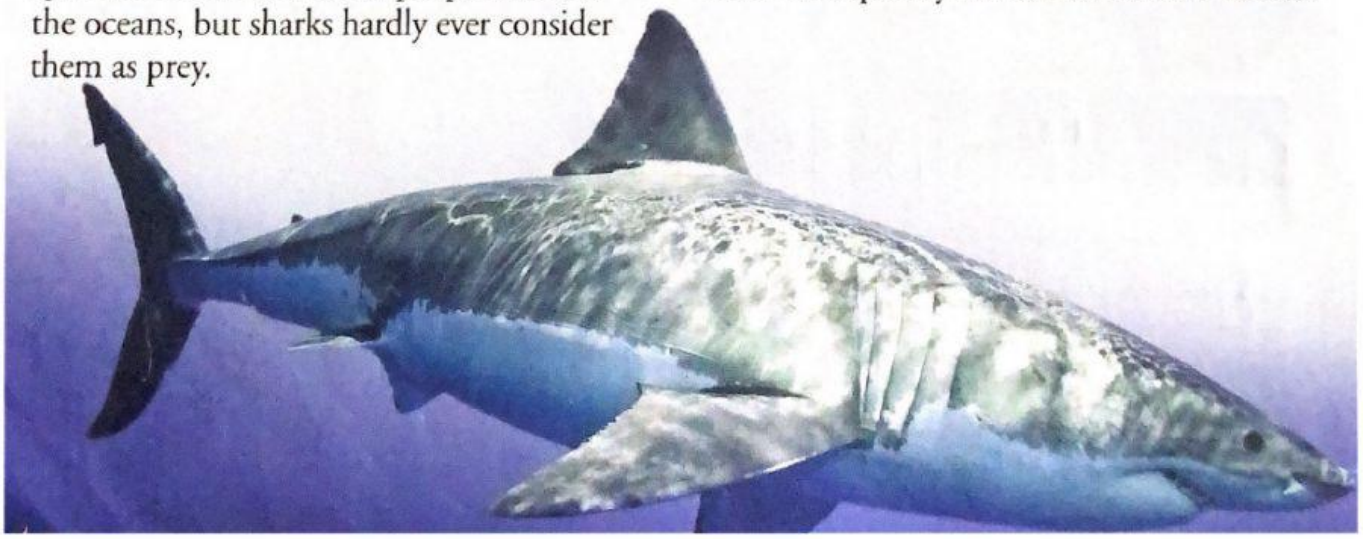
The Great White Shark: The Hungry Hunter

While ocean divers work to film a school of fish, one diver feels a tug on her safety line. Another diver is pointing at a great white shark moving toward them. The shark moves in circles, but the experienced divers stay calm. They know that sharks rarely attack humans. The divers move closer together, though, since a shark is more likely to attack a lone swimmer. The shark slowly circles again, and then swims away.

Great white sharks are misunderstood creatures. Many people think that they are cruel, bloodthirsty killers out to harm them. Experts, however, believe that these sharks kill because they are always hungry. Humans are not sharks' usual food. In fact, once they bite into humans, great white sharks usually spit them out. Millions of people swim in the oceans, but sharks hardly ever consider them as prey.

A closer inspection of a great white shark will explain why it is so greatly feared. The shark has a mouth full of razor-sharp teeth, sometimes five rows of them. An adult shark often stretches 18 feet long and weighs close to 3,500 pounds. The largest recorded great white shark was 21 feet long and weighed 7,000 pounds!

The great white shark can smell a tiny amount of blood in the water and trace it to a wounded animal. It can see its prey from as far away as 30 to 40 feet. Small holes on the shark's snout also sense signals from other creatures. These signals lead the shark straight to its next meal. The gray-and-white color of its skin helps the shark to blend into the background and allows it to sneak up on its victims. Large muscles help it to swim quickly to find the food it senses.



LIVEWORKSHEETS

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1) What misunderstanding do people have about the great white shark?

2) What is the most likely reason for a shark to attack a human?

3) Select the topic of the passage.

a) Ocean divers

b) Great white sharks

c) A school of fish

d) Marine seals

Read the following sentences. Write MI next to the main idea of each paragraph. Write SD next to each supporting detail.

Paragraph 1

4) _____ Ocean divers stay calm when a great white shark appears.

5) _____ The divers move close together.

6) _____ Sharks rarely attack humans.

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Paragraph 2

7) _____ Great white sharks are misunderstood creatures.

8) _____ Experts believe these sharks kill because they are always hungry.

9) _____ Humans are not sharks' usual food.

Paragraph 3

10) _____ The shark has a mouth full of razor-sharp teeth.

11) _____ A closer inspection of a great white shark will explain why it is so greatly feared.

12) _____ A great white can be 18 feet long and weigh close to 3,500 pounds

Match each word in column A with its synonym in column B.

Column A	Column B
13) bloodthirsty	a) hurt
14) harm	b) animal captured for food
15) misunderstood	c) nose
16) shark	d) big type of fish
17) prey	e) cruel
18) experienced	f) skillful
19) snout	g) seen incorrectly

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