

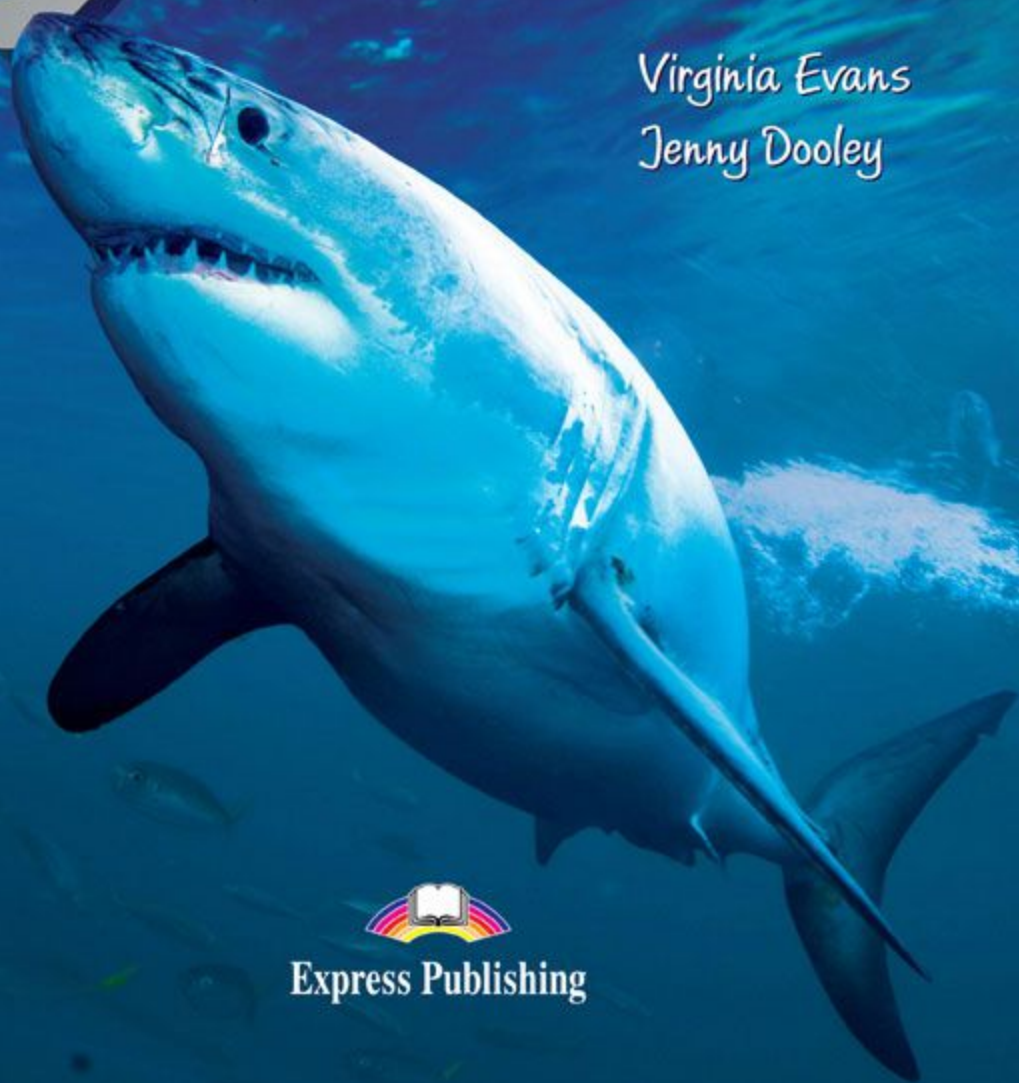
DISCOVER
OUR AMAZING
WORLD

CLIL READERS

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.