

DISCUSSION & ACTIVITY GUIDE



Discussion Questions

- 1) Two hurricanes are mentioned in *Treasure Tracks*—one in the present and one in the past. Have you ever been through a hurricane, or met someone who has? What do you know about hurricanes?
- 2) “Fin” is the main character’s nickname. Do you have a nickname, and is there a story of how this nickname came to be?
- 3) What is Fin’s lucky charm? Do you have one?
- 4) Most of the story takes place in the Florida Keys, a string of tropical islands off the southern tip of Florida. Can you guess how many islands are in the Keys, and how many bridges connect them? (*Hint: More than you can imagine!*)
- 5) Abuelo refers to American industrialist Henry Flagler and his Overseas Railroad in the Florida Keys. How else did Henry Flagler contribute to the development of Florida and the Atlantic Coast?
- 6) When Fin mentions Cuba, he says that he likes his American freedoms. How does the Cuban government compare to that of the United States? What “freedoms” is Fin alluding to?
- 7) Searching for the treasure is part of Fin's family legacy, starting with his great-grandpapa's quest for the gold. Does your family have a special legacy of their own?
- 8) Fin remarks on Abuelo’s dedication to ocean conservancy. What are some of the major issues affecting our oceans, and what steps can you take to help preserve them? (*Hint: A big one is mentioned in the book.*)
- 9) Abuelo and Fin use two Latin phrases: *Semper fortis* and *carpe diem*. Can you come up with other widely used Latin phrases? (*Hint: Universities and the armed forces use lots of these.*)
- 10) Fin uses Google and other means to conduct research and come up with solutions to his problems. Besides the Internet, how else could you go about conducting research?

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- 11) Fin describes a strange dream where he sees a non-living ancestor. Have you ever had dreams about your ancestors or loved ones?
- 12) Fin ends up feeling bad about how he judged Sly without getting to know him. Has this ever happened to you? How did you feel about that experience?
- 13) How do you think Fin feels about his ethnic background at the beginning of the novel versus at the end?
- 14) What ends up being worth “more than gold” to Fin? What is worth more than gold to you?
- 15) If you found hidden treasure, what would you do with it?
- 16) If you could only take one person and one object along on an adventure, who and what would it be? Why?
- 17) If you could write Fin’s next adventure, what would it be?

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Activities

1) Below is a list of the marine life referenced in *Treasure Tracks*. Based on the information and prompts provided, what else can you find out about each species? (Bonus points for identifying scientific names.)

- **Staghorn coral:** Identify different types of coral. You can also download an activity pack from the [Coral Restoration Foundation](#) and learn more about our beautiful coral reefs and restoration efforts. (Bonus question: Are corals plants or animals?)
- **Sea urchins, sea fans, and sand dollars:** Identify different types of these species.
- **Cassiopea and Portuguese man-of-war:** Identify different types of jellyfish.
- **Cockleshell:** Identify different types of shells. You can even collect them if you live near the ocean!
- **Loggerhead turtle:** Identify different types of sea turtles. You can also learn more about sea turtles by visiting the [Turtle Hospital](#) in the Florida Keys.
- **Blue marlin:** Identify different types of billfish.
- **Yellowtail snapper, angelfish, parrotfish, Sergeant Majors, blue tang:** Identify different types of Atlantic fish.
- **Barracuda:** Why may this species be dangerous?
- **Stingray:** Why may this species be dangerous?
- **Moray Eel:** Identify different types of eels.
- **Dolphin:** Identify different types of dolphins. Detailed curriculum materials may be accessed from the [Dolphin Research Center](#) in Key Largo.
- **Nurse Shark and Blacktip Shark:** Identify different types of sharks. Descriptions of the most common sharks of Florida may be accessed at the [Florida Sea Grant](#).
- **Manatee:** Why are manatee populations under threat? You can also learn all about manatees from the [Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission](#).
- **Pelican:** What types of birds populate an ocean habitat?
- **Squid:** Perform a [virtual squid dissection](#) if you dare. No risk of splattering ink!

2) Make key lime pie with the help of a parent or guardian! Follow [this](#) recipe for instructions.

3) If your geography allows, go on a field trip to the ocean to identify marine life or go snorkeling. A virtual trip to explore the Florida Keys is a fun alternative! You can dive in [here](#) to snorkel a reef and even explore a shipwreck.