

## ***SHARKEY'S SON*** by Gillian D'achada

### **CHAPTER 1: A MAN WHO ONLY KNOWS FISHING**

#### **Pre-reading**

1. The name of the chief character is Grant. Yet the book is called 'Sharkey's son'. Suggest a reason for this.
1. *It suggests that Sharkey is well known in the town. / It suggests that Grant has been strongly influenced by his father in his way of behaving, his qualities and what he can do.*

#### **During reading**

2. Although Oom Daan knows Grant well, why is he not at ease in talking to him?
2. *He has the difficult task of discussing Sharkey's disappearance with Grant and making arrangements to take him to live with someone else.*
3. Grant refers to his father as Sharkey, not Dad or Pa. What does this suggest about his relationship with his father?
3. *It suggests that they were more like friends than father and son.*

#### **Post-reading**

1. Why does Grant suspect that something bad has happened to his father?
  1. *Sharkey has never been away for as long as three days before.*
2. Oom Daan says of Sharkey, "And strong! Sjoel! He was the best kind of skipper you could get." Notice that he uses the past tense. Suggest a reason for this.
  2. *Sharkey is no longer able to be the skipper of a boat because he does not have a licence to fish.*
3. We can tell that Grant is deeply hurt when Oom Daan tells him his father has gone to Lüderitz.
  - a) Why is he so upset by this news?
  - b) What news causes him further pain?
3.
  - a) *He feels hurt that his father did not tell him that he was going away.*
  - b) *He hears that he has to go and live with his Uncle Roy. / He hears that his father is going to sell their house: the house that was going to be his one day.*
4. According to Oom Daan, Sharkey was not given a permit to continue fishing for a living. How, then, does he earn money to support himself and his son?
  4. *He catches fish illegally and sells them.*
5. Grant yells, "He must have drunk too much and gone mad!" Do you think he deserves to be cuffed for saying this? Explain why or why not.
  5. *Personal response. Learners are free to focus on whether children should be cuffed for what seems disrespectful comment or they can argue that Oom Daan should have taken account of the fact that he was upset.*
6. Answer the questions on the following figures of speech.
  - a) "...tiny hermit crabs of fear were scabbling around inside him."  
How does this metaphor help us to imagine what Grant is going through at this point in the story?
  - b) "Sometimes a minister can be more slippery than a harder."  
What does this simile tell us about Oom Daan's attitude towards politicians?
    - a) *When you are frightened you often feel uncomfortable in your stomach. Hermit crabs move timidly and they scatter in different directions: his fear is also not definite but it keeps coming up where he doesn't expect it.*
    - b) *Oom Daan distrusts politicians / has a very low opinion of politicians: he sees them as like fish which are slippery and can easily wriggle free.*

## CHAPTER 2: A TOOL OF THE TRADE

### Pre-reading

1. Grant seems determined not to go to Cape Town. What would you do if you were Grant?  
*1. Personal response, but there should be some attempt to see things from Grant's point of view.*

### During reading

2. Why was Grant so sure that Sharkey would not easily sell his house?  
*2. He has often said that he would not sell his house and has refused many offers.*
3. What amazing discovery does Grant make about his father's financial position?  
*3. Grant finds out that his father has R50 000 in his FLASH Account.*

### Post-reading

1. Find at least three details that capture the peaceful atmosphere of their home, and their simple lifestyle. You may quote from the passage.  
*1. "no fancy stove ... just a gas burner and a small bar fridge"; "the kitchen door was never locked"; "They ate fish and chips most nights"; There was no lampshade on the light.*
2. There are at least two clues which suggest that Sharkey left home in a sudden and unplanned way. Write these down.  
*2. Sharkey has left his knife behind that he always has with him; he has also left his cell phone behind.*
3. Name two ways in which Oom Daan helps Sharkey with his work (poaching).  
*3. Oom Daan takes orders for the fish and crayfish that Sharkey catches and he allows Sharkey to transfer money into his account so he can get the cash he needs.*
4. Explain why Grant puts Sharkey's small sea-gull carving into his pack.  
*4. He knows that he could sell it easily for quite a lot of money.*
5. Name some of the possible reasons for Grant's decision to run away rather than go to Cape Town with Oom Daan.  
*5. Learner should suggest at least two reasons. Accept any that show the learner is making sense. [Grant loves living near the sea./Grant wants to solve the reason for his father's strange actions and would not be able to do it if he were in Cape Town/ He has had a great deal of freedom up to now. Living with Uncle Roy would limit his freedom.]*
6. At this stage, Grant has mixed feelings towards Oom Daan. Can you explain why?  
*6. He has known him a long time and he is very fond of him but he now suspects that Oom Daan is trying to steal his father's money.*

## CHAPTER 3: THE GREAT WHITE NOTHING

### Pre-reading

1. What difficulties would you face if you had to leave your home suddenly and had no time to plan where you are going?  
*1. Personal response. This is designed to allow learners to identify with Grant more closely.*

### During reading

2. In the third paragraph, the writing is fast-moving and brisk. Most sentences are short and written in the active voice. How does the writing style add to the atmosphere at this point?  
*2. It builds tension/ momentum.*

### Post-reading

1. Describe Grant's feelings
  - a) when he is first enveloped by thick fog, and
  - b) when he later sees a "ghost ship" in the fog on the rocky beach.
1. a) *At first he is happy to be in the fog because it means he will not be seen.*

- b) *He is paralysed with fear.*
2. Figures of speech (metaphors, similes etc)
- a) What is the “snorting, rolling-eyed monster”?
- a) Why is the fog described as “cotton wool quiet”? Name the figure of speech and say what it adds to the story at this stage.  
Name the figure of speech and say what it adds to the story at this point.
- b) *It is a dune buck. This is a metaphor. It makes us aware of how threatened and frightened Grant is at this stage.*
- b) *The figure of speech is a metaphor. It gives us a sense of how safe and protected Grant felt in the fog. It was as if the rest of the world was shut out so he could not even hear anything.*
3. The cell phone plays an important part in the story.
- a) How is it useful to Grant in the wheelhouse of the stranded ship?
- b) Why is he so horrified when the battery dies?
- c) Scan the first three chapters and summarize the part played by the cell phone so far.
3. a) *He is able to use it to make it possible to see exactly what the inside of the wheelhouse is like.*
- b) *He has no way of charging the battery so the cell phone will be useless, and he needs it to access the money to get to Lüderitz. Without it he has no way of carrying out his plan.*
- c) *The cell phone has made it clear to Grant that his father left in a hurry and that the trip was not planned. It has also told Grant that his father has a lot of money in his account. This heightens the mystery because his father’s poaching would not have brought in this kind of money. At the same time it arouses Grant’s suspicion of Oom Daan. The phone message on the phone tells him that his father is being threatened. Finally, he uses the cell phone to help him see the inside of the wheelhouse.*

## CHAPTER 4: WHEELHOUSE BAY

### Pre-reading

1. What would you miss most if you had to move away from your home town?

1. *Personal response. It is designed to build background knowledge.*

### During reading

2. Grant winces as he wades into the sea-water (“the best healer”). What are his injuries and how did he get them?
2. *While he was going through the fog, he had got cuts on his legs from the reeds and thorns in his feet, and he had stubbed his toes on a cross.*
3. Why do you think he is happy to be on an unfamiliar beach, some distance from Langebaan?
3. *He is probably happy to be there because he feels less likely to be found by his pursuers.*

### Post-reading

1. What is Grant’s plan and what is “vague” about it?
1. *His plan is to hide during the day and walk to Lüderitz during the night. It is vague because he has no idea of the direction he should be taking, he does not know how long it will take, and he does not know where he will be staying along the route. [Accept any other valid suggestion.]*
2. In a few sentences, describe the first encounter between Grant and the “small, brown boy”.
2. *Grant hears the unwelcome sound of a dog and a person. The boy appears and tells him to get out as it is his boat and he is the skipper. Grant refuses. The boy challenges him to fight. He fights him, but finds him quick despite his small size.*
3. The fight comes to a sudden end. What happens?
3. *The small, brown boy recognises who he is.*
4. Place names, like Langebaan, tell us where the story is set. What other clues show that the setting is South African?

4. *The people in the story use Afrikaans words/ Grant plans to eat bakkom, a South African fish/ the names of the people.*

## CHAPTER 5: SOME BIG SECRET

### Pre-reading

1. What does Grant fear about the boy's arrival?  
*1. He is afraid that the people searching for him will find him through this boy.*

### During reading

2. Smiler guesses that Grant is Sharkey's son. How does he work this out?  
*2. Smiler guesses this because there is a major search on for a boy just like Grant, and Oom Daan was at his house the previous night and got his father to help search for Grant.*
3. Explain clearly why Grant thinks he should tie Smiler up.  
*3. He does not want him to go and reveal where he is hiding.*
4. At one point Grant looks at Smiler with new respect.  
a) What has he realized about Smiler at this point?  
b) Why does this discovery change his attitude towards Smiler?  
*4. a) He has realised that they are connected to the same world/ he has realised that this boy is the son of a very accomplished fisherman.*  
*b) He realises that he will understand his situation and that he can trust him.*

### Post-reading

1. Creative writing  
Based on what you have learnt about him so far, paint a picture in words of Smiler. The character sketch of about 10 lines should include his looks, personality and dreams of the future.
2. In the course of the chapter, Grant's attitude towards Smiler changes. Quote two examples from the passage that best show this changed attitude.  
*2. The best two are probably when he finds out that his father is Michael September (one of the pair of the best fishermen in Langebaan) ("He looked at him with new respect") and when Smiler show his practical intelligence by saying that he will charge the cell phone ("Meeting Smiler was a kind of miracle".)*  
*He trusts him enough to confide in him about why he had run away and about his father's knife and cell phone and even to give him the cell phone to charge.*
3. What detail reveals that although Grant has begun to trust Smiler, he does not yet trust him completely.  
*3. Grant decides not to tell him about the FLASH Account with the R50 000 in it.*

## CHAPTER 6: SMILER'S PORTRAIT

### Pre-reading

1. When someone takes your photograph, how do you feel when you look at the result? Explain.  
*1. Personal response. This is designed to engage the learners by allowing them to identify with Grant's experience.*

### During reading

2. Why does Grant enjoy Smiler's company so much?  
*2. He enjoys his company because they like doing the same things.*

### Post-reading

1. We are told that Grant does not look at his portrait because “Lagooners scoff at vanity”. Express this in your own words.
  1. *Fishing people in Langebaan are straightforward and are not interested in showing off to the world. They do not like people who are in love with themselves.*
2. Grant wishes he could fall asleep under the stars. What does this tell us about him?
  2. *He enjoys simple pleasures like the freedom of being outdoors. But he also has a sense of the wonder of nature.*
3. Quote from the text to show that Smiler had similar feelings.
  3. *“Ag,” said Smiler, “ag, this is the life, hey?”*
4. “[T]he darkness jumped away from him.” This sentence describes the sudden way in which the light breaks the darkness. Briefly explain why Grant is so frightened of being alone in the dark wheelhouse.
  4. *He is afraid that Leentjie’s ghost will come looking for company.*
5. Grant sees his dead mother’s face in the portrait of himself drawn by Smiler. Make a list of the things that remind him of his mother.
  5. *Most of his facial features are the same as hers. His grey eyes, his full lips, the slight frown, the cleft in his chin, and his fringe that has a cow’s lick in it just before it falls onto his face.*
6. In what way does he resemble his father?
  6. *He has a big, curved nose like his father’s.*

## CHAPTER 7: THE GIRL IN THE GREEN BATHING SUIT

### Pre-reading

1. What is worst kind of weather to go swimming in the sea?
  1. *Stormy weather is the worst weather to go swimming in the sea.*

### During reading

2. Having lived all his life on the West Coast, Grant is familiar with the weather. What signs tell him that stormy seas and strong winds are coming?
  2. *There are big swells on the sea and the wind is beginning to come up.*

### Post-reading

1. What does Grant collect from the beach and why?
  1. *He collects driftwood so he can make a fire to keep himself warm and cook food.*
2. Grant feels compassion (loving sympathy) for the dead seal and the drowned girl. Leentjie. What other feeling engulfs him on the wind-swept beach?
  2. *He suddenly realises how vulnerable he is. If he should hurt himself, there would be no-one to help him.*
3. Why does he not respond to the call for help at once?
  3. *He thinks that the girl is Leentjie’s ghost.*
4. What convinces Grant that the girl on the rock is not Leentjie’s ghost?
  4. *She is wearing a green bathing suit and she has long brown hair. Leentjie would have short, tightly curled hair.*
5. What puzzles Grant about the girl’s actions?
  5. *She stays sitting on the rock instead of coming to safety on the beach.*
6. Explain why he wades into the swirling water towards her.
  6. *He realises that she is probably unable to get to shore by herself.*

## CHAPTER 8: FLASH

### Pre-reading

1. What makes you decide whether you are going to like someone or not? (What qualities are important to you?)
  1. *Personal response. This could form an interesting whole class discussion.*

### During reading

2. Why does Grant have mixed feelings about the girl?
2. *He is not sure whether she is a ghost or not. She is so different from the people he knows well. He is also not sure how he will manage to get her back without being found and stopped from carrying out his plan.*

### Post-reading

1. The following extracts from the passage are examples of interesting word-pictures. In each case, say what **two** things are being compared and what the comparison adds to the story.
  - a) "...her lips were no longer as purple as the sea-lavender that grew in his garden." (Simile)
  - b) "Her voice... like the tinkling of the cowbells.." (Simile)
  - c) "But I still feel ... wavy... on the inside.' " (Metaphor)
    - a) *Her lips are compared to the purple sea-lavender. It gives a clear picture of how cold the girl was before and that her lips are looking better now.*
    - b) *The sound of her voice is compared to the sound of cowbells. It shows us how attractive Grant finds her.*
    - c) *The up and down movement of waves is compared to the heaving movement of her stomach. It gives us a sense of just how nauseous she has been feeling.*
2. Discuss the following with other members of the class.
  - a) In South Africa, there are a number of accents and different ways of pronouncing words. Grant admires Ally's way of speaking (she has lived in Cape Town and Johannesburg etc.) and he feels self-conscious about his own West Coast speech. Would you agree with Grant's view or not? Why?
  - b) Grant feels guilty because he forgot to introduce himself to Ally. How might he have introduced himself to her. Provide two different ways.
    - a) *This could be a whole class discussion or be done in smaller groups. The issue of different ways of speaking English could be limited to this context or it could be broadened to different ways of speaking English in South Africa or even broadened to a world context. A key point is different kinds of English for different purposes and the need to develop a repertoire.*
    - b) *Personal response . [Suggestions: Informally: Hi, I'm Grant. Formally: May I introduce myself. I am Grant. They could also suggest two informal ways.] It would make a good whole class activity and could be tied to other situations where the context determines the register that is used but that still gives one a number of options, e.g. inviting someone to join you for coffee.*
3. Ally tells Grant why she was calling for help. What was her reason for not wading back to the beach?
  3. *She thought that the water was very deep at that point.*
4. We often exaggerate when we tell a story. Why do you think Grant exaggerates when he tells Smiler how he rescued Ally?
  4. *He feels that the real story sounds a bit silly. He also wants to seem a hero.*
5. Describe Ally and her family in a few sentences.
  5. *Ally's mother and father live in two different places. She stays with her mother in London during school terms and with her professor father in Cape Town during the holidays.*
6. Why does Grant wonder if Smiler has found clues on his cell phone? (Remember what Smiler plans to do one day.)
  6. *Smiler is very good at finding clues and solving problems, and is especially good with cell phones. He wants to become a detective one day.*

7. Explain how to use a cell phone **FLASH** Account and the Find Me function.
7. *Press the menu function and get to the FLASH account. Then scroll down to PAY HOW MUCH. Decide on the amount and type it in. When the prompt shows PAY WHO type in the appropriate cell number. To activate the FIND ME function, use the MENU to get to it, then press 3.*

## CHAPTER 9: VOICES IN THE NIGHT

### Pre-reading

1. How has Grant's desire to be independent been both a good thing and a bad thing so far?
1. *It has been good in that he has managed being on his own. It is a bad thing in that he seems to be in danger and so he would be better off in the care of adults.*

### During reading

2. Describe Grant's mood when he wakes up on the moonlit beach.
2. *Grant is a little downcast because he is cold and stiff. At the same time he is excited at the thought of adventures ahead and the prospect of seeing his father.*
3. He hears voices and expects to see early fishermen. What alarms him about the two strange men?
3. *The two men are heading straight towards the old wheelhouse.*

### Post-reading

1. Read the following extracts. Say what each word-picture adds to the story.
  - a) "It threw a ribbon of gold across the bay." (Metaphor)
  - b) "The cloudless night sky was heavy with (stars)." (Metaphor)
  - c) "The moonlight beckoned him." (Personification)
  - d) "Leentjiesklip was awash with sepia shadows..." (Metaphor)
  - a) *It helps to paint the scene by giving a sense of how bright and beautiful the reflection of the moon is on the water of the bay. It also explains why it is possible for him to see the men for at least five minutes after they have left the wreck.*
  - b) *This explains further why it is so easy to see. The bright stars almost fill in the clear sky.*
  - c) *The moon makes the night seem very inviting. This encourages him to think of travelling to find his father the next day.*
  - d) *There were so many dark reddish brown shadows on the rock that Grant could not be seen by the two men.*
2. Grant is deeply concerned about his father, Sharkey. Why is he afraid? (Remember what has happened so far and summarise his fears in a few good sentences.)
2. *He is afraid that the two men who are after him will physically attack his father, perhaps even kill him. His father is alone without anyone to help him.*
3. Read the paragraph that begins, "Lagooners live by the light of the moon." We are reminded that Grant is always aware of nature, especially the sea and the tides.
  - a) The moon waxes and wanes – grows bigger and smaller. What is a "fully waxed moon"?
  - b) Explain why Grant must wait until morning before he follows the men across the water in a dinghy.
3. a) *A full moon is fully waxed.*
- b) *He knows that there will be too many exposed sandbanks until the tide turns. He has to wait until he can safely use the dinghy to follow the men.*
4. What are the men looking for?
4. *They are looking for the R50 000.*

## CHAPTER 10: 16-MILE BEACH

### Pre-reading

1. This chapter begins: "It had been like stealing octopus from a seagull, so easy." From your reading of the last chapter, what do you think Grant had done so easily?
  1. *Grant had managed to steal a dinghy from Flippie's boat hire business.*

### During reading

2. Where is Grant going?
  2. *Grant is heading for 16-Mile Beach.*
3. Find the verb in the second paragraph that tells you he is emotional (feels strongly) about the flamingoes.
  3. *The verb is "moved".*

### Post-reading

1. Grant refers to Smiler as a crab and earlier he referred to him as a cockroach. What does this suggest about the way he feels about Smiler?
  1. *This suggests his mixed feelings towards Smiler. Sometimes he finds him annoying. [Accept other valid suggestions.]*
  2. Rewrite in Standard English the cell phone message that Grant receives from Smiler.
    2. *It is wonderful that I am able to get hold of you like this, isn't it? I can't come yet. Some visitors were robbed at gun point yesterday. My father is making me stay at home until they catch the robbers.*
  3. The place known as 16-Mile Beach is very different from the beaches on Langebaan Lagoon.
    - a) Explain why it is full of wrecked ships.
    - b) Why have the robbers, and now Grant, come here?
  3.
    - a) *There are often storms in this area so ships are driven off course and wrecked there.*
    - b) *They are hoping to find Sharkey.*
  4. Grant finds a stash of stolen money in the wrecked ship. Whose money is it and how did it get there?
    4. *The money belongs to the robbers. They must have hidden it there.*

## CHAPTER 11: AN ACCIDENTAL DROWNING

### Pre-reading

1. What is particularly difficult about Grant's situation?
  1. *He can see no sign of Sharkey and he does not know what to do next.*

### During reading

2. Grant sees some people approaching the wreck.
  - a) Who do they seem to be?
  - b) Why doesn't he go out to talk to them?
2.
  - a) *They seem to be soldiers from the nearby military base.*
  - b) *He has become very cautious in the last few days and wants to make sure that they are not a danger to him before he reveals that he is there.*

### Post-reading

1. The robbers leave him on a sandbank instead of simply throwing him out of the boat into the sea. What is their reason?
  1. *This is their cunning way of murdering him. It will look as if he drowned.*
  2. Explain Grant's pain, "inside and out."
    2. *Grant's physical pain comes from being bludgeoned with a club by the robbers. His emotional pain is his grief at the death of his father.*
  3. Why is Grant's life in danger at this point?



3. *He is quite unable to move to where he will not be in danger of being swept out to sea and drowning.*
4. Grant manages to do what Smiler has told him after the seagull squawks again. Briefly explain what happens.
4. *A voice urges him not to give up but to press the button. Grant manages to press 3 on his cell phone signalling his location to Smiler, before sinking into unconsciousness again.*

## CHAPTER 12: TIME

### Pre-reading

1. What do you think is likely to happen in this chapter?

1. *Grant will be rescued.*

### During reading

2. Why is Grant in hospital and not dead?
2. *Grant is in hospital because he was rescued before he was swept out to sea as a result of Smiler's being able to pinpoint where he was.*
3. Grant has found it difficult to find food in the last while. Why is he not delighted to see the big bowl of fruit on the table next to him?
3. *Among the fruit there is a mango, Sharkey's favourite fruit. This brings back the pain of remembering that his father is dead.*
4. How is he able to be sure who the man is whom the policeman brings to see him?
4. *He sees his unmistakable nose and the two missing fingers on his left hand. Furthermore, the policeman refers to him as Sharkey.*

### Post-reading

1. Who are Professor Christopher and Alison Stone?
1. *Alison is the girl he rescued and Christopher Stone, a professor in Cape Town, is her father.*
2. Why does Grant not expect to see his father?
3. *The robbers told him that they had killed him.*
3. Give two reasons why Grant feels as if he is dreaming.
3. *He has no doubt been sedated and that would make him find it difficult to know whether he is awake or asleep. In addition, he sees what cannot be true – his dead father is alive again.*
4. Why does Sharkey have to “do time” in prison?
4. *He will have to serve a year's sentence in jail because he has been found guilty of poaching.*
5. Grant says he knows where the cell phone is. How is it possible for him to know this?
5. *He has such a feeling of confidence now that he knows that his dad is alive that he feels sure that other things will have gone well too. Smiler must have been involved in the rescue and would have taken it into safe keeping.*
6. Based on what we have learnt so far, Sharkey seems to be a good man although he is mixed up in illegal poaching. Discuss.
6. *Learners should provide a coherent paragraph.*

*Some suggested points*

#### **Good man**

- *He has clearly been a loving father – his son sees him as a fine man*
- *His son shows courage and determination – good qualities that he has probably learnt from his father.*
- *He is admired by fellow fishermen for his skill as a captain – clearly he is someone they trust.*

#### **Possible counter argument**

*He began poaching because he had no other way of making money.  
He seems to have stolen the money from his criminal contacts.*

## **CHAPTER 13: ONE LAST SMOKKEL**

### **Pre-reading**

1. Grant does not know the whole story yet. What questions do you think still have to be answered?
1. *He needs to know why his father did not tell him that he was going away, where the R50 000 comes from and what his father's connection with the two Special Forces men is. He also needs to know how he was rescued.*

### **During reading**

2. Oom Daan feels uncomfortable when he visits Grant in the hospital.
  - a) Why does he 'look round sheepishly'?
  - b) What did he do (or not do) that makes him feel this way?
    - a) *He is feeling embarrassed about having to talk to Grant.*
    - b) *He lied to Grant about where his father was.*

### **After reading**

1. Smiler's father wonders if he deserves a medal or a hiding. Which do you think he deserves? Say why.
  1. *Personal response. Learners must give clear reasons.*
2. Write a short sketch, beginning with Smiler's arrival at the military base and ending at a suitable point in the rescue. Write it like a play. You could start, for example, as follows.

*Officer is sitting at a desk in the duty room, writing.*  
*Enter Smiler, running.*  
*Smiler: (panting) Officer? Officer! You must help us – please!*
2. *This should be assessed as a dialogue.*
3. Grant wonders if some presence or spirit helped him to survive. He sees his survival as a miracle. List all the possible things that could have gone wrong, but didn't.
  3. - *The cuts on his feet could have turned septic.*
  - *He could have fallen off a rock and hit his head. No one might have found him and he could have died.*
  - *He could have lost his way.*  
*(Any other valid suggestion.)*
4. How does Oom Daan try to put things right with Grant?
  4. *He invites him to come and live with him and his wife while Sharkey is in prison.*

## **CHAPTER 14: A GOOD BREAKFAST**

### **Pre-reading**

1. Who do you think Grant would most like to see next?
2. *He would probably like to see Smiler and Ally next.*

### **During reading**

2. What sign is there that Grant is feeling better?
  2. *He is feeling very hungry and is eager to eat some food./ He is able to talk and laugh happily with his friends.*
3. How does Grant know that he is not in Langebaan?

3. *There isn't a hospital in Langebaan.*
4. Why do you think Smiler's mother has made him wear shoes?
4. *Smiler's mother wants him to look respectable when he visits Grant in the hospital.*

### **Post-reading**

1. When you have had a particularly frightening experience, it helps to talk about it so that you can get over your anger and fear. Skim through the chapter and quote the line that expresses this idea.
  1. *"For the next few minutes they spoke at once, reliving their fears and eventually, laughing them away."*
  2. Professor Stone says, "If someone banned painting I'd carry on doing it anyway." Applied to Sharkey, this means that he is not guilty of any crime because he was unjustly banned from fishing. Debate this point with your friends. Some of you should support the idea and others should oppose it.
  2. *This could be done in a whole class setting as a formal debate or more informally as a kind of forum of the type conducted on television or over the radio.*
  3. Sharkey has been sent to prison for a year. How does he plan to support his son during this time?
  3. *He has asked Oom Daan to sell the house so he can get the money to support his son.*
  4. What is Professor Stone's solution to this and other problems?
  4. *Professor Stone is offering to buy a piece of land at the bottom of Sharkey's property. This will provide more than enough money to support Grant. It will mean that Grant will not lose his garden and that he and Sharkey will be able to have their own home to live in again when he finishes serving his sentence.*

## **CHAPTER 15: A SKY FILLED WITH PINK WINGS**

### **Pre-reading**

1. If you wanted to give a special present (something that you own) to someone very important to you, what would it be?
  1. *Personal response.*

### **During reading**

3. How do we know that Grant intends to keep in contact with Ally?
2. *This chapter implies that this is his intention: "Of course, he knew he would kiss her one day – but this was not the day."*

### **Post-reading**

1. The final chapter starts with a lovely description of the lagoon and the black-backed gulls. The reader is invited to say goodbye to Grant in this natural setting. Why is this a suitable way for the novel to end?
  1. *This suggests that Grant will once more be able to enjoy life in this world that he loves so much. Oom Daan and his wife will offer him a secure home. The danger is over. His father is in jail but the sentence will end in a year's time. It is a happy ending.*
  2. Grant gives Ally a precious little whalebone gull that his father carved for his mother. What does this suggest?
    2. *This suggests that he cares for her very deeply and that he hopes for a long-term relationship.*
    3. Grant asks Oom Daan if they can go and visit his father in prison. How does this show that Grant has grown in understanding and sympathy?
    3. *Grant is able to recognise that his father will have a hard time in prison. He knows his father will long to see him and to know that he is all right. He also wants to take his father one of his favourite mangoes as a treat.*

