

Setting & Overview: Arctic. A young Eskimo stands on an ice floe when it breaks away from the mainland. He manages to reach a desolate island, where he kills seals and foxes enough to survive for several months. Once a bear comes and slashes Tikta'liktak's face before the boy's harpoon kills him. Eventually Tikta'liktak makes a raft out of inflated seal's bodies and reaches the mainland and his family again.

Q: How does Tikta'liktak separate from the mainland? [pages 8-21]

A: when he shoots a bird that drifts far from him, he goes to retrieve it, so he will not waste, and the ice separates in that short time

Q: What must Tikta'liktak do in order to sleep? [pages 8-21]

A: he builds a shelter out of slabs of ice, puts snow in the cracks to prevent the wind's chill, piles snow on the ice for a bed (snow is warmer than ice), and sleeps with his hands next to his body and his mittens under his hip and shoulder

Q: How does Tikta'liktak get food? [pages 22-36]

A: he lays bait for a raven, then catches the bird with his bare hands; he harpoons a seal when he is almost dead from hunger

Q: What risks does Tikta'liktak take to get to the island? [pages 22-36]

A: he first breaks a light piece of ice from his floe and steers toward the land; then he jumps on loose ice, from pan to pan, as quickly as possible; if he pauses or missteps he will land in the sea and die

Q: How does Tikta'liktak kill the bear? [pages 22-36]

A: he watches his movements and tries to think like a bear; he wedges his harpoon between some rocks, then holds the harpoon until it pierces the bear's throat, and finally kills the bear

Q: What does Tikta'liktak use to make his boat? [pages 37-50]

A: he blows up three sealskins and uses them as floats; he makes waterproof boots from another sealskin and makes a paddle from the bear's shoulder blades and his harpoon; the fox's fur provided thread

Q: What dangers does the sea hold for the boy? [pages 37-50]

A: the strong tide, the deep and deadly, cold water, and strong and angry walrus bulls

Q: Describe the Place of Beautiful Stones. [pages 37-50]

A: a cave littered with sharply cut red and clear stones, and ten holes in the wall with fox skulls inside

Q: Why does Tikta'liktak not immediately go to his family? [pages 50-63]

A: since they think he is dead, they will fear he is a ghost or spirit

Q: How does Tikta'liktak's past help him survive? [pages 50-63]

A: he has watched his mother teach his sister how to sew and prepare food, he knows stories that help him reach the island before he is swept to sea, and he has hunted enough and learned from his father that he can hunt the food he needs