

5. There are several "stories" in this book:
- the actual sailing adventure
 - the natural history of the Great Lakes
 - the relationships between crew members
 - the sailing differences between the Great Lakes and the ocean
 - maritime history of the Great Lakes
 - memoir of author's experience

Did you find one story more compelling than another? Are there too many stories?

6. Which character did you identify with in the book? Why?

7. Have you read many sea stories? Would you class The Living Great Lakes in this genre? Why or why not?

8. Does this book make you proud to live in Michigan? Why or why not?

9. Jerry Dennis discusses the demise of Michigan's forests by logging. Has this book changed your perspective on Michigan's natural resources, especially its water? Do you feel motivated to take care of our resources?

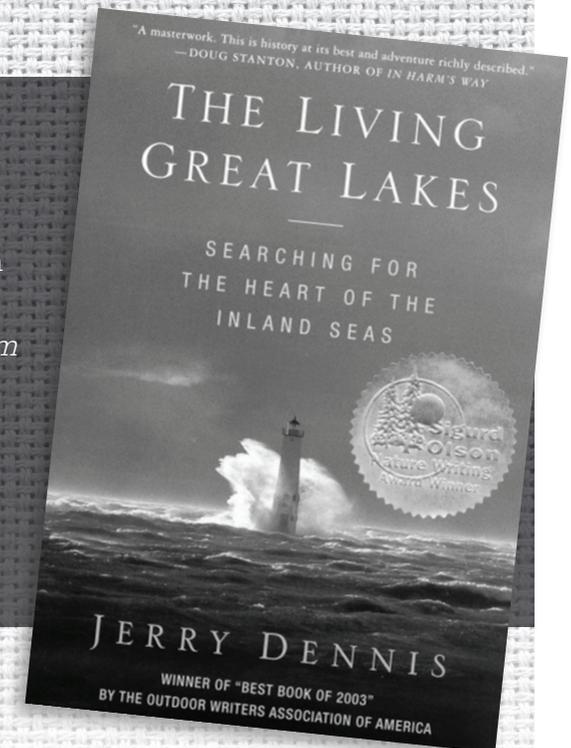
10. What is something you learned in this book that you did not know before?

Discussion Questions

"Engrossing... modern adventure tale"

- *Publishersweekly.com*

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Jerry Dennis grew up in rural northern Michigan and has earned his living since 1986 writing about the places where nature and human culture intersect. His essays and short fiction have appeared in more than 100 publications, including *The New York Times*, *Smithsonian*, *Audubon*, *Orion*, *American Way*, *Gray's Sporting Journal*, and *Michigan Quarterly Review*. His books, many of them illustrated by artist Glenn Wolff, are widely acclaimed, have won numerous awards, and have been translated into Chinese, Japanese, German, Portuguese, and Czech.

In 1999 the Michigan Library Association named Jerry the Michigan Author of the Year, and in 2003 the University of Louisville's School of Arts and Sciences recognized his achievements in literature with its Outstanding Alumnus of the Year Award. He is a frequent guest speaker at universities and elsewhere and serves on the faculty of the University of Michigan's Bear River Writers Conference, where he teaches creative non-fiction. He and his wife, Gail, live near the shore of Lake Michigan not far from Traverse City, Michigan. (From the author)

Book Summary

The story of the Great Lakes told from the decks of boats, especially *The Malabar*, a two-masted schooner the author helped sail from Lake Michigan to Bar Harbor, Maine, in which many adventures ensued. Awards include the 2004 Sigurd Olson Nature Writing Award, the Best Book of the Year from the Outdoor Writers Association of America, the Stuart D. and Vernice Gross Award for Excellence in Literature, and the Great Lakes Culture Award from Michigan State University. The book was also a finalist for the Great Lakes Booksellers Association's Book of the Year and was selected as a 2004 Michigan Notable Book by the Michigan Library Association. A perennial favorite of book clubs across the U.S. and Canada, it has been a community reads selection in 17 cities, including 2009 "Traverse City [MI] Reads," and the 2010 "Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti Reads." (From the author)

Discussion Questions

1. Do you have any sailing experience?
 - a. Do you think the author did a good job of describing the experience?
 - b. Do you have a preference for fresh or salt water sailing?
 - c. Did you find the use and explanation of sailing terms useful?

2. Do you have a favorite Great Lake?
 - a. Did one lake seem more 'favored' than another in the book?
 - b. Did the author make you want to learn more about a particular lake?

3. Have you ever experienced living in tight quarters?
 - a. Do you think the author described the relationships realistically?
 - b. Do you think that the experience is the same (cramped quarters) on both land and sea?- why or why not?

4. Librarians will use the phrase, "non-fiction that reads like fiction" to describe a book that is factual, but reads like a novel. Do you think that this describes *The Living Great Lakes*? Why or why not?
