



## Alumni Book Club: The Underworld by Susan Casey

Discussion Questions for Chapters 1-3



*The Underworld* by Susan Casey

### **Discussion Prompts** (Note that we plan to address these in breakout groups of your choice.)

**“Waterfall” Icebreaker:** What’s on the menu?

(In reference to the theme-based food and drink suggestions email from your moderators – see page 3)

**1. What and where is the deep ocean?**

What do you already know about it, and what are you curious to learn? During your breakout discussion, do a quick Google search to learn more, then share your findings with the group! You can also share something you learned on your TAS Cruise that deepened your understanding of the ocean.

**2. In each of Casey’s dives, something new is discovered.**

What did you discover or learn from reading the Prologue and Chapters 1–3? Reflecting on ship life in olden times versus now, what’s one thing you would have loved or feared about sailing in the past?

**3. Was there a particular sentence or section that stood out to you?**

Did anything resonate with you or strike you as especially evocative? Why? You can also compare this to other books on the ocean you’ve read—how does this section’s tone or perspective differ?

**4. What past assumptions about the deep ocean were mentioned in this section of the book?**

Are there any assumptions we still hold, and what questions about the deep ocean remain unanswered?

**5. Considering the discussion of the Carta Marina, how might you use maps as a teaching tool in your classroom?**

Casey touches on politics, religion, geography, art, history, storytelling, and mythology while discussing this unique map. How could you incorporate these elements into your teaching? If maps aren’t part of your lessons, what other classroom connections can you make from these themes?

### **Extra Resources:**

- NOAA Exploration: <https://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/>
- Ocean Literacy Principles: <https://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/>
- Ocean Literacy Resources: <https://www.marine-ed.org/ocean-literacy/overview>
- Book trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9wMv28ueL10>



### From your moderators: What's on the menu?

Thanks for joining us to study [The Underworld: Journeys to the Depths of the Ocean](#) by Susan Casey. Each week we hope to inspire you with something fun as a more lighthearted way to enjoy the book.

This week, we invite you to try out something from a Jacques Cousteau themed dinner party! Feel free to get as involved (or not) as you want. [Dinners on the Calypso](#) often started with homemade soup and an appetizer before moving on to an elaborate main course - and they always included French red wine. If you want to try out some [seaworthy recipes](#) from Allison's 2019 TAS experience, the soup would be an excellent choice for chilly weather!

And of course, if all you can muster this week is a [Jacques Cousteau themed cocktail](#), no one will fault you for that! For a rough week, you might even consider just picking up some prepped items from Trader Joe's or your local market like their [chocolate croissants](#) or [spinach artichoke dip](#).

If you feel inspired to try any of these ideas prior to (or during) our first meeting, we'd love to hear about how it goes for you!

[NOAA Sustainable Seafood](#)

