



Colorado Book Club Resource

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA BY ERNEST HEMINGWAY

1. Discuss the baseball imagery in the book. What does the "great Dimaggio" symbolize? What does the "bone spur" symbolize?
2. When Santiago was a boy, he saw "lions on the beaches" in Africa. What do these lions symbolize? Why does he dream about Africa and the lions every night?
3. What is the difference, according to Santiago, between those who think of the sea as "la mar" and those who speak of it as "el mar"?
4. Discuss some of the things Santiago knows about nature, and the details he reads in the behavior of the birds and fish. How did he learn these things?
5. When Santiago catches the albacore, he "hit him on the head for kindness." Discuss this scene and Santiago's "kindness" in general.
6. Santiago says he is "not religious," but he says his prayers regularly and promises to make a pilgrimage if he catches the fish. Discuss Santiago's religious feeling, both his natural piety and his Catholic piety.
7. Why is "no one worthy of eating" the great marlin?
8. In one of the book's most important passages, Santiago thinks, "But it is good that we do not have to try to kill the sun or the moon or the stars. It is enough to live on the sea and kill our true brothers." How do you interpret this statement?

Discussion questions adapted from BookRags.com.



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