

# Individual Learning Packet

## Teaching Unit

# The Cay

by Theodore Taylor

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# The Cay

## Objectives

*By the end of this Unit, the student will be able to:*

1. Describe two major difficulties on the island that Phillip encounters as he tries to survive on his own.
2. Explain how *The Cay* is a coming of age novel by citing incidents from the book.
3. Define various vocabulary words from *The Cay*, including some about ships and life on the island.
4. Follow and describe the theme of prejudice as it is portrayed in the novel.
5. Connect this story to its actual place and time in history.
6. Discuss the believability of the story.
7. Understand the dialect Timothy uses.
8. Discuss the differences between the two main characters regarding
  - Prejudice
  - Optimism
  - Care for the other
  - Work
  - Survival
9. Define and cite examples from the book of the following literary terms:
  - Allusion
  - Climax
  - Coming of age
  - Conflict
  - Dialect
  - Foreshadowing
  - Irony
  - Narrator
  - Plot
  - Setting
  - Simile
  - Theme
10. Appreciate the elements of plot that make this an adventure story.

# The Cay

## Questions for Essay and Discussion

1. As the first chapter opens, we discover exactly how innocent and naive the narrator is. In what way does he demonstrate his innocence? How does he view the world?
2. Phillip shows both a stubborn and a giving, kind side of his character in his opening dialogue with Henrik van Boven. What does he say that shows each of these traits?
3. What makes the island of Curacao so important that the Germans would come all the way from Europe to bomb it?
4. At what point in the story does Phillip begin to understand the true meaning of war? Compare this to how he feels and behaves previously concerning the War.
5. Describe Phillip's mother and father.
6. The author foreshadows events that may happen in the future. Why do you think the author uses foreshadowing?
7. After the boat is torpedoed, Phillip meets Timothy for the first time. Discuss how Phillip's words let the reader know how he feels about Timothy without actually expressing any feelings aloud.
8. Does Timothy's use of dialect affect the reader's perception of his character? How?
9. In Chapter three, Timothy shows wisdom and intellect, but Phillip shows his immaturity. Discuss how you think these differences may contribute to the developing plot?
10. What are several kind things Timothy does for Phillip despite Phillip's obvious disdain for him? Explain why Philip does not see them as kind.
11. Timothy seems to be a man of common sense. What superstitious belief does he hold that seem contradictory to his usually consistent common sense attitude and actions?
12. Why does Timothy want to land on the island? Why does Phillip not want to? Which character do you agree with? Why?
13. In Chapter eight, Timothy decides to go to the reef to catch lobster. Why does Phillip become angry with Timothy and how does his anger color his feelings toward Timothy?

# The Cay

## Chapter 1

### Vocabulary

**aviation** – the science of flying aircraft  
**galleon** – a large sailing ship  
**schooners** – ships with two or more masts  
**trade winds** – winds blowing across the ocean  
**whitecaps** – wave crests with white foam

1. What is the opening setting of the story?  
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2. Where does the narrator want to go in the beginning of the story and what does he want to do there?  
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3. Who is Henrik van Boven?  
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4. What two historical island events did Phillip and Henrik recreate when they were younger?  
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5. What happens to the Amsterdam Navy?  
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**Chapter 4**

## Vocabulary

haze – fog, smoke

1. Describe the living conditions of the whites and blacks in Virginia.

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2. Where is Timothy's home?

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3. Why does Phillip assume that Timothy comes from Africa?

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4. What do we find out about Timothy?

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## **Chapter 12**

### Vocabulary

**malaria** – a disease characterized by fever and chills

1. What does Timothy have at the beginning of the chapter?

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2. What happens to Timothy throughout the chapter?

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5. How does Phillip learn to tell time?

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6. What are some of the things that Phillip finds washed up on the island?

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7. Why do the birds attack Phillip?

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