



THE GREAT WHITE Shark

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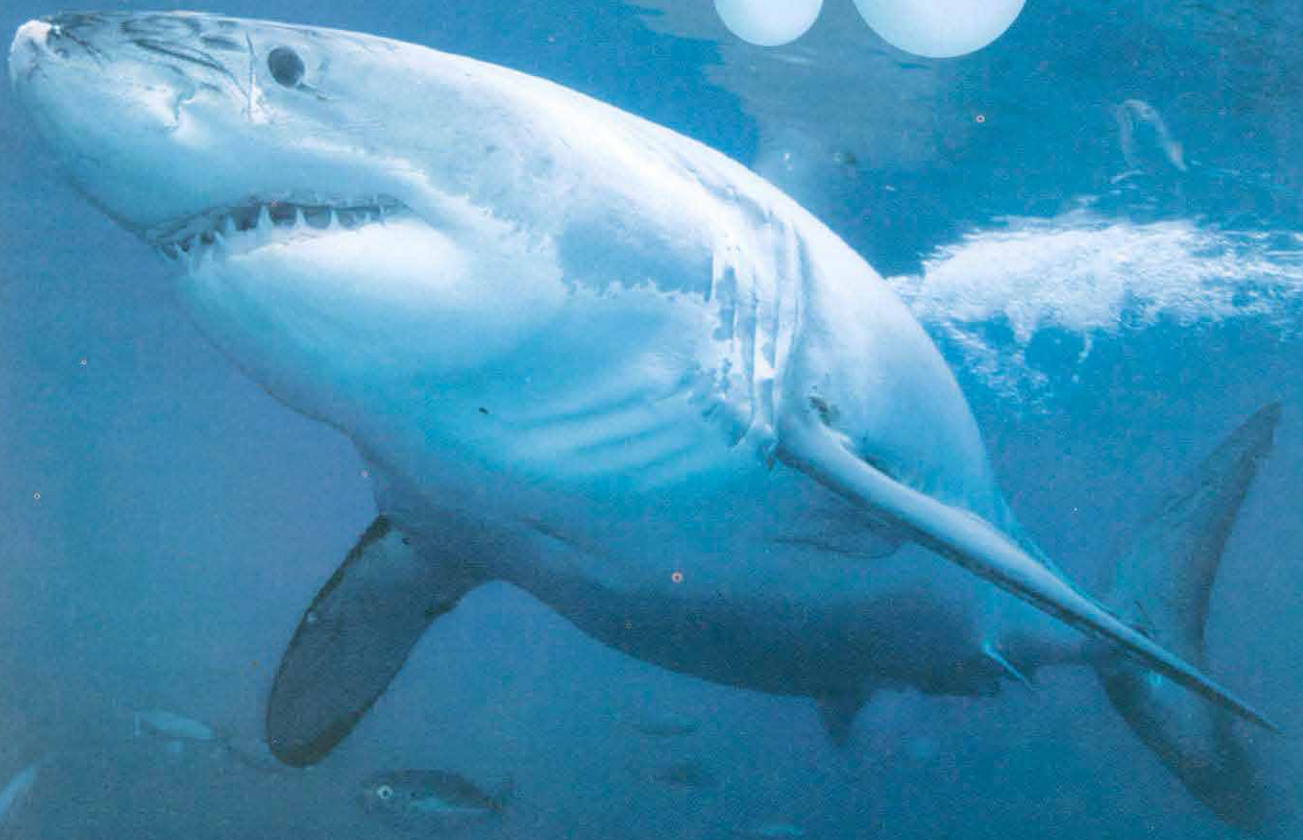
Sharks

Sharks are a kind of fish that are different from other fish mostly because sharks have cartilage instead of bones. Many people fear sharks because they are thought to be violent man-eaters. In reality, out of the hundreds of species of sharks that still exist today, only four species (the great white shark, the bull shark, the tiger shark, and the oceanic whitetip shark) have been involved in unprovoked attacks on humans. Most species of sharks pose no threat to humans because of their size and hunting preferences.

Even though not all sharks hunt large prey, they all share a body structure that is well suited for killing. Shark bodies are very sleek and sharks can generally swim faster than most other sea creatures. The jaws of almost every shark are placed perfectly for gripping, biting, and ripping at their prey. Sharks live in every sea, and can be found at depths ranging from 2,000 meters down all the way up to the ocean's surface. Some species of sharks can even live in freshwater environments, such as lakes and rivers.

The Great White Shark

The great white shark is the most famous species of shark because it is one of the deadliest predators in the ocean. It is also the shark that has attacked and killed the most humans. The great white became popular to most people as the subject of the *Jaws* movies.



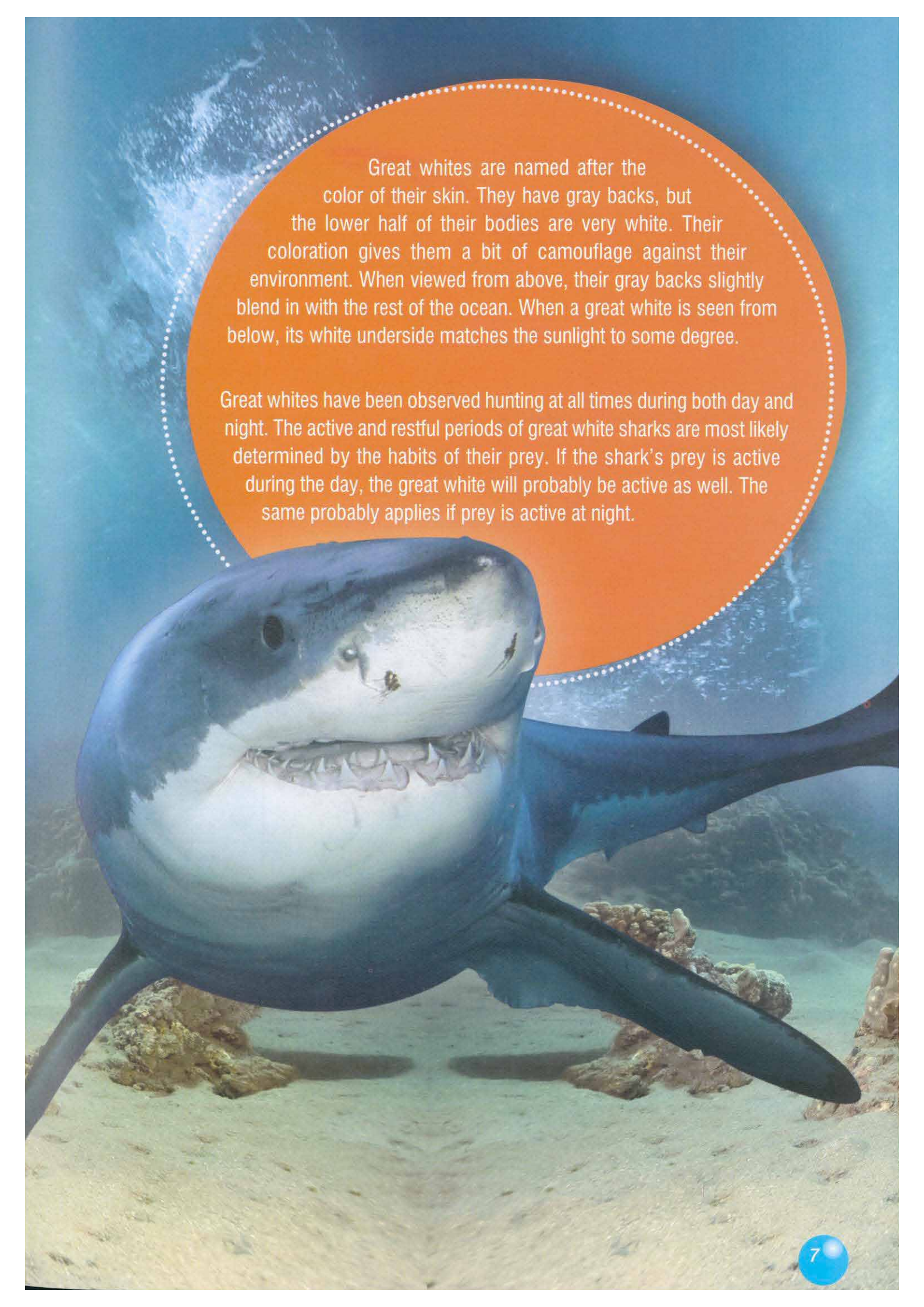
The Shark Awakens

Just before dawn, a great white shark glides slowly through the ocean. The great white does not sleep. Instead of sleeping, it swims very slowly. This way, it uses less energy. Like all sharks, the great white must move constantly to keep water moving through its gills. If the great white stops moving, it will not be able to breathe and will die. As the sun rises, the deadliest predator in the ocean becomes active again.

The great white shark is one of the most fearsome creatures on the planet. Thanks to books and movies like Peter Benchley's *Jaws*, and Steven Spielberg's movie adaptation of it, the great white shark is one of the most popular predators as well. Humans are not the preferred prey of great whites, so they are not as dangerous to people as movies and books make them seem. However, they are responsible for the majority of shark attacks on humans.

Great whites can grow up to six meters long, and can weigh as much as 2,240 kilograms. They can live to be at least 30 years old. As a species, they are very old. Based on fossils, great white sharks evolved into the sharks they are today about 65 million years ago. This makes the species about as old as the last living dinosaurs. The oldest shark fossil ever found is about 409 million years old. This means that sharks existed about 200 million years before the dinosaurs.





Great whites are named after the color of their skin. They have gray backs, but the lower half of their bodies are very white. Their coloration gives them a bit of camouflage against their environment. When viewed from above, their gray backs slightly blend in with the rest of the ocean. When a great white is seen from below, its white underside matches the sunlight to some degree.

Great whites have been observed hunting at all times during both day and night. The active and restful periods of great white sharks are most likely determined by the habits of their prey. If the shark's prey is active during the day, the great white will probably be active as well. The same probably applies if prey is active at night.

Sharks

Word Bank (pp. 4-5)

cartilage (n) = strong, flexible, substance found in the body, especially around the joints

bone (n) = one of the hard parts which form the skeleton

fear (v) = to be afraid

violent (adj) = cruel

man-eater (n) = creature eating humans

species (n) = kind; type

be involved (v) = to take part in

unprovoked (adj) = unmotivated

pose a threat (phr) = to cause danger

hunt (v) = to chase

prey (n) = animal hunted for food

well suited (adj) = appropriate

sleek (adj) = smooth; glossy

jaws (pl n) = the mouth of a dangerous animal

grip (v) = to hold tightly

bite (v) = to cut with your teeth

rip (v) = to tear

range (v) = to vary

surface (n) = flat top layer of sth

freshwater environment (phr) = place that contains water which is not salty

deadly (adj) = extremely dangerous

predator (n) = animal that kills and eats other animals

attack (v) = to try to hurt

subject (n) = topic

Pre-Reading activities

1 a) Which of the following are true about sharks?

- 1 Sharks aren't exactly the same as other fish.
- 2 Sharks are wrongly thought to be violent man-eaters.
- 3 They don't swim very fast.
- 4 They only live in warm waters.
- 5 Some species live in lakes and rivers.
- 6 Great white sharks live in the open sea.

b)  Listen, read and check.

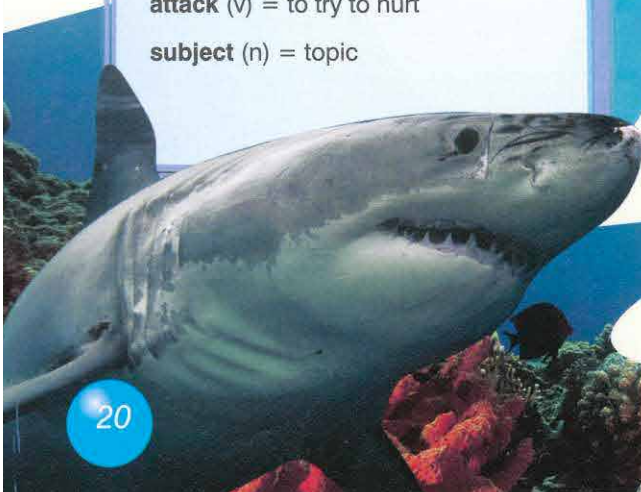
While-Reading activities

2 Read the text and choose the best answer from A, B, C or D.

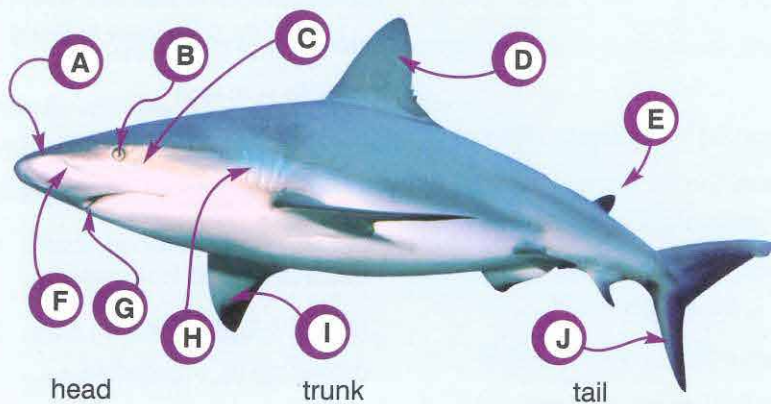
- 1 How do sharks differ from other fish?
 - A They have muscle and skin.
 - B They have gills instead of lungs.
 - C They have cartilage instead of bones.
 - D They have fins instead of arms.
- 2 Which kinds of sharks are man-eaters?
 - A The great white shark. C The tiger shark.
 - B The bull shark. D All of the above.
- 3 Where do sharks live?
 - A They only live in the Atlantic Ocean.
 - B They only live in the Arctic Ocean.
 - C They live in every sea and, in some cases, lakes and rivers.
 - D They only live in lakes and rivers.
- 4 What is the great white shark famous for?

A for being one of the deadliest predators in the ocean	C for being extinct
B for being gentle	D for being small
- 5 Which movie is based on the great white shark?

A <i>Predator</i>	C <i>Ocean's 11</i>
B <i>Jaws</i>	D <i>Free Willy</i>



3 Match the numbers to the letters.



- 1 eye
- 2 spiracle
- 3 first dorsal fin
- 4 nostril
- 5 gills
- 6 mouth
- 7 pectoral fin
- 8 caudal fin
- 9 snout
- 10 second dorsal fin

4 Use the words in the list to complete the fact file:
cartilage, predators, jaws, prey, hunt, sleek.

- 1 Great white sharks are; they eat other sharks and seals.
- 2 They have a body that allows them to move fast in the water.
- 3 They have wide teeth in their upper and lower
- 4 Sharks use their teeth to hold their in place while they cut into it.
- 5 They usually alone looking for food.
- 6 They don't have bones; their skeleton is made of

5 Add these words and phrases to the right group according to their meaning: *bite, rip, range, grip, unprovoked, pose a threat.*

- 1 differ, vary,
- 2 cut, chew,
- 3 not caused, unmotivated,
- 4 grasp, hold,
- 5 pull apart, tear,
- 6 increase the risk of, cause danger,

After-Reading activities

6 Fill in: *well suited, deadly, species, pose, range.*

- 1 Only four of sharks are man-eaters.
- 2 Most sharks no threat to humans.
- 3 All sharks' body structures are for killing.
- 4 Sharks live at depths that from 2,000 meters down, all the way up to the ocean's surface.
- 5 The great white shark is a ocean species.

7 Write three things that impressed you the most about sharks.

