

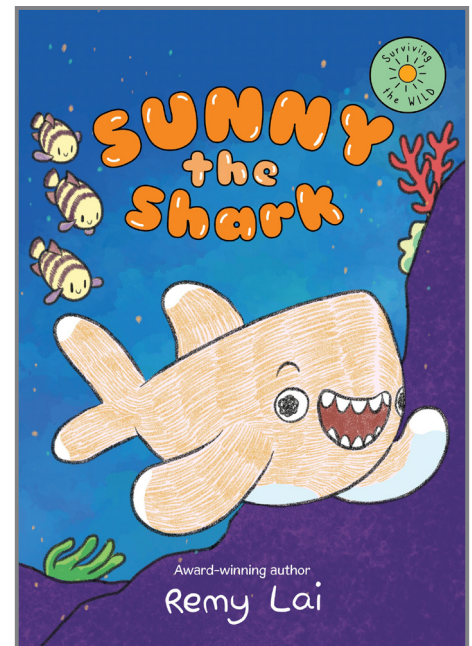
# Surviving the Wild #3: Sunny the Shark

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Mid Primary



## SYNOPSIS

*Hi! I'm Sunny and I'm a shark. I love cruising the ocean with my pilot fish friends, looking for food. But sometimes things in the water are not what they seem...Now a plastic ring is wrapped around my fin and it's tricky to hunt. Can I break free before winter sets in?*

Based on true events, Sunny the Shark is the story of a white tip shark who spends her days cruising the ocean with her chatty friends—a school of helpful pilot fish. But when Sunny mistakes rubbish for food, a plastic ring gets caught around her fin and even her friends can't save her. Eventually Sunny fights her way to the surface, where a surprise awaits her...

## ABOUT THE CREATOR

Remy Lai was born in Indonesia, grew up in Singapore and currently lives in Brisbane, where she writes and draws stories for kids with her two dogs by her side. She is also the award-winning creator of *Pie in the Sky*, *Fly on the Wall* and *Pawcasso*. [www.remylai.com](http://www.remylai.com).

## STUDY NOTES

### BEFORE READING

- Hold up the cover of *Sunny the Shark*, while masking the book's title with your hand. Now ask the following questions:
  - What kind of animal is Sunny? (Reveal the title once it is established that Sunny is a shark.)
    - Where might we find Sunny?
    - What might Sunny eat?
    - What sort of smaller fish often accompanies sharks like Sunny? (Answer: pilot fish)
  - Explain to students that this is the third story in a series called *Surviving the Wild*. (Point to the logo in the upper right-hand corner and ask questions, such as) What sort of dangers do you think Sunny might face living in the ocean? What can we do to keep creatures like Sunny safe in the ocean?

### COMPREHENSION

- Why did the pilot fish choose to stay with Sunny? (p 5)
- How do pilot fish 'look after' sharks like Sunny? (pp 6–8)
- What do the people who catch Sunny do to her? (pp 12–17)

- Why do they do this? (p 16)
- Why does Sunny mistake the plastic ring as food? (pp 19–20)
- What creatures live on the plastic ring? (p 26)
- How does the plastic ring make it harder for Sunny to hunt for food? (pp 30–33)
- What creatures do ‘fearsome predators’ like Sunny fear? (p 39)
- Why might it be bad for Sunny if the pilot fish desert her? [Hint: think about the answer to Q2.]
- What are pilot whales expert at hunting? (p 50)
- The squid that Sunny wants to eat is making so much light that it glows in the dark. True or False? (pp 55–56)
- As Sunny grows more and more tired she can’t fight off which giant creature? (pp 66–76)
- How do the marine researchers find Sunny again and save her life? (pp 92–96)
- Why did the creator of the book, Remy Lai, make Sunny an Oceanic Whitetip in the story? (p 101)
- Name three facts about Oceanic Whitetips. (pp 102–103)

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

- Graphic novels show how a character is feeling. Sunny sometimes feels disappointed, fearsome, scared and exhausted in *Sunny the Shark*. Find images of Sunny feeling these emotions and explain what it was in each image that showed how she was feeling.
- Onomatopoeia is when words sound like their meanings—for example words such as boom, crash or bounce. Graphic novels often feature lots of onomatopoeic words—and these are often handwritten in special lettering, so the word also looks like its meaning! Turn to p 10 of *Sunny the Shark* and look at the word CHOMP!. What is it about this word that tells us about the action as well as the sound made by it? Sometimes words aren’t necessary at all. Turn to p 38 and discuss how the creator, Remy Lai, shows the noise that the killer whales are making. What role does colour play in showing that the noise the pilot whales are making on p 47 is less scary?
- The term ‘panel’ is used in graphic novels to describe each sequential image. Panels are often similar in size but can be bigger or smaller at points as a special way to tell the story. Turn to the first double-page spread in the story showing the ocean and two small birds sitting atop it. Discuss why Remy Lai decided to include the two smaller panels featuring close-ups of the seagulls in the lower right-hand section of the spread.
  - Can you find other examples in *Sunny the Shark* where changing the size or shape of panels helped tell the story?
  - Most of the panels in this story are squares or horizontal/vertical rectangles. Compare the horizontal frames on pp 52–53 with the vertical ones on p 54 and discuss how the shape of the panel emphasises different aspects of the ocean.
  - Turn to pp 52–53 and come up with ideas for why the scuba diver’s body is carried across two frames here.
- Have you heard of the saying ‘an image is worth a thousand words’? Can you explain what you think this saying might mean? Turn to pp 84–88 and explain everything happening here and what Sunny and the pilot fish might be thinking.
- Try creating your own short story in a comic format. The story can be about anything you like but it should include simple text and feature at least six panels.