

Name: _____

Summer Reading Guide: *A Single Shard*

Section 1: The Bridge & The Broken Pot (Chapters 1–3)

Focus: Meeting Tree-ear and Crane-man, and the mistake that changes everything.

Check for Understanding

1. Where do Tree-ear and Crane-man live to stay sheltered from the weather?
 - A) In an abandoned pottery kiln
 - B) Under a bridge made of logs and earth
 - C) In the back of Min's workshop
 - D) In a cave on the outskirts of Ch'ulp'o
2. Why does Tree-ear offer to work for the master potter, Min, for nine days without pay?
 - A) He accidentally broke a valuable piece of Min's pottery and needs to pay him back.
 - B) Crane-man forced him to learn a trade so they could buy a real house.
 - C) Min promised to teach him how to throw clay on the wheel on day ten.
 - D) Tree-ear wants to steal Min's secret formula for making celadon glaze.
3. What is Tree-ear's very first job when he starts working for Min?
 - A) Painting delicate duck designs on vases
 - B) Spinning the heavy wooden potter's wheel
 - C) Gathering firewood from the mountains for the kiln
 - D) Digging clay out of the riverbank

Reflection Question

Crane-man tells Tree-ear, "Scholars read the great words of the world. But you and I must learn to read the world itself." What does Crane-man mean by "reading the world"? Give an example of how Tree-ear uses his wits or senses to survive in Chapter 1.

Section 2: The Secret of the Clay (Chapters 4–7)

Focus: Hard labor, a rival's new technique, and a secret kindness.

Check for Understanding

1. Why does Tree-ear start hiding half of his mid-day meal every day?
 - A) He doesn't like the food Min's wife cooks.
 - B) He wants to save it to share with Crane-man.
 - C) He is saving it to feed a stray dog he found.
 - D) He wants to sell it back to the village traders.
2. What makes Kang's new pottery technique different from Master Min's traditional style?
 - A) Kang uses a completely different type of red clay.
 - B) Kang applies multiple layers of clear glass over the pots.
 - C) Kang uses an "inlay" technique, cutting designs into the clay and filling them with white or black mud.
 - D) Kang bakes his pottery in an open fire rather than a brick kiln.
3. What does Min's wife ask Tree-ear to start calling her, showing a shift in their relationship?
 - A) Master's Wife
 - B) Auntie (*Ajima*)
 - C) Grandmother
 - D) Teacher

Reflection Question

Tree-ear secretly spies on Kang to see his new inlay technique, but he instantly feels a deep wave of guilt. He decides he will not steal the idea to give to Min. What does this decision tell you about Tree-ear's values, especially when he wants so badly to help Min succeed?

Section 3: The Royal Emissary & The Journey (Chapters 8–10)

Focus: The competition for a royal commission and Tree-ear's big trip.

Check for Understanding

1. Why does Emissary Kim grant Kang a temporary royal commission instead of Min?
 - A) Min's pottery was completely ruined in the kiln firing.
 - B) Min was too slow and didn't have his new work ready in time for the display.
 - C) Kang's inlay work is completely fresh and exciting to the royal court.
 - D) Min refused to talk to the Emissary because of his pride.

2. Why does Tree-ear volunteer to walk all the way to the capital city of Songdo?
 - A) To run away from Ch'ulp'o and start a new life as a trader.
 - B) To deliver Min's finished, perfect vases directly to the Emissary.
 - C) To find his long-lost family who might live near the palace.
 - D) To buy a rare type of glaze that can only be found in Songdo.
3. Before Tree-ear leaves, Crane-man gives him a gift and some advice about his journey. What does Crane-man say will be the hardest part of the trip?
 - A) The steep, rocky mountain trails
 - B) The lack of clean drinking water
 - C) Wild animals like tigers and bears
 - D) The people he meets along the way

Reflection Question

Min is too old and tired to make the long journey to Songdo, so Tree-ear steps up to go for him. This is a massive turning point for Tree-ear. How has his motivation changed from Chapter 1 (where he just wanted to pay off a debt) to Chapter 9?

Section 4: The Rock of the Falling Flowers (Chapters 11–13)

Focus: Disaster at the cliff, the single shard, and a new beginning.

Check for Understanding

1. What happens to Tree-ear at the Rock of the Falling Flowers?
 - A) He loses his map and gets completely lost in the mountains.
 - B) He is ambushed by bandits who steal his money and smash Min's vases.
 - C) He drops the vases into a deep river while trying to cross.
 - D) He decides to give up and return home to Crane-man.
2. What does Tree-ear decide to bring to Emissary Kim after looking at the destruction?
 - A) A single, large shard of a broken vase that shows Min's beautiful glaze and inlay.
 - B) Nothing—he goes to the palace to apologize with empty hands.
 - C) A small clay monkey he made himself while resting.
 - D) A bundle of specialized firewood from the local trees.

3. When Tree-ear returns to Ch'ulp'o, what heartbreaking news does he receive from the local guard?
- A) Min has moved away to another village.
 - B) Crane-man tragically died in an accident involving a collapsing bridge.
 - C) The village kiln was completely destroyed by fire.
 - D) Min's wife has forgotten who Tree-ear is.

Reflection Question

At the very end of the book, Min renames Tree-ear "Hyung-pil," sharing a part of his late son's name, and promises to teach him how to throw clay on the wheel. Why is this name change so meaningful? How does it fulfill Tree-ear's deepest wish?

Final Summer Reflection & Project Menu

Choose **one** of the following options to show your deep understanding of the novel.

- **Option 1: The Character Mosaic**

The title of the book refers to a single piece of broken pottery that still carries great beauty and value. Create a "mosaic" paragraph or drawing. Identify **three small moments** or single choices Tree-ear made during the story that proved he had the true character of a master craftsman long before he ever touched the wheel.

- **Option 2: Crane-man's Wisdom Notebook**

Crane-man is the philosophical anchor of the story. Write a diary entry or create an illustrated guide containing three pieces of advice Crane-man gave Tree-ear throughout the book. For each piece of advice, explain how Tree-ear actually used it to survive or succeed on his journey to Songdo.

- **Option 3: Historical Artifact Report**

Do a tiny bit of independent research on 12th-century Korean **Celadon Pottery** (or look closely at the descriptions in the book). Write a descriptive paragraph explaining how it was made, why the glaze color (often compared to jade or a robin's egg) was so prized, and why the "inlay" technique mentioned in the book was such a major invention.
