

The Open Boat Discussion Questions Sections 1 - 4

1. Only one character in the story has a name. What do you think the significance is that only Billy the oiler has a name? Why doesn't the correspondent, the cook, or the captain have a name? What impact does it have on the story to not have the names of the other characters?
2. The Open Boat is a story about the struggle to survive in a hostile environment. In this story, the only antagonist is the sea. What impact does the conflict between the characters and nature have on the way that the story is told? What impact does it have on the development of the characters? What do we learn about Nature from the story?