

## Sharks at Risk Viewing Questions With Answers

**Note:**

The indicated timings are approximate and are based on the PBS broadcast; home video versions may differ slightly.

**Introduction (2:15-5:27)**

1. Who is the king of predators? *the shark*
2. What is the name of the region that Jean Michel Cousteau's team travels to that is south of the Hawaiian Islands?  
*French Polynesia*
3. What is the name of the famous sunken volcano known for being a place where the greatest number of sharks can be found?  
*Rangiroa*
4. What do the powerful currents provide the area in the lagoon with?  
*nutrient-rich waters, perfect hunting ground, perfect place for Cousteau to study sharks*
5. Where does the Ocean Adventures team make its base camp?  
*one of the two small villages on the atoll*
6. Who is Yves Lefevre? *expedition guide*
7. What are the names of the two main passes at Rangiroa?  
*Tiputa and Avatoru*
8. Where in Rangiroa is the largest concentration of gray reef sharks found? *entrance of Tiputa Pass*
9. How many sharks does the guide think the team will see on this dive? *hundreds*

**Rangiroa (5:20-10:40)**

1. How many feet down will the divers go to see the sharks?  
*200 feet*
2. Why is it important for the divers to stay together as a group during the dive? *because the current will make them disperse, and for security—divers always need to be near one another in the event that their equipment malfunctions*
3. How much time will the divers spend at the bottom? *five minutes*
4. What vital roles do the members of this team play?  
*in front of and behind the camera and keeping watch*
5. What is the name of the first shark that approaches the team?  
*the silvertip*
6. What do sharks do to ensure balance between shark and prey?  
*catch the weak and sick, increasing the genetic diversity of fish population; sharks have constant food in return*
7. Who are the primary enforcers of the balance of a species becoming too depleted or overpopulated? *sharks*
8. What species do the divers encounter midway to the bottom?  
*spotted eagle rays*
9. What do the team members find when they finally reach the bottom? *many sharks*
10. How long does it take for some female sharks to mature?  
*up to 25 years*
11. How long is the gestation period (the length of a pregnancy) of some sharks? *24 months*

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### Longline fishing (10:33-14:00)

1. The impact of longline fishing has been \_\_\_\_\_ both on the ocean and on the land. *severe*
2. How many residents live on the atoll on Rangiroa? *3000*
3. Why is Rangiroa's future dependent on fishing? *Rangiroa and the Tuamotu Islands supply over half the fish marketed in all of French Polynesia*
4. What does the president of the local fishermen's association think the key is to saving the future of Rangiroa? *conservation and protecting fish balance*
5. How many fish did the fisherman used to catch every day just a few years ago? *20-30*
6. How many fish does the fisherman catch every day now? *10*
7. Why does the fisherman not see tuna anymore? *longliners have overfished the population*
8. What does the fisherman think the government should do? *regulate the catch and limit boat size*
9. According to the fisherman, why are there so many squid present in the waters at Rangiroa? *not enough fish to eat the squid, so they multiply*
10. How has the absence of large fish due to overfishing affected the local people's economic future? *forced to turn to squid, maybe sharks next*

### Night dive (14:00-16:52)

1. What type of fish gathers and releases its sperm and eggs during the full moon? *surgeon fish*
2. What do the stripes on a fish do to a predator? *confuse the predator*
3. How do sharks breathe? *water must continually flow over their gills*
4. Why does the nurse shark not have to be moving around to breathe? *is able to pump water across its own gills*
5. What plays an important part in the coral reef's food chain? *plankton*

### Fisheries (16:52-20:11)

1. Describe the system set up at the fishery to catch fish. *fish enter in one direction with the tidal flow and cannot escape the same way*
2. What does Jean-Michel Cousteau find inside one of the traps? *representation of the abundant fish species found in Rangiroa*
3. What happens after the fish are trapped? *kept fresh until fisherman herds them into a basket*
4. What kind of material were the fisheries built with traditionally? *coral and straw*

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5. Small-scale fishing like this makes up \_\_\_\_\_ percent of the total commercial catch. *80 percent*
6. What are all the small-scale family fisheries called?  
*South Pacific coastal fishery*
7. What do the fishermen do when they accidentally catch sharks?  
*throw them back*

### Mating behaviors (23:25-27:32)

1. What is the name of the shark that the divers find? *grey reef*
2. How do the males find females during their mating season?  
*identify and follow females by odor; this puts males on edge*
3. Describe the mating ritual of this shark. *males bite female; females have evolved thicker skin to endure this*
4. What has Cousteau spotted that has gone wrong? *an aggressive male has crossed the line from mating to full-on attack*
5. Which species of shark will benefit from the female's death?  
*hammerhead*
6. Why is the fate of the sharks at Rangiroa in danger? *because if fishing practices change, people may start hunting sharks*

### Fishing and finning (27:32-29:57)

1. How many sharks are caught each year? *more than 100 million*
2. What are a growing number of Asian fishermen doing to sharks when they catch them? *cutting off their fins to use in shark fin soup; is a sign of prosperity for the middle class*
3. What are marine biologists concerned about all over the world?  
*removal of predators at top of food chain will affect all life in the ocean*

### Dolphin encounters (29:57-36:21)

1. Which animals are the first to approach the divers? *dolphins*
2. What traits do humans share with dolphins? *intelligence, living in a tight society, using language, taking care of each other and having fun*
3. How do sharks play a role with dolphins? *sharks are dolphins' natural predators; dolphins band together and outnumber sharks*
4. Which is another of the ocean's key predators? *barracuda*
5. What are the world's underwater rain forests known as?  
*coral reefs*
6. "In the end nature will survive, but perhaps \_\_\_\_\_ won't." *we*

### Great white dive (36:21-45:20)

1. List some of the places where large numbers of great whites are found. *near coastlines all over the world; but many are found in northeastern United States, Northern California, Australian coast, South Africa*

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2. What is the name of the area that the team travels to in South Africa? *Cape of Good Hope*
3. What species of seal draws the great white to the Cape of Good Hope? *Cape fur seal*
4. What does Jean Michel Cousteau's guide tell us about how they started opening the shark's mouth? *lured shark with bait and touched the tip of the shark's nose*
5. How do sharks catch a seal? *they recognize it as prey and hit it at high speed from below*
6. What are the divers' real protections from the shark underwater? *each other and tapping the shark with the stick*
7. What does the great white do when it spots the divers? *swims down to investigate*
8. What is the key to not being attacked? *never to lose shark's position and confront it head-on with the stick*
9. How many people do great whites attack every year? *seven or eight*
10. Why do the great white attacks occur? *sharks mistake a human for its preferred prey*
11. What surprised the divers about the sharks? *how gentle and timid they are*
12. How fast can a shark go? *25 miles per hour*
13. How does the shark play a role in the Cape fur seal population? *catches the weak and the sick*

### **African penguins** (46:37-48:06)

1. What percentage has the penguin population decreased by in the last century? *90 percent*
2. What are the greatest threats to the African penguin? *human activities like guano mining, oil pollution from tankers and commercial fishing*
3. What trick does the penguin use to get the shark to go away? *tap them from above*

### **Cousteau's dive and the concluding monologue** (48:06-end)

1. How does Cousteau approach the sharks? *from the surface*
2. What is found in shark fins that is a greater risk to humans than shark attacks? *fins have 42 times more mercury than is safe for human consumption*
3. What are the two myths that Cousteau and his team have dispelled for us? *sharks are not man-eaters; the oceans are not filled with sharks*
4. By what percentage may the population of the hammerhead and the great white have fearfully declined by? *75%—that is three out of four!*
5. What does our future depend on? *ocean, balance between predator and prey, the shark*