



Mid-Atlantic Region Virtual Book Club

Chesapeake Requiem by Earl Swift

8 PM ET on May 12th, 2021

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Part 1: And Every Island Flew Away (Chapters 1-5; pages 9-92)

Nuts and Bolts

1. What was the effect of the ice age on the islands in the Chesapeake? (Ch 4)
2. Without massive interference, what do scientists predict will happen to Tangier island in the coming decades? (Ch 1)
3. What is the connection between sea level rise, erosion and weathering, and the receding mantle? (Part 1)
4. Describe the life cycle of the crab -- what terms should we keep track of as we go through the book? (Ch 2) Include the mating rituals (Ch 5).

Big Questions

5. Who is Earl Swift and why is he writing this book? How does his background influence his view of the island? How do his goals for the book influence his view of the island? (Ch 1)
6. On pages 30- 31, Swift lists a series of “uncomfortable questions” the country will need to confront: what factors do we need to consider when considering “where” needs to be saved? (We’ll be returning to this question throughout the book)

Framing the Story

7. We all know a great teacher needs a great hook—how does Swift hook us into the story? What does the Introduction suggest will be the message of the book? (Intro)
8. One of the challenges of a teacher is to use words to explain a place that students cannot see. How does Swift use language to explain the layout of Tangier Island in his tour around town? Were you able to visualize the town from his descriptions? (Ch 2)
9. How does Swift switch back and forth between the science of the Bay/Crabs/Climate Change and the personal stories? How does he do in that translation? (Overall)

Personal Connection

10. Swift says on page 41 that he'd "make a lousy waterman" because of the schedule—when you were a TAS did you have to adopt a different cycle than your normal sleep schedule? How did you make it work? Would you be able to make it as a waterman with the schedule they outlined? (Ch 3)
11. Would you rather be a scrapper or a potter? Why? (Ch 5)
12. How can the case study of Tangier Island be used as an anchoring phenomenon or driving question for student-led learning? (Part 1)

Resources for Further Exploration

Multimedia Connection

Check out this 2017 video made by the Virginia Tourism Board: [Tangier Island](#) (you can hear Ooker's accent and see some of the island in color).