



## The Shark Attacks of 1916

*Lauren Tarshis*

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## **The Shark Attacks of 1916** Lauren Tarshis

Chet Roscow is finally feeling at home in Elm Hills, New Jersey. He has a job with his uncle Jerry at the local diner, three great friends, and the perfect summertime destination: cool, refreshing Matawan Creek.

But Chet's summer is interrupted by shocking news. A great white shark has been attacking swimmers along the Jersey shore, not far from Elm Hills. Everyone in town is talking about it. So when Chet sees something in the creek, he's sure it's his imagination. . . until he comes face-to-face with a bloodthirsty shark!

## **The Shark Attacks of 1916 Details**

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Author : Lauren Tarshis

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## From Reader Review The Shark Attacks of 1916 for online ebook

### Gracie Horlbogen says

This book was awesome!

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### May Regan says

YES! When I was 6 or 7 I saw shark week and was OBSESSED (in a bad way) with sharks. I was obsessed in the way where I thought sharks might just be swimming around on my bedroom floor, waiting to eat me. This book fed my obsession. I LOVED it. I still do. =)

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### Meg McGregor says

I was a Middle School Reading, History, and English teacher for almost 30 years! How did I not know about this series?

Another reviewer, Phillip, recommended one of the books in the series, and I decided to get them all from my library!

This is the second one I have read and I really enjoyed it! I love learning new things and Ms. Tarshis writes about the past so vividly, it is like she was actually there; you get the feeling that she is telling you about personal events!

I can fully understand why students would enjoy reading her books! I would certainly include them in any History or Reading class studying the period being discussed!

In this story, Chet Roscow is staying with his Uncle Jerry, in Elm Hills, New Jersey. He finally is feeling like he is where he belongs. What he doesn't know is that along with he and his friends swimming in Matawan Creek, a great grey shark likes to go hunting for prey there.

Like most people at the time, Chet doesn't believe that sharks will kill people. He does learn the truth in a very painful manner.

Besides the historical perspective, a Language Arts teacher could touch upon the loneliness that Chet felt. Middle school students can be very alone and this passage could be a springboard for discussion or a writing exercise.

"No, it wasn't the shark that scared him. It was the idea of being alone in the middle of the ocean Strange, but Chet could imagine that feeling. He'd been traveling around the country with Mama and Papa most of his life. Papa was always chasing some new business idea. Selling motorcars in Oregon. Building bicycles in St. Louis. Taking family portraits in Philadelphia. Mama would get them settled into an apartment or a run-down little house. Chet would try to make friends. And just when they were starting to get comfortable, the business would go bad or Papa would get some other idea. "We're hitting the road," Papa would announce.

And Mama would have to start packing again."

Another heartbreakin passage would be great for a current events discussion.

"Every year, humans kill nearly 100 million sharks, mainly for their fins, which are a prized ingredient for shark fin soup. Many shark species are endangered, including the great white."

Thank you Ms. Tarshis for writing this series. I know that people of all ages enjoy them!

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### **Mariah says**

I am trying to read as many "Who Was," "What Was," and "I Survived" books as I can get my hands on in 2017.

The "I Survived" books are always based on true events! This book is about the summer of 1916 and in the Jersey shore theres a Great White shark that has been killing locals.

"In the summer of 1916, ten year-old Chet Roscow is captivated by the local news: a Great White shark has been attacking and killing people up and down the Atlantic Coast, not far from Chet's hometown of Springfield, New Jersey."

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### **Kelli says**

Wow! Seriously?! I had no idea of (so many facts presented in this book) the threat of shark attack in brackish water. This is going to greatly diminish my comfort factor while boating on the North River for the rest of this summer and probably forever, in the same way that JAWS has impacted my enjoyment of the beach since the seventies. Of course, I can let none of this on in front of my children so as not to have the "scarred for life" thing passed down to another generation. I guess I should have expected the a) based in truth story and b) mild peril from the title and the fairly ominous cover art.

The story was age appropriate and the right reading level for my soon-to-be fourth grader. This series is very popular in the elementary school library. This was my idea for my daughter, who doesn't love reading out loud to me. As expected, the story was a hit. We shall see how she does next time we are boating in the river, though. (Or how I do, for that matter). Possible Mom fail! 4 stars.

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### **Jared Shilts says**

personal response: I personally had no feelings concerning this short chapter book. I say this because of its flat plot and characters.

plot: The year is 1916, a boy named Chet arrives in a town close to the ocean on the east coast. He is sent to live with his uncle because of his father's work habits. At first Chet is worried that nobody will make friends with him. Later on, Chet learns that he is very popular with the other kids in town. Before Chet realizes how

much he means to everyone, he discovers that there is a shark in the local creek. At the time, no one believed that such a thing was possible. When his buddies decide to swim in the creek, Chet warns them of the shark. Chet is too late however, as the boys tell him how ridiculous he sounds and jump in. Just then, the monstrous fish makes itself known and forces Chet into action. When the shark drags one of the boys down, it is up to Chet to save him. What Chet does to stop the shark is jump in the water and distract it in time for his pals to get out of the creek. When he gets bit by the shark's razor sharp teeth, Chet passes out from bloodloss. Days later Chet awakes to see himself in a hospital with stitches. He learns that the local police captured the shark and shot em up. The story ends with Chet in the Hospital laughing with his family and friends.

characterization: When Chet talks to his uncle about how he will befriend the new boys he sees, his uncle tells him that he must act natural. Chet follows the orders to great success. while he swims in the creek with the boys, he notices a triangular fin sticking out of the water. Chet is horrified at the thought of a shark that close. He rushes out of the creek traumatized with fear only to see the boys standing in the water laughing. Chet has been pranked. When he talks to his uncle about revenge, his uncle tells him of the infamous "Creek Devil". The beast is covered in muck and kidnaps children to eat them in the murky creek. Chet decides that he will get back at the boys by making himself appear as the Creek Devil. Chet learns that his impersonation is too spooky and he regrets his actions. By the end of the book, Chet and the boys are good friends.

setting: The setting of this tale is a New England town a couple of miles away from the Atlantic Ocean during the year of 1916. The reason for the sharks to swim into the creek is because of the increased summer heat. The excess sunlight causes an algae bloom and results in an abundance of fish. This in turn draws more sharks inland to eat the fish seeking refuge in the creek. The negative effect that this brings is the danger to the local people.

recommendation: I believe that this book is very easy to read for anyone of any age or gender. I say this because it does not really focus on any gender-specific issues. Readers that are around Chet's age could probably relate better to the main character.

rating: I would give this story a 2 out of 5 stars for its very flat story and anticlimactic finale.

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## **karen says**

IS IT WRONG TO CHEAT ON SHARK WEEK WITH SHARKFEST???

i also survived a vicious shark attack this shark week:

shaaaaark!

the wonderful ceridwen sent me this book, because she totally gets my love of sharks, and the people they eat along the way.

don't worry, sharks don't eat people much. we are the circus peanuts of the animal kingdom, and only crazy

sharks want to eat us.

but this is great - a kid's book about the shark attacks of 1916; the one *jaws* was based on. and it is a real-and-true story about how when there is a shark that is going on an all-you-can-eat buffet rampage, you are not even safe in a creek, or a crick, or whatever regional dialect you have that applies to your little swimming hole that is not the ocean.

and you might get noshered.

as you can tell by the title of this book, our hero chet does not get noshered, but in the real-and-true incident, two people did indeed get noshered unto death, and one just got nibbled a little. which is no fun when it is a shark what is doing the nibbling, let me tell you...

this was such an unusual occurrence, but i am glad to see that scholastic is taking time out of its day to terrify kids away from any body of water, ever. this should make bathtime fun.

it is a pretty great book - a modern-day "boy who cried wolf" story with some oddly hypocritical kids who hold grudges. but all is forgotten when your friend gets half his leg eaten by a shark. that's just basic courtesy...

come to my blog!

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### **Juli says**

I love this series of fictionalized eye-witness accounts of historical events written for kids. They focus on a wide variety of events from the destruction of Pompeii in AD 79 to the 9/11 attacks in 2001. The stories mix facts with a fictionalized story told by a child who was there for the event.

Each book is around 100 pages long and the audio books range from 1 to 1.5 hours, so the series is perfect length for use in a classroom situation or for at-home reading.

I Survived the Shark Attacks of 1916 is about shark attacks in the creeks along the Jersey Shore that summer. The attacks didn't just happen on the sea shore, but in Matawan Creek nearby as well. Swimmers in a creek did not expect to see a shark....and back then it was even believed that sharks would not attack humans.

Chet Roscow is staying in New Jersey with his uncle, helping him at his diner. His parents are in California trying to make his father's latest business venture work. Chet makes friends with some boys, and life seems to be settling down for him. Then, the newspaper headlines start talking about swimmers being killed by sharks at the beach. Chet sees a shark in Matawan Creek and tries to tell everyone about it, but most think he imagined it or the newspaper stories scared him. He walks down to the creek, and even his own friends refuse to get out of the water. Until they also see the shark. Can they escape with their lives?

There are 16 books in the I Survived series, with a new book scheduled to come out in September 2018.

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### **NATHANIELL says**

I really liked this book and I just wanted to keep reading this book. I think this book taught me that certain things can happen at the best of times and the worst of times.

At the beginning of this book there's this kid whose parents leave him at his uncle's house while they are on a business trip. He makes friends and they decide to pull a prank on him. Chet gets mad at them and in the paper there are shark attacks but nobody believes that though. Chet decides to pull a prank on his friends, and when he is swimming he sees a shark fin coming towards him. The shark scratches his stomach but before the shark bites him, he's able to get out of the water. He goes to town and tells the people what happened to him. Of course no one believes him. He goes to tell the captain and the captain believes him. He then tells Chet to go to the swimming hole and tell everyone to get out. Chet does what the captain says to do. the swimmers don't believe him until they see the shark fin coming towards them. They all get out but one kid is "frozen" in the water, so Chet jumps into the water to save him. As they are getting out of the water the shark jumps out and bites the Chet's leg. Then the captain shoots the shark, and the shark lets go of the leg and swims away. The kid is then sent to the hospital, and after his leg heals they let him go home.

I would recommend this book to both boys and girls at middle school age. The character in the book is middle school aged, and I think that they will be able to relate to the main character.

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### **Joseph S says**

I Survived the shark attacks of 1916 by Lauren Tarshis is about a kid named Chet and when he plays a prank on his friends the stop trusting him and when Chet spots a shark fin while he is swimming he tries to warn his friends, but when they don't believe him he tries to save them. Will Chet save his friends and will his friends trust him? Read I Survived the shark attacks of 1916 and find out.

I was moved by when Chet tried to save his friends from the shark. I liked the way the author put pictures in the book to put more detail in the story and so you could better understand the story. The main character of the book would have to be Chet. He is a kid that has never settled down in one place for very long and his parents left him to live with his uncle while his parents went to California. The genre of this book is nonfiction because it tells a true story , but the author wrote about made up characters to tell the story. I would say the theme of the book would be trust, because even though Chet's friends don't trust him he still tries to save them from the shark. The other theme of the book would be friendship, because Chet's friends were in trouble and since they were his friends he tried to save them from the shark. I would rate this book a solid ten because it was a super suspenseful book and and it always kept you wondering what would happen next. I didn't agree with the author putting the end of the story in the begining . It made the story very confusing. I wish that at the end of the book it told you what happened next to Chet. I hope you enjoy this book as much as I did and I hope you can read the whole series. Have fun reading!

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### **Emily Cook says**

My adventure-loving son and I truly enjoyed this book.

Great life-lessons about teasing, honesty, and heroism taught within a compelling and action-packed story. Highly recommend.

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### **Danette says**

My 11 year old son and I listened to my friend, Angel, read this fun book via You Tube. It was my first exposure to the I Survived Series and I was pleasantly surprised. Fun Historical Fiction for the younger set (and their moms).

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### **Nick Harrington says**

In 1916 a great white shark started to attack swimmers on the New Jersey shore. This book is based on true events but the characters are made up. It takes place in Elm Hills, New Jersey on the ocean shore and also in the Matawan Creek. Chet Roscow is the protagonist and the other main characters are his friends Dewey, Sid and Monty. The story happens in July and over 12 days there are 4 people killed by shark attacks in waist deep water and in a creek. At the time this happened people didn't believe that sharks were dangerous to humans.

I liked this book a lot because it was really easy to read and it was about true events. The way the author writes made me feel like I was really there and since I knew that this had really happened it made me think a lot about what I would do in the situation and how scared I would be. The chapters were pretty short and they had a picture in almost every chapter which I liked so I could see the setting and characters. This book is part of a series called I SURVIVED and this is the fourth book I have read. I will definitely read the other books and I would recommend them to my classmates. My favorite part is at the end of the book and in the very back is a section that lists the facts and the names of the victims.

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### **Jenni Heins says**

I read "Close to Shore" by Michael Capuzzo for a book club selection. I decided to read this junior historical fiction title to compare. I was very impressed by how much factual information Lauren Tarshis included. And, knowing my ability for retention, I felt like I should have only read this book and skipped the much longer, adult non-fiction title!

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### **Laura says**

Not exactly a Newbery winner, but a good story that will appeal to reluctant readers. Very short- I read it in an hour. I did like the mixture of historical fact with fiction, and I learned something while reading it- before 1916 people thought that sharks were passive and afraid of people.

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