

DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR **THE SHARK CURTAIN**

1. Lily feels safest in her room, and yet it isolates her with her visions and fears. Why does she feel safe there? What is she afraid of? What is YOUR safe place like?
2. It is not uncommon for children to have an imaginary playmate. How is Jesus different? . . .Do you find the use of Jesus, as a character in *The Shark Curtain*, improper? Why or why not?
3. One of Lily's mantras through out the book is "Things get out if you're not careful, things get in." What do you think that means to her?
4. *The Shark Curtain* is set in the middle-late 1960s, against the backdrop of changing values, the struggle for civil liberties, and the Vietnam War. How does the "news of the day" impact the book's characters?
5. Beauty, the white horse, is clumsy and old and drawn to the rim of the pit. The author hints at both the attraction and danger of riding so close to the edge with the expression "Emptiness pulls." What does that expression mean to you? Why is Beauty's death so devastating to Lily?
6. What is Lily's fascination with Frog Boy? And Martin Hornbuckle?
7. How does Lily's view of the Savage boy change over the course of the book?
8. Do YOU think Lily is a "weirdo?" What do you think is really going on with her?
9. Why does Mrs. Wiggins continue to haunt Lily?
10. What are some of Lily's rituals, and what does she get out of them?
11. Why do you think Jesus crawls through a tear in Lily's window screen instead of walking through her door?
12. Why did the author title the book *The Shark Curtain*? What does the 'shark curtain' represent?