

PENGUIN READERS GUIDE

SEAWORTHY

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1) In returning to the ocean, Linda Greenlaw faces great risks as well as the potential for great rewards. Why did she decide to go back to swordfishing? Did her obligations to other people, such as Sarai or Simon, influence her plans? Should they?
- 2) According to Greenlaw, being at sea is like living in a bubble, completely disconnected from the rest of the world. What are the benefits and drawbacks of this kind of solitude?
- 3) “Home is a feeling, more than a residence,” writes Greenlaw (p. 192). Which places conjure a sense of home for you? Why?
- 4) In the book, the relationship between fishermen and fish is extremely complicated. How does Greenlaw reconcile her respect for swordfish with her gruesome anecdotes about fishermen’s treatment of sharks? What was your response to these conflicting perspectives?
- 5) On p. 109, Greenlaw writes, “If you haven’t been there, you haven’t been there.” Does she mean a place, an experience, a state of mind, or all three? Are there situations in your own life that you could apply this phrase to?
- 6) How would you describe the crew of the Seahawk? What did each member contribute? Which member proved to be the most challenging? The most valuable?
- 7) Greenlaw argues that gender “is only a problem if it’s allowed to be” (p.24). Do you believe this? Does Greenlaw face challenges in captaining her boat that a man might not? What examples from her experience support or contradict her statement?
- 8) Evaluating her own skills as a captain, Greenlaw often refers to her age as a factor in being able to deal with crises more reasonably. Do you find that to be true in your own life? In what other ways does age color your experience?
- 9) Have you ever tackled a project or entered a profession that was traditionally associated with another gender or age group? How did you confront this challenge? What was the outcome?

10) Greenlaw claims she is defined by “persistence and determination” (p.137). Would you add anything to that list? What attributes would you use to define yourself?

11) On the last page of the book, Greenlaw assesses her return to swordfishing and discusses her plans to continue. Considering the circumstances, was she too critical of herself in her responsibility for the events of the book? Not critical enough? Did she make the right decision in returning to the ocean?