimpse of the entire universe, and he is ultimately saved from destruction by his god Vishnu. Pi is suggesting that his nighttime experience is a similar sort of unintentional divine revelation.
2. Pi is able to put his troubles into the broader context of the entire, grand Universe. He is able to recognize how finite and minute his current trouble is.
3. His epiphany about the vastness of the Universe and the finite nature of his suffering is a result of his Hinduism, and he concludes the chapter with a Muslim prayer.

Chapter 61
1. In the previous chapter—at night—Pi came to the realization of the minuteness of his own suffering in the context of the grandness of the Universe. Now, in the daytime, he has his first significant breakthrough in securing food for himself and Richard Parker.
2. The flying fish arrive just at the point when Pi is at his lowest, fearing that he will not have sufficient food for Richard Parker and that the tiger will eventually attack and eat him.
3. On the one hand, the vegetarian Hindu Pi is repulsed at having to kill other living things—the flying fish. Yet, it is, interestingly enough, Pi's Christianity and Islam that give him the words to express that he felt "guilty as Cain."
4. Pi offers two explanations. First, he says that he was caught up in the victory of capturing the fish, that catching the Dorado was a victory, an act of retaliation against the Natural World for his predicament. Finally, however, he admits that a human can grow accustomed to anything—even killing. This second explanation is further evidence of Pi's descent into animal brutality.

Chapter 62
1. This is another attempt at mild, ironic humor. The game “I Spy” was one of the ridiculous suggestions for passing the time in the survival manual. Suggesting this game as a pastime clearly trivializes the plight of the castaway. Richard Parker represents the greatest threat to Pi’s survival. For Pi to talk about waking up and facing this threat in terms of the childish game is ironically humorou.
2. Pi's calling the stills sea cows most likely refers to the similarity of the water-collection bags to a cow's udder.
3. Pi is slowly gaining control over the tiger. He has fed and watered him a second time. When he blows the whistle again, it is to stress that he controls Richard Parker's food and drink. Hearing the whistle, Richard Parker goes back under the tarp to yield to Pi, who is establishing himself as the alpha male.

Chapter 63
1. 227 days, over 7 months total
2. He lists these survival rates so we can compare others’ experiences with his.
3. Pi survived for over seven months at sea (227 days), and every day was very much like every other day. Listing Pi's daily routine is one way of emphasizing the day-after-day sameness of the ordeal.
4. Prayer plays a huge part in Pi's routine. Every section of his day has a prayer time. This emphasizes that Pi is a person of faith, not merely one who participates in the rituals of religion.
5. We are not hearing the account of Pi’s adventure in the order in which the events and realizations happened. He is simply telling about them as he remembers them.

Chapters 64 – 65
1. Earlier, Pi concluded that, if he was going to survive, it would have to be on his own effort. He could not rely on any outside help. Now, however, he cannot control where the boat is going. He cannot chart a course, he would not know where to chart a course to, and he does not have to means to follow the course were he to chart one. So, in this aspect, Pi is completely dependent on outside forces.
Chapters 66 – 67
1. Pi ends this chapter lamenting that he had “descended to a level of savagery [he] never imagined possible.” This suggests that (1) he is likely to descend even further before the novel is finished, and (2) the necessities of survival are not always compatible with spiritual ideals (like Hindu vegetarianism).
2. Some of the tiny creatures provide Pi with food while the entire civilization provides him with distracting entertainment.
3. Rather than being merely foreign objects floating on the ocean, the raft and boat are becoming part of the ocean community.

Chapters 68 – 69
1. The horizon represents a circle with Pi at the center. The closer Pi is to sea level, the shorter will be the radius of the horizon-circle—less than two-and-a-half miles—and, thus, the diameter (less than five miles) and, thus, the circumference. Pi calculates that there is virtually no chance, given the vastness of the Pacific Ocean, for a ship to coincidentally enter the tiny circle of Pi’s sight.
2. While at sea, the fired flares smelled like the cooking spice, cumin, which reminded Pi of home. Now that he is an adult on dry land, the smell of cumin reminds Pi of the signal flares and being at sea.

Chapters 70 – 71
1. Chapter 70 ends with Pi’s decision that he must be more intentional in taking control of Richard Parker and establishing his territory on the life boat. The theme being expressed is Pi’s descent from humanity into animalism. Now, like an animal, he is concerned with establishing his territory.
2. Once again, Martel resorts to a numbered list.
3. He wants to get Richard Parker to the point where he only has to blow a whistle to make the tiger retreat to his place under the tarpaulin.
4. Despite his protests to the contrary, Pi is still humane enough not to want to make a fellow living being suffer unnecessarily. These are concerns based, not on a primal survival instinct, but on a higher, spiritual belief.

Chapter 72
1. Pi reminds us that, in the wild, a physical conflict between two animals will most likely result in the death of one of them. Even for tigers, violence is the last result because the tiger “knows” that a fight will mean “kill or be killed.”
2. Being the food provider proves to be insufficient. The threat of physical violence proves to be insufficient. But when Pi is able to demonstrate that he has control over whether Richard Parker feels well or seasick, the tiger stops fighting back.

Chapter 73
1. The words and ideas contained in a book would mean some form of human contact for Pi. He would also be able to read messages of hope and encouragement.
2. He sees placing a book of scripture, a book of spiritual guidance and sustenance, into the hands of possibly weary and discouraged travelers a wonderfully generous gesture. He says that this is a much better way to spread the truths of a religion than booming sermons from a pulpit.
3. He does not specifically say, but it clearly has to do with the need to communicate, have some form of human interaction, and find encouragement.

Chapter 74
1. Pi is learning the difference between faith and religion, that God can be worshipped and prayed to without the intercession of a priest or kneeling on a prayer rug facing Mecca.
2. Pi describes faith as an act of letting go and trusting, and he has found it very difficult to let go and trust during his ordeal.
3. The primary theme of this chapter has something to do with the triumph of faith over mere religion and over intense suffering. Even while fearing for his life and suffering the privations he has been suffering, Pi maintains his observances of faith. He prays even without the prescribed trappings of his three professed religions. He is also to find humor and strength in the deterioration of his clothes, shouting out that it is God’s pants that are deteriorating, God’s hat that is falling apart, etc.


**Chapters 75 – 76**
1. *In these two chapters, Pi is a loving son singing “Happy Birthday” to his mother, and a base animal using another animal’s feces to maintain his animal dominance. Martel is establishing the theme of Pi’s continual descent from the spiritual to the base.*

**Chapter 77**
1. *This section is reminiscent of some of the suggestions in the survival manual in Chapter 58.*
2. *At this point in his struggle to survive, Pi will eat anything.*
3. *As a spiritual being, Pi had always been taught and believed that happiness and satisfaction came from things other than physical pleasures and comfort. But when one is reduced to one’s lowest, happiness hinges on one thought: whether or not one’s belly is full.*

**Chapter 78**
1. *As he has already done a few times already, Martel is trying to convey a sense of the passing of endless time. This time he focuses on the changing appearance of the ocean and the sky as day follows day.*
2. *Pi says “to be a castaway is to be a point perpetually at the centre of a circle.” He adds, “[a castaway’s] gaze is always a radius” and “the circumference is never great.” These allusions are particularly appropriate for Pi because his nickname is the term that refers to the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter.*
3. *He names boredom and terror.*

**Chapters 79 – 80**
1. *This is the first time—quite possibly in Richard Parker’s entire life—that his prey has fought back and caused him injury.*
2. *In the Gospels of Matthew and John, one of Jesus’ most notable miracles was feeding five thousand people with only two fishes and five loaves of bread. In Hinduism, Matsya is a part-man, part-fish incarnation of the god Vishnu. Clearly, Pi, who is a devotee of both Hinduism and Christianity, is combining the two notions into a single prayer of gratitude for the catch of a huge fish.*
3. *Pi establishes his mastery simply by the force of his will.*

**Chapters 81 – 82**
1. *Pi is Richard Parker’s main provider of food and water, so Richard Parker never attacks him.*
2. *Pi realizes that he eats as hastily, as ravenously, as indiscriminately, and as noisily as Richard Parker. This is significant because Pi’s coming of age seems to involve his descent from spiritual humanity to a form of savagery.*

**Chapter 83**
1. *This is the worst storm Pi has experienced, and it costs his a great deal of what he has accomplished before. If Pi is going to experience any sort of despair, it is going to be as a result of this storm.*
2. *The chapter ends of the suspenseful note that Pi has little chance left to survive. The sea has taken his provisions, and he has only one orange whistle left with which to maintain his dominance over Richard Parker.*

**Chapters 84 – 85**
1. *Pi is alone, bereft of friends and family. His one constant companion is also a constant threat to his life. He has several times claimed to believe he is also in the presence of God, but the whales offer him the opportunity to imagine a real and physical and caring presence.*
2. *For Pi, it is a moment of wonder, both the same as and the opposite of the calm, starry night when he realized the vastness of the Universe. Any revelation of divinity—like the starry sky and the powerful lightning bolts—provides Pi the opportunity to focus his thoughts on bigger things than his own personal suffering.*

**Chapter 86**
1. Pi’s lifeboat is so close to the tanker, and it bears upon him so quickly and passes so quickly—with no apparent threat of collision or capsizing. Plus, no one sees or hears Pi either on the boat’s approach or departure. All of this suggests that the ship was merely an illusion.

2. If he did not have Richard Parker, Pi would be completely alone. Also, Richard Parker is another living soul, a being who has suffered and struggled to survive even as Pi has.

**EXTRACT H:**

1. He has seen the first ship after months at sea and a ship means a chance of rescue.
2. He expresses his struggle emotionally (“hurt and frustration”). He has not moved much in a long time (“I got to my feet, the first time in a long time”). He implies that they were in fact dying (“Life is ours once again”) (ANY TWO).
3. The repetition has the effect of heightening emotion/building to a climax but instead there is an anti-climax when the ship sails by, so the reader feels Pi’s painful disappointment.
4. A) the ship passes/does not stop (any appropriate answer).
   B) He is afraid to voice the unthinkable. It is too terrible to contemplate. He does not wish to lose hope. Losing hope would break his spirit and he would die (ANY TWO).
5. The ship is described as wearing a priest’s robe of black metal with a white trim and as a mountain.
6. He sees Pi as alpha because Pi has taken charge with his whistle and he feeds Richard Parker. He sees him as an odd tiger because he does not look or sound like a tiger and yet he has some of the behaviours of one, such as marking his territory. He is unpredictable because Pi decides when to speak or shout or whistle – Richard Parker thus cannot predict Pi’s behaviour – he does not follow animal instinct.
7. A) This metaphor compares Pi’s emotions towards Richard Parker to a flood in terms of how overwhelming these feelings are.
   B) The alliteration of the “f” in “unfettered, infinite…feeling flooded” emphasizes the immensity of the feeling / how overwhelmed Pi is.
8. Richard Parker is the strong side of Pi’s personality, the side that can kill and eat like a carnivore to survive. This side is essential to his survival thus by embracing his killer-self, he ensure his survival. In fact it is the first time that pi verbally embraces the tiger – he has moved full circle from first being afraid of the tiger and wanting to kill it, to feeding it to ensure its survival, and finally embracing it wholeheartedly as he realizes that Richard Parker is as essential to his survival as he is to Richard Parker’s survival.

**Chapters 87 – 88**

1. It seems as though Pi is playing with death, toying, perhaps with suicide.
2. After so many days at sea—representing the natural world—the first inkling of humanity that Pi encounters is evidence of humanity’s pollution of that natural world.

**Chapters 89 – 90**

1. Clearly, the ink and the paper represent something, possibly the substance of survival versus the spirit. Earlier, Pi thought the biggest challenge to his survival would have been running out of supplies, but now it is his will that is faltering.
2. Blindness typically represents a lack of knowledge or understanding, an inability to perceive a truth. Pi’s blindness could represent that, on a symbolic or metaphorical level, he cannot see, or is not aware, of the truth of his situation.
3. Pi is upset because he can no longer care for Richard Parker.
4. It is highly unlikely that two blind castaways, drifting aimlessly and with no awareness of or control over their whereabouts, would by sheer coincidence meet one another in the Pacific Ocean.
5. Pi’s use of stories to bolster his and the Frenchman’s spirits illustrates the importance of story to human survival—especially emotional and psychological survival.
6. He says, “Something in me died then that has never come back to life.” The Frenchman’s death has altered Pi irrevocably.
Chapter 91
1. Pi’s tears—expressions of grief and remorse—clears out his eyes and restores his sight.
2. Pi descends into cannibalism.

Chapter 92
1. Pi admits that many people will not believe this part, but that it is “part of the story and it happened to [him].”
2. Pi has to be careful that what he thinks is an island won’t turn out to be a mirage, an illusion.
3. The island appears to be free-floating and made completely of algae. The algae is edible and tastes sweet. The island is dotted with hundreds of freshwater ponds. The island is populated by hundreds of meerkats, who have no fear of predators. At night, the island, which appears hilly in the daytime, flattens out. At night, dead fish float to the surface of the freshwater pools, but by daylight they are gone. The meerkats sleep in the trees at night and return to their burrows in the morning. Richard Parker, who is content to leave the lifeboat every morning and roam the island, returns to the boat every night. One night he returns late to the boat, obviously distressed and licking his paws. The one time Pi touches the island at night with his bare feet, he feels a stinging, burning pain. Pi discovers what he thinks is a fruit-bearing tree, but the fruit turns out to be curled leaves with a human tooth at the center of each.
4. As a predatory animal, Richard Parker has an instinct to hunt. All those months at sea have caused him to keep his hunting instinct pent up. He kills to eat, but he also kills simply to satisfy his urge to kill.
5. Taking into consideration the ease with which Pi is able to secure food and water and the native meerkats’ lack of fear of predators—all conditions Pi told us earlier were the “two relentless imperatives of the wild”—the island is reminiscent of the biblical Garden of Eden.
6. This chapter, symbolically Pi’s return to carefree innocence. The horrendous realization that he cannot be innocent again, immediately follows the most horrible incident in Pi’s fight for survival—his descent into cannibalism.

EXTRACT I:
1. It is a free-floating island made up of what appears to be tube-shaped seaweed. He later discovers the island consists of carnivorous algae and deep non-salt pools that fill daily with dead fish. Thousands of meerkats live on the island.
2. The sincerity of the personal, one-on-one (“you” and “me) tone makes the reader want to believe Pi (even when his story is “hard to believe”) / Because Pi seems to level with the reader, almost confiding in the reader by conceding that it is hard to believe, the reader is biased towards Pi.
3. I agree. It is unrealistic that he would rest and enjoy the elements when he is on a lifeboat with a tiger for months, facing imminent death. OR I disagree. It is realistic. Nobody can endure tension of a shipwreck, loss of family and months alone on a lifeboat with a tiger without resting and just being in the moment – sleep would help him survive.
4. He thinks he is seeing tress which would signify land, salvation and food. (ANY THREE)
5. The simile compares Pi’s eyelids to lumberjacks in that when he closes his eyes and his eyelids come down, he expects the trees to disappear, as a lumberjack would cut down trees.
6. Music appeals to the sense of hearing while eyes refer to sigh. The mangled “like music” idiom reminds the reader of Pi’s mixed Anglo-Indian heritage while conveying a humorous way how excited Pi would be to see land after months at sea.
7. Both green, the colour of land and vegetation and orange, the colour of the lifeboat (and of Richard Parker) reflect survival.
8. He calls it a “mental delusion” a “dream” and a “fanciful” island, which means far-fetched, imaginary or unlikely.

Chapters 93 – 94
1. For 227 days, Pi has essentially kept Richard Parker alive, providing him with food and drinking water. He “tamed” Richard Parker to the extent that the tiger accepted him as the Alpha male in their little streak of two. (A group of tigers is called either a “streak” or an “ambush.”) It, therefore, bothers Pi that Richard Parker is able to run off with no sense of farewell or gratitude—no emotion that would be appropriate at a human parting.
2. Pi says that it is only by “conclud[ing] things properly” that one can let go of them. Not to conclude something properly will be to forever live with regret.

3. He says that people naturally turn to God in the depths of despair. The apparently fruit-bearing tree in the center also supports this interpretation. When the tree’s “fruit,” however, turns out to be curled leaves with human teeth in the center, the entire nature of the island changes in Pi’s perception, and he flees. This Eden, then, is tainted, illusory. After everything Pi has experienced on the life boat, he cannot return to a state of innocence at all resembling what he knew in his home in India.

Part Three: Benito Juarez Infirmary, Tomatlan, Mexico

Chapters 95 – 96
1. Since the Tsimtsum was a Japanese ship, it is the responsibility of the Japanese government to investigate the accident that caused it to sink. They have come to record Pi’s account of what happened to the ship.

2. The men themselves seem incompetent in their attempt to read the map, negotiate with car rental companies and auto mechanics, and find their way to Pi. This mirrors the incompetence Pi notes in the crew of the Tsimtsum. Their responses to Pi’s requests for food and their preoccupation with their own hunger suggest that they are oblivious to Pi’s condition or the nature of the ordeal he has endured.

Chapters 97 – 98
1. We already know that the author—at Pi’s request—is trying to write his book, tell Pi’s story, in exactly one hundred chapters. This is a tactic to make that happen. It is evidence of the story’s being crafted for effect rather than related for the sake of its factual accuracy.

2. The interviewers’ side comments, which Pi presumably cannot understand because the men are speaking to each other in Japanese, bring some humor back into the novel. The men express their hunger, their disbelief, their wish that they had taken the day off, all in contrast to the seriousness of their official business and the horrors of Pi’s story.

3. In the way they conduct their business and their reactions to Pi’s tale, the interviewers are both clowns and foils for Pi.

4. Pi has experienced severe privation and been on the point of starvation numerous times in the past seven months. He has learned to hoard food while it is plentiful so that he can survive on the reserves when food becomes scarce.

Chapter 99
1. Pi says that most people travel too quickly to notice things. He was traveling slow and saw everything.

2. This exchange gets at the nature of truth and humankind’s ambivalent search for it. Pi equates the interviewers’ disbelief with the disbelief of those who doubted Copernicus and Darwin—because those scientists proposed ideas that contradicted what was currently “known.” When Mr. Okamoto insists that the floating island of algae contradicts the laws of nature, Pi counters by questioning whether Okamoto honestly thinks the laws of nature are already absolutely known. In this exchange, Pi represents the philosopher or scientist always struggling to push beyond the boundaries of what is known to discover what is not yet known. The interviewers represent the complacent masses who believe there is nothing new to be discovered.

3. Pi points out that other things, like love and the existence of God, are also hard to believe. Pi also reminds Mr. Okamoto that Christopher Columbus also believed only what he saw—he’d landed on a continent previously unknown to Europeans, and he thought he had to be on land that was known. Pi asks Okamoto what he does in the dark when he sees nothing. Does he then believe nothing?

4. The zebra represents the Chinese sailor. In the first story, the zebra has a broken leg. In the second, the Chinese sailor has a broken leg. The hyena is the French cook. In the first version of Pi’s story, the hyena is hideous, in appearance and in action. This is what Pi thinks of the cook. Also, the hyena kills the zebra by biting off his leg. The cook cuts off the leg of the Chinese sailor, killing him. The orangutan is Pi’s mother. Just as the orangutan slaps the hyena, so Pi’s mother slaps the French cook. Later, as the orangutan and the hyena fight on the lifeboat, so do Pi’s mother and the cook; and, as the hyena eventually kills the orangutan, the cook kills Pi’s mother. Finally, the tiger, Richard Parker, represents
the animal part of Pi himself. Pi kills the cook because the cook killed Pi’s mother. Then, because he is starving, he eats the cook. In the first story, Richard Parker kills and eats the hyena.

5. There are a couple of possible reasons. First of all, the story with the animals is a better “story.” As Pi says, it is surprising, exciting, at times heartwarming, and is at least partially true. Secondly, if the second story is the factual account, they too may feel that the facts are too horrible to examine directly, so the first story is “better.”

6. First, the Japanese men represent a rational corporate interest that has nothing to do with what happened to Pi. They actually believe that Pi’s reluctance to talk about what happened is the result of his fear of legal action being taken against him! Second, they are most interested in the part of the story about which Pi know the least and about which he is least interested.

**EXTRACT J:**

1. It is near the end of Part 3 when the Author/narrator includes the transcripts, toward the end of the novel, after Pi has told the Japanese officials the story with animals but before he tells them the macabre story without animals.

2. The transcript dialogue is in normal font, the Author’s observations are in italics and the Japanese officials’ comments in Japanese are in a cursive font.

3. It is the one with animals because of elements such as the floating bananas and the carnivorous island.

4. His attitude is blasé, casual or unfazed which is funny in this serious context. Furthermore, his focus on food and his surprise at the Japanese officials’ disbelief is funny.

5. It is an easy point of entry rather than focusing immediately on the tiger or the other animals, which seem far-fetched/incredible/implausible./They are being polite and gentle. The effect is that it creates humour and Pi is almost given the upper hand in the interview which allows him to feel a bit more comfortable first.

6. The repetition emphasizes the silence and distance and establishes the awkwardness of the interview, and distance between Pi and the officials in terms of understanding and the different worlds they currently occupy. Pi’s is a world of faith and theirs is one of facts./The repetition emphasizes that the officials are unsure of how to handle Pi and his fantastic statements of faith which results in the awkward silences, and they do not understand him or believe him, preferring to hear facts.

7. Their responses are insensitive and blunt. They admit to this when they say, “I’m sorry to be so blunt” and then they insensitively go on to say that “we don’t mean to hurt your feelings, but you don’t really expect us to believe you?” They are unsympathetic, changing topics in a blunt way which suggests a lack of empathy, as in “It’s a pity. Now about…”

8. The Venus flytrap is a carnivorous plant that one would not believe existed unless one saw it in the same way that the algae island has carnivorous tress which the officials are finding hard to believe exist. Thus this illustration is very effective in conveying Pi’s point that incredible things do exist.

**Chapter 100**

1. Ultimately, in terms of the story, the cause of the shipwreck is irrelevant. Neither version of the story—nor the truth that underlies each—would be altered by knowing the cause.

2. Earlier in the book, Pi asked the author if he could write a book in exactly one hundred chapters. This, to Pi, would represent closure, finality.

3. Pi’s truth is still the story of Richard Parker. Were it not for Mr. Okamoto’s letter to the author, the reader probably would not even consider the possibility that there might be a second version.

4. While, on the surface, it might seem that Okamoto has finally learned to recognize the validity of the Richard Parker version of Pi’s story, his word choice indicates otherwise: “Very few castaways can claim to have survived so long at sea as Mr. Patel, and none in the company of an adult Bengal tiger.” The fact of Pi’s being at sea for 227 days is not questioned. The idea of his being at sea with a tiger still is.
ESSAY QUESTIONS:

Question 1:

“The relationship with deity and questions relating to worship and commitment are issues addressed in the ‘Life of Pi’.

The central theme of Yann Martel's Life of Pi concerns religion and human faith in God. However, the novel pointedly refrains from advocating any single religious faith over another. Instead, the novel investigates the nature of religious faith itself. This theme is embodied most clearly in the novel’s protagonist, Pi Patel, who is a devout follower of three very different religions. Pi has studied and memorized the stories of all the various incarnations of the Hindu gods, maintaining shrines in his home to many of them. He also possesses a crucifix and a rosary, going to church on Sundays and praying to Jesus. Lastly, he owns and proudly uses a prayer rug, observing the call to prayer several times a day as a devoted Muslim. By comfortably following three of the world’s major religions, Pi represents not just the possibility of peaceful coexistence between different faiths but also the belief that different religions are merely alternative paths to the same destination.

The specific doctrines of Pi’s three faiths make very little difference to him. When comparing these religions to one another, Pi seems to conclude in his innocence that there need not be conflict between them. For him, each religion simply emphasizes what is most powerful and true in the others according to its own strengths. The religions resemble different chapters of one very long book, each chapter setting up and feeding into the next. The novel contrasts Pi’s easy acceptance of his three faiths with the competition and arguments between the leaders of those faiths. In Munnar, while Pi is walking in a busy marketplace with his parents, they happen upon the pandit, imam, and priest who are the leaders of Pi’s Hindu, Muslim, and Christian faiths, respectively. When the leaders discover that Pi has been following three different religions, each attempts to claim Pi for himself. They reason that one boy cannot follow three different paths, and they begin to debate which religion would be best for Pi. When the leaders demand that Pi choose one faith to the exclusion of all others, he blurts out, “I just want to love God,” embarrassing the hot-headed religious leaders and putting a stop to their debate.

This tension between reason, logic, and argument, on one hand, and simple religious faith and the desire to love God, on the other hand, lies at the novel’s core. The human capacity for reason is contrasted to religious faith repeatedly, nowhere more poignantly than in the chapters showing Pi adrift on the Pacific Ocean, where his faith, not his reason, enables Pi to survive: I was alone and orphaned in the middle of the Pacific hanging onto an oar, an adult tiger in front of me, sharks beneath me, a storm raging about me. Had I considered my prospects in the light of reason, I surely would have given up and let go of the oar, hoping that I might drown before being eaten.

Pi’s refusal to consider his predicament “in the light of reason” opens up space for his faith in God to flourish, and this faith sustains him even through the darkest, most fearful moments. Fear, Pi realizes, is “life’s only true opponent,” and he holds back the fear with his faith, no matter what religion embodies that faith.

The novel also explores another meaning of faith—the human capacity to believe what is unbelievable. Pi’s story challenges readers with plot twists that sound impossible. That Pi survives 227 days adrift on a lifeboat in the Pacific Ocean is remarkable enough; that he survives this time in the company of a Bengal tiger or that he happens to run into a floating island of carnivorous algae strains readers’ ability to suspend their disbelief. A sceptical attitude toward the narrative is embodied by Mr. Okamoto and Mr. Chiba, who at first refuse to believe Pi’s stories about a Bengal tiger and carnivorous algae. They insist that his story contradicts reality, to which Pi replies, “You want a story that won’t surprise you. That will confirm what you already know. That won’t make you see higher or further or differently. You want a flat story.”

When Pi gives them the flat story they want, a story that fails to contradict what they are prepared to believe, the men become excited by the prospect that this second version is the truth. However, Pi is not finished with them or their scepticism. He demonstrates that the facts of both stories are irrelevant to the men’s purpose of finding out what caused the Tsimtsum to sink, and he points out that the men are in a position to verify neither of the two versions. Then, he asks, “Which is the better story, the story with animals or the story without animals?” The men agree that the story with animals is superior, which prompts...
Pi to add, "And so it goes with God." This is faith, Pi seems to say. Since it is the nature of religious faith that it can never be proven, just as the facts of Pi's journey across the Pacific can never be verified, the question is not a matter of reason but of belief. Pi seems to argue that what should compel one to believe a story is whether the story is a good one—whether it helps readers "see higher or further or differently."

**Question 2:**

Pi's name
Pi's full name is Piscine Molitor Patel. He was named after a family friend, who loved to swim and whose favourite swimming pool was the Piscine Molitor in Paris. Instead of giving their son their friend's name, Pi's parents named him after the pool! Because he is constantly teased about his name ("Pissing Patel"), he decides to shorten it simply to Pi.

Pi is a mathematical figure that represents the number 3.14. According to Math theorem it is an irrational number because it cannot be expressed as a fraction. It is also a constant: "Pi is always the same number, no matter which circle you use to compute it." It is also an ancient number, known to the Egyptians and the Babylonians.

In changing his name, Pi goes from being a joke to being a significant "number"--maybe a little irrational, but constant as well.

Piscine Molitor Patel
Piscine Molitor Patel is the protagonist and, for most of the novel, the narrator. In the chapters that frame the main story, Pi, as a shy, graying, middle-aged man, tells the author about his early childhood and the shipwreck that changed his life. This narrative device distances the reader from the truth. We don't know whether Pi's story is accurate or what pieces to believe. This effect is intentional; throughout Pi emphasizes the importance of choosing the better story, believing that imagination trumps cold, hard facts. As a child, he reads widely and embraces many religions and their rich narratives that provide meaning and dimension to life. In his interviews with the Japanese investigators after his rescue, he offers first the more fanciful version of his time at sea. But, at their behest, he then provides an alternative version that is more realistic but ultimately less appealing to both himself and his questioners. The structure of the novel both illustrates Pi's defining characteristic, his dependence on and love of stories, and highlights the inherent difficulties in trusting his version of events.

Though the narrative jumps back and forth in time, the novel traces Pi's development and maturation in a traditional bildungsroman, or coming-of-age story. Pi is an eager, outgoing, and excitable child, dependent on his family for protection and guidance. In school, his primary concerns involve preventing his schoolmates from mispronouncing his name and learning as much as he can about religion and zoology. But when the ship sinks, Pi is torn from his family and left alone on a lifeboat with wild animals. The disaster serves as the catalyst in his emotional growth; he must now become self-sufficient. Though he mourns the loss of his family and fears for his life, he rises to the challenge. He finds a survival guide and emergency provisions. Questioning his own values, he decides that his vegetarianism is a luxury under the conditions and learns to fish. He capably protects himself from Richard Parker and even assumes a parental relationship with the tiger, providing him with food and keeping him in line. The devastating shipwreck turns Pi into an adult, able to fend for himself out in the world alone.

Pi's belief in God inspires him as a child and helps sustain him while at sea. In Pondicherry, his atheistic biology teacher challenges his Hindu faith in God, making him realize the positive power of belief, the need to overcome the otherwise bleakness of the universe. Motivated to learn more, Pi starts practicing Christianity and Islam, realizing these religions all share the same foundation: belief in a loving higher power. His burgeoning need for spiritual connection deepens while at sea. In his first days on the lifeboat, he almost gives up, unable to bear the loss of his family and unwilling to face the difficulties that still await him. At that point, however, he realizes that the fact he is still alive means that God is with him; he has been given a miracle. This thought gives him strength, and he decides to fight to remain alive. Throughout his adventure, he prays regularly, which provides him with solace, a sense of connection to something greater, and a way to pass the time.

**Question 3:**
Religion plays an important role in Pi’s life.
- Pi comes from a family that is not religious. From a young age he is very religious.
- Initially Pi’s religion can be seen as youthfull enthusiasm but we soon find out this is not the case. Pi’s first religion is Hinduism. Aunt Rohini introduces him to it at a very young age.
- Pi’s second religion is Christianity. While on holiday in Madras, Father Martin introduces him to Christianity when he is 14 years old.
- Pi’s third religion is Islam. Satish Kumar introduces him to Islam when he is 15 years old.
- Pi believes in three religions at the same time, Christianity, Islam and Hinduism.
- Adult Pi studied religious studies at university which shows us religion is very important to him.
- The three religious leaders believe Pi should only follow one religion but Pi believes the opposite because the religions have things in common.
- The contrast between the point of view of the religious leaders and Pi shows that religion is important to his.
- These religious leaders treat Pi badly but he stays true to all three religions.
- From a young age Pi uses different religious symbols like a prayer rug.
- Adult Pi still believes in all three religions because when his house is described we also learn about all the different religious symbols in his house.
- Religion gives Pi’s life a sense of structure and meaning. He understands life through religion.

Question 4

The view that a person can follow only one religion seems obvious. Each religion has a separate set of rules and rituals, and people limit themselves to the teachings of their own holy books and traditions. Most individuals keep to the conventions of their religions, and do not open their minds to the wider vision that more than one religion can be correct.

Pi comes across Hinduism for the first time from his Aunt. He believes that Hinduism’s rituals and colours are exquisite and show the beauty of worship.

Christianity was brought into Pi’s life when he meets Father Francis who explains Christianity. Pi is taken by the notion that an all-powerful deity could love his followers so much that he would be willing to put himself on earth to be treated badly. Pi loves that Christianity is for Love.

Pi is introduced to Islam by the Baker. He appreciates the dedication and self-control that it takes to be a Muslim. Pi enjoys the feeling of being close to God when he prays on his prayer rug.

Pi believes that one should ‘choose the better story’. To him, choosing to see the good in all religious beliefs, as well as Science, enables him to create his ‘better story’ by being three times more likely to be closer to God. Pi’s aim is not the practices of people’s version of religion, but more his ability to use as much information as he can to be as close as possible to the God that he loves so dearly. Pi seems to love with the over-enthusiastic manner of a child; Pi’s faith is unwavering.

Many people – including the ‘three wise men’ and Pi’s family – do not understand Pi’s belief in three religions. It is ‘normal’ to follow one religion or none at all. This reveals an ignorance and prejudice in others as they are unwilling to concede to the possibility that there may be a more unconventional way of believing in God.

Question 5:

Despite the fact that he faced many struggles throughout the novel (majorly part 2), he manages to remain optimistic and determined to find a way to escape. In most cases, a person would have just given up under the circumstances he fell under, but Pi had faith in getting off the ship and finding land. He never gave up despite the fact that he knew that he’d never see his family again, and he had to survive for 227 days with a ferocious tiger, and little food.
He had to overcome his fear of killing animals in his struggle for survival. Pi went from hesitating to kill a fish, to becoming comparable to a professional fisherman. Although there were many thoughts going through his head to just jump off the boat and put an end to everything, his perseverance overcame his doubt and he did anything possible to survive.

Faith in God - PRAYER
Knowledge of animals from ZOO
Having been a strong swimmer
Creating Richard Parker to help him deal with his animal/survival side.
RP serves two purposes. He helps Pi to create a boundary in his mind between himself and his vicious acts of survival. He also says that he needs to stay alive in order to provide RP with food and water.

Studying the survival guide found in life boat.

Pi survives mentally after seven months at sea on a lifeboat by keeping his mind busy with the following: completing daily tasks, such as reading, fishing and writing a diary; taming Richard Parker; and practicing religious rituals.

All of these things help Pi to keep his mind active so he doesn't succumb to depression and hopelessness. By chapter 63, he creates a set schedule that he follows each day in order to keep his sanity. Many of his chores include checking ropes, feeding and cleaning up after Richard Parker, fishing, and maintaining the solar stills. Much of Pi's attention is on the tiger, though, because he always needs to watch out for the one thing that could eat him.

His humanity and civilization was affected predominantly by having to kill or be killed (the French cook) and also by having to eat human flesh in order to survive.

SOURCES:

Life of Pi by Yann Martel
Life of Pi Guided Reading Questions
Oxford Exam Success – Life of Pi Study Guide