



Bethany Hamilton

CHAPTER 3

Shark Attack!

MYTH: SHARK ATTACKS HAPPEN ALL THE TIME.

In 2003, a tiger shark attacked Bethany Hamilton, a 13-year-old girl from Hawaii, when she was surfing near Kauai, one of the Hawaiian Islands. Bethany was a very good surfer, but she lost her arm because of the attack. However, only one month later, Bethany got back in the water. She still surfs today.

Most people who are attacked by sharks live to tell the story. Sharks attack 50 to 70 people each year, but as you read, only 5 to 15 people die. In fact, sharks are less dangerous than **jellyfish**! In the whole of the United States, there are about 16 shark attacks every year, but in Florida alone, jellyfish sting about 200,000 people a year! Jellyfish stings are very painful and can sometimes even kill people.

What is the most dangerous animal in the world? It isn't the shark. It's the mosquito! Mosquitoes give diseases⁷ to 700 million people a year, and these diseases kill more than 1 million of them!



A mosquito

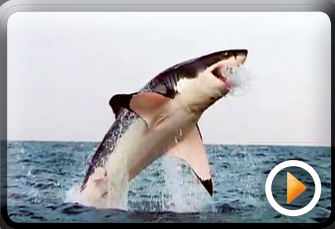
Of the almost 400 species of sharks, only about 25 to 30 are actually harmful⁸ to people. The top three are great white sharks, bull sharks, and tiger sharks. But when these sharks attack, it is often because of “mistaken identity.”

Yes, the sharks are hungry. Yes, they want to eat. But they prefer fish and other ocean animals to people. However, if people are swimming where a shark is, the shark might mistake them for its usual food. Most shark attacks are really just the shark tasting a new animal – you!

⁷ **disease:** a bad illness that can kill you

⁸ **harmful:** able to hurt others

Video Quest



Great White Sharks

Watch this video to learn about great white sharks. Why is the shark attacking the boat?