HZT4U: *Life of Pi*

NAME:

<http://www.lifeofpimovie.com/>

There is a lot of philosophy in *Life of Pi*. From a positive psychology standpoint, the main character is very resilient and purpose-orientated.

*Life of Pi* is based on [Yann Martel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yann_Martel" \o "Yann Martel)'s [2001 novel of the same name](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Life_of_Pi). The storyline revolves around a 16-year-old Indian boy named Piscine Molitor "Pi" Patel, who survives a shipwreck in which his family dies, and is stranded in the [Pacific Ocean](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacific_Ocean) on a lifeboat with a tiger named [Richard Parker](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Parker_(shipwrecked)).

Spoiler Alert:  Pi is crushed that Richard Parker does not acknowledge him before disappearing into the jungle. Pi is rescued and brought to a hospital. Insurance agents for the freighter interview him, but do not believe his story and ask what "really" happened. Remembering an incident aboard the ship when the ship's cook insulted his family, he makes up a less fantastic account of sharing the lifeboat with his mother, a Buddhist sailor with a broken leg, and the cook. According to this story, the cook killed the sailor in order to eat him and use him as bait. In a later struggle, Pi's mother pushed her son to safety on a smaller raft before the cook stabbed her and threw her overboard. Pi later returned, took the knife and killed the cook. Next, Yann notes the parallels between the two stories: the orangutan was Pi's mother, the zebra was the sailor, the hyena was the cook, and Richard Parker was Pi. Pi asks which story the writer prefers, and the writer chooses "the one with the tiger" because it is "the better story", to which Pi responds, "Thank you. And so it goes with God". Glancing at a copy of the insurance report, Yann sees that the agents wrote that Pi survived 227 days at sea with an adult Bengal tiger, meaning they had also chosen the more fantastic story to be the one recorded as the real story.

The author of the novel meant to teach readers that life is a story... You can choose your story... A story with God is the better story." A recurring theme throughout the novel seems to be believability. Pi at the end of the book asks the two investigators "If you stumble about believability, what are you living for? "There are two main themes of the book: "that all life is interdependent, and that we live and breathe via belief" (**positive psychology**).

The author is also quoted as saying:“I must say a word about fear. It is life's only true opponent. Only fear can defeat life. It is a clever, treacherous adversary, how well I know. It has no decency, respects no law or convention, shows no mercy. It goes for your weakest spot, which it finds with unnerving ease. It begins in your mind, always ... so you must fight hard to express it. You must fight hard to shine the light of words upon it. Because if you don't, if your fear becomes a wordless darkness that you avoid, perhaps even manage to forget, you open yourself to further attacks of fear because you never truly fought the opponent who defeated you.”

Questions: /9

1. Pick 2 of the following quotes and interpret them in your own words considering the context during the film: (4)

a) “Why would a Lotus flower hide in the forest?”

b) “…And so it goes with God?”

c) “I know zoos are no longer in people’s good graces. Religion faces the same problem. Certain illusions about freedom plague them both.”

d) “Without Richard Parker, I wouldn’t be alive today to tell you my story.”

e) “The lower you are, the higher your mind will want to soar.”

2. What would you do if you were stranded at sea in a lifeboat? (1)

3. What is your view on zoos? (2)

4. Was there really a tiger in the boat or not? Explain. (2)