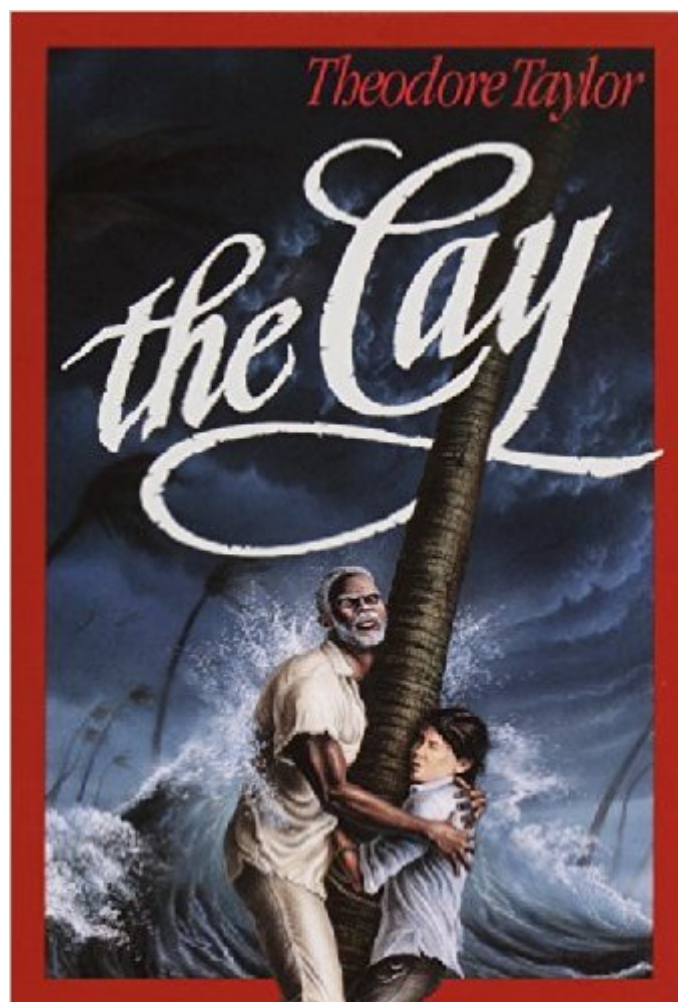


The book was found

# The Cay



## Synopsis

Read Theodore Taylor's classic bestseller and Lewis Carroll Shelf Award winner *The Cay*. Phillip is excited when the Germans invade the small island of Curaçao. War has always been a game to him, and he's eager to glimpse it firsthand "until the freighter he and his mother are traveling to the United States on is torpedoed. When Phillip comes to, he is on a small raft in the middle of the sea. Besides Stew Cat, his only companion is an old West Indian, Timothy. Phillip remembers his mother's warning about black people: "They are different, and they live differently." But by the time the castaways arrive on a small island, Phillip's head injury has made him blind and dependent on Timothy. Mr. Taylor has provided an exciting story [The idea that all humanity would benefit from this special form of color blindness permeates the whole book] The result is a story with a high ethical purpose but no sermon. "New York Times Book Review "A taut tightly compressed story of endurance and revelation" At once barbed and tender, tense and fragile "as Timothy would say, "outrageous good." "Kirkus Reviews "Fully realized setting" artful, unobtrusive use of dialect "the representation of a hauntingly deep love, the poignancy of which is rarely achieved in children's literature." "School Library Journal, Starred "Starkly dramatic, believable and compelling." "Saturday Review "A tense and moving experience in reading." "Publishers Weekly "Eloquently underscores the intrinsic brotherhood of man." "Booklist" "This is one of the best survival stories since Robinson Crusoe." "The Washington Star "A New York Times Best Book of the Year "A School Library Journal Best Book of the Year "A Horn Book Honor Book "An American Library Association Notable Book "A Publishers Weekly Children's Book to Remember "A Child Study Association's Pick of Children's Books of the Year "Jane Addams Book Award "Lewis Carroll Shelf Award "Commonwealth Club of California: Literature Award "Southern California Council on Literature for Children and Young People Award "Woodward School Annual Book Award "Friends of the Library Award, University of California at Irvine From the Hardcover edition.

## Book Information

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Best Sellers Rank: #13,884 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #25 in [Books > Children's Books >](#)

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[Needs](#) #108 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World](#)

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

**PLOT SPOILERS / WARNING:** Do not read this review/summary if you haven't yet read the

book!!**CHARACTERS:** Phillip Enright, 11, American citizen living with his parents on Curacao;

Timothy, an elderly black West Indian deckhand; and Stew Cat, a tomcat shipwrecked along with

them.**SUMMARY:** In February 1942 the Germans attack an oil refinery on Aruba, neighboring island

of Curacao, Dutch island off the Venezuelan coast. Young Phillip is living in Willemstad, Curacao,

with his parents, but after the attack his mother wants to return to America. Phillip and Father are

against the plan, but eventually Mother gets her way. Just days out to sea, the Germans torpedo the

Dutch freighter Phillip and his mother have boarded to flee Curacao. The ship breaks up and sinks;

mother and son are separated. Mrs. Enright's fate is unknown, but Phillip is hauled onto a lifeboat

by a very old black West Indian who'd been a crewmember on board the "Hato." The only other

occupant of the lifeboat is an old cat named Stew Cat; the three are adrift on the open sea for days

with only a keg of water, some matches and a few crackers. Phillip was struck on the head when the

"Hato" was sunk, and he has a splitting headache and concussion. After two days on the raft with

Timothy and Stew Cat, he goes completely blind. On the third day at sea a plane flies overhead and

Timothy signals for help with a torch, but they are not seen. Timothy, Phillip and the cat make it to a

small island that the old Negro, an old sea-hand, figures must be in the Devil's Mouth. Phillip's initial

reaction to Timothy is one of revulsion; he finds the big black man ugly and frightening. His mother's

prejudice against blacks is a factor in his attitude, but Phillip eventually overcomes it and they truly

become friends. When they first land on the island, Phillip feigns helplessness, refusing all labor.

Timothy encourages the boy and teaches him to make things they'll need. When the boy gathers

the courage to climb a coconut palm, he stops feeling sorry for himself and decides to do as much

as he can. He is no longer a helpless blind boy. Timothy begins teaching Phillip survival

skills--without telling the boy that he is preparing him for survival on the island after the old man dies. In July with a terrible hurricane brewing, Timothy makes preparations for it, including lashing their water tank, matches and knife high on the trunk of a palm tree. They survive the first part of the storm and rest while the hurricane's eye is over them. Then they again lash themselves to the tree again to wait out the storm. After the hurricane, Phillip finds that Timothy has borne the brunt of the storm to protect him; the big West Indian's back is flayed open by sand and things driven by the high winds, and Phillip can't stop Timothy's bleeding. The old man dies. Stew Cat, who was missing after the fierce storm, reappears. Initially the boy feels anger in response to the man's death, but gradually realizes how much Timothy did to prepare him for life alone. In addition to teaching Phillip to get around the cay without assistance, Timothy left a dozen fishing poles lashed to another palm trunk and had taught Phillip as much as he himself knew about survival. Phillip has to bury Timothy, construct a new hut, prepare another signal fire on the beach and a "HELP" message of stones, build a new rainwater catchment, clean the camp of debris, restart his campfire, and search for anything useful the hurricane might have deposited on the cay. At first the amount of work to be done seems overwhelming, but Phillip approaches the situation calmly, rationally, and with intensity. Phillip's first signal fire goes unnoticed, so he determines something oily will make a black smoke visible from a distance. On August 20, 1942 what he thinks is thunder is really a destroyer, so he throws oily sea grape leaves on the signal fire, which emits black smoke visible to rescuers. The deeply-suntanned boy could've been mistaken for a native fisherman, but the captain of an American destroyer hunting German submarines has the boy and Stew Cat picked up. The captain can't believe Phillip could've drifted so far from where the "Hato" was sunk, and he's most astonished to have found a naked blind boy and a cat on a deserted island in the Caribbean. Phillip's put ashore in Panama for medical treatment and his parents are flown in from Curacao. They can't absorb all that their son has to tell them of his time on the cay. Four months after his rescue Phillip has three surgeries to restore his eyesight. The following April, a year after the shipwreck, he returns to Willemstad with his parents. IMPRESSIONS: Beyond the obvious but meaningful theme of overcoming racial prejudices, this is a powerful story about growing up, becoming independent despite physical disability, and about strength and self-reliance beyond the levels required of most human beings--let alone a child. "THE CAY" is a most interesting, believable and memorable book. I'm glad to have read it.

I am in sixth grade now and our english teacher picked the book The Cay by Theadore Taylore to read as an assigned book. The Cay was the most recent assigned book we have read so we are

still doing essays. Just by looking at the cover, this book look stupid to me. But when I read it, it was excellent. My teacher is always making us write essays for assigned books. The topics for our Cay essays were as followed: Phillip's immaturity changing to mature; Phillip's prejudice towards blacks and then accepting blacks; a newspaper article on the German & Dutch war; a brochure for persuading people to visit a Caribbean island; a newspaper article on the rescue of Phillip; and a couple others I can't think of. I mostly got A+ and A's on all of these essays. The only thing that brought the 10 rating down to a 9 is because it was hard to read when Timothy talked. But other wise I would give it a ten. I think that this book would be good for boys and girls ages 11+. I am 12 now so I would qulafy. I hope you will read this book. It is awesome!!!

This book was awesome! It started out with a boy named Phillip who lived in the Caribbean. Phillip and his family were racist toward black people. They kind of thought that they were bums! During the book, 1942, some German tankers were attacking the ships that went out to sea. After a while Phillips mother did not feel safe where they lived. She wanted to go back to Virginia were they had lived before they moved south. Since Phillips dad had a steady job and was helping in the war he decided that it would be best if they stayed on the island. Phillips mother preferred to go back to the states. Phillip and his mother went back alone. On their way they got bombed. their was a great explosion and everyone was frightened. They made it to the life boats safely with the other passangers. But they did not stay in the boat for long. The boat capsized and phillip got knocked on the head. When he woke up he was on a boat with his worst enemy, a black man. He was a very, very ugly and he was very, very large. Phillip was very frightened. But mainly he was scared about knowing where his mother was. During this whole time on this lifeboat with this black man named Timothy, Phillip had a terrible headache. One day he woke up and he was blind. The only plus was that his headache was gone. One day they landed on an island. They were stuck on it for a long time. While they were on the island there was a hurricane. It mad a log fall on both of them. It knocked both of them out. But Timothy did not wake up. Shortly a ship came and saved Phillip. The conflict in this book were man vs. man, man vs. nature, man vs. socirty, and man vs. himself. The man vs. man was the white people on the island and the black people on the island. The man vs. nature was on the island a hurrican struck and killed Timothy. The third conflict was man vs. society. it was the pressure on Phillips family to not like blacks. And the fourth conflict was man vs. himself. This was Phillip against himself. He had to deal with his blindness. In all I like this book. It was a very educational book because I learned what it was like during a hurricane. I also learned that the Island of Curaco was just north of Venezuela. I feel that anyone in the age group of fourth through

eighth grade should read this book. It is not easy but it is definitely not too hard. In conclusion this book definitely deserves five stars. Like I said it was awesome.

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