

HUMANS – Humans & the Marine Environment

Blueback

Topics

Commercial fishing
Human impacts
Research
Sustainability
Threatened species
Recreational fishing

Phase of Learning

Late 3–6, 7–10

Site (Location)

Classroom
Internet
Library

Activities & Duration

1. [Reading Comprehension](#)
2. [Writing](#)
3. [Debate](#)
4. [Research Report](#)

The activities in this lesson plan have been designed to be carried out over a period of 2 – 5 weeks

Materials

- Class set of *Blueback* by Tim Winton
- Copies of *Blueback* with different book covers (there are at least six different covers to this book)
- Copy of *The Deep* by Tim Winton

Student Worksheets

1. [Character Compare Venn Diagram](#)
2. [Exposition Template](#)
3. [Fishbone Graphic Organiser](#)

1. OVERVIEW

Students will study the sustainability of the marine environment in an integrated literacy program. The program consists of reading and discussing the books 'Blueback' and 'The Deep', written by Western Australian author Tim Winton.

2. LINKS TO CURRICULUM

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK (WA)

Learning Area	Outcome
English	Reading Writing Listening & Speaking Viewing
Society and Environment	Active Citizenship Resources

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

Strand	Sub-strand
ENGLISH	
Language	Expressing and Developing Ideas Text Structure & Organisation
Literature	Examining Literature
Literacy	Interpreting, Analysing, Evaluating Creating Texts

3. OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Have an understanding of the elements of a debate
- Understand how language influences how we read a text
- Understand how language influences the way we feel about a text
- Have knowledge and understanding of persuasive writing
- Understand the importance of sustainability within the marine environment

4. TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The activities in this lesson plan can be carried out over a two to five week literacy program.

Book blurb – *Blueback*:

Abel Jackson has lived by the sea at Longboat Bay ever since he could remember. He helps his mother each day and loves to dive. One day he meets Blueback, the biggest and most beautiful fish he has ever seen.

When Abel's mother is approached by developers, she decides she must do something to protect their fragile piece of coastline, but can Abel and his mother save Blueback and Longboat Bay in time?

Book Blurb – *The Deep*:

Alice's family lives by the sea. Every day they run down to the jetty and jump into the smooth, dark water. They look like a bunch of dolphins leaping and laughing. But Alice misses out. She's afraid of the deep. She is afraid of what might be down there where the water turns from green to blue and you can't see the bottom. Then, one day some new friends come into the bay and Alice forgets to be scared.

Vocabulary

Simile: states that one object is like another, e.g. The world is like a stage.

Metaphor: states that an object is another or substitutes one object for another, e.g. All the world is a stage.

Imagery: assists readers to imagine what is in the writer's mind.

About the author:

Tim Winton has published 21 books for adults and children, and his work has been translated into 25 languages. Since his first novel, *An Open Swimmer*, won the Australian/Vogel Award in 1981, he has won the Miles Franklin Award four times (for *Shallows*, *Cloudstreet*, *Dirt Music* and *Breath*) and twice been shortlisted for the Booker Prize (for *The Riders* and *Dirt Music*). He lives in Western Australia.

References

Penguin Books Australia, <http://www.penguin.com.au> [7 September 2011].

Related Resources

Department of Fisheries, WA, Fisheries Factsheets:

- [Western blue groper](#)
- [Bycatch](#)

Further information on literacy vocabulary: http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/learning/7-12assessments/naplan/teachstrategies/yr2010/index.php?id=literacy/language/ll_simi/ll_simi_o

Poster: [Bycatch](#)

Winton, T. (1997) *Blueback*, Penguin: Australia ISBN: 9780143304333

Winton, T. (1999) *The Deep*, Fremantle Press: Australia ISBN: 9781863682107

5. TEACHER PREPARATION

A number of activity ideas and avenues for classroom exploration are presented arising from the books *Blueback* and *The Deep*. Enquire whether your school already has copies of both books and organise copies of *Blueback* books with different book covers.

One of the suggested activities in Activity 1: Reading Comprehension introduces the book *The Deep* and requires text in this book to be masked.

6. PROCEDURE

ACTIVITY 1: Reading Comprehension

- Introduce the book *Blueback* by Tim Winton. Ask students what they already know about the author.
- Show the various covers of the book. Hold a class discussion to predict what the text is going to be about. Discuss the text type – literary or factual.
- Engage students in variety of reading styles – silent, individual; shared group reading; shared whole class reading. Also, model oral reading periodically.
- Discuss descriptive/figurative language used in the text – including simile, metaphor, personification, and imagery. Discuss what these words mean. Ask students to find examples of them in the text. Determine their purpose within the text.
- Discuss the point of view the text is written in. Does this affect how the text is read? How?
- Discuss the characterisation of Abel, Costello, Abel's mother and Mad Macka. How is the author encouraging students to feel about these characters.
- Following a shared reading of Chapter 7, discuss Costello's attitude towards the ocean, compared with Abel's. Introduce and discuss expositions – a persuasive text (one side of the argument). Read examples from letters to the editor from the local paper.
- Following a shared reading of Chapter 12, discuss human impacts on the marine environment as discussed in the book. Discuss other human impacts on marine environment in Western Australia. Brainstorm ways that students can lessen their ecological footprint when using the marine environment.
- As part of an ongoing assessment, ask each student to write one comprehension question and answer per day. Collate work at the end of a two-week period and administer as an assessment piece to the class.
- Organise a shared reading session of *Blueback* Chapters 15 and 16. Engage the class in a discussion on conclusion of story, including the 'About the Author' text at the end of Chapter 16. Verify how accurate their written predictions were from the beginning of the study of this text.
- Introduce a new book – *The Deep*, by Tim Winton. Discuss what students already know about the author and his style of writing. Ask students questions, such as "looking at the cover, who is this text aimed at?", "what is its purpose?", "what do you predict the story to be about?"
- Use a prepared version of the book *The Deep*, by Tim Winton with masked text and read as a class using the pictures to create the story.
- Reread, this time without the text masked and compare how the two stories differ and why. Discuss the difference between this book and *Blueback*. Ask students questions, such as "what do the illustrations tell you?", "how do they make you to feel?"

The main difference between the two books is that *The Deep* is a picture book, and thus does not need the descriptive language that is used in *Blueback*.

Related Resources

Blueback teachers notes:
http://www.penguin.com.au/educationcentre/pdf/teachers_notes/PDF/9780143304333.pdf

Marine WATERs Lesson Plan: [Sustainable Shores](#)

ACTIVITY 2: Writing

- After reading Chapters 1 and 2 of *Blueback*, ask students to predict what will happen in the story and write the last chapter of the story. Discuss predictions as class. Let students share predictions and discuss why predictions may or may not be feasible and what leads them to thinking that way.
- Following discussion on characterisation, let students complete Student Worksheet 1: *Character Compare Venn Diagram* comparing and contrasting Abel and Costello. Encourage use of adjectives and examples from the text.
- Ask students to imagine that they are Able as a grandfather and that they tell their grandchildren about how the Bay has changed since he was a boy. Ask them to write a recount to tell this story.
- Ask students to draw the setting of the story – include Longboat Bay, Mad Macka’s boat and Abel’s mother’s property, while using the descriptions provided in the text.
- Following discussion on expositions, ask students to write a letter to the Department of Fisheries, either for or against Costello and his way of fishing. Students should plan their letter using Student Worksheet 2: *Exposition Template*.
- Invite students to write a newspaper article using one of the events from the text. Possible events include:
 - Abel’s father’s death
 - Mad Macka’s death
 - declaration of Longboat Bay as a marine sanctuary.

ACTIVITY 3: Debate

Introduce and explain debate. Discuss features of debate. Ask one group to present their opinion and reasoning, while the other group gets a chance to respond. Students will be conducting debates using written exposition pieces. Model with students using the topic “should the canteen sell chocolate?”

Split the class into six groups: three groups ‘for’ Costello’s way of fishing and three groups ‘against’. Ask students to use exposition letters to prepare for the debate. Students should prepare notes in the format: opinion, reason, explanation of reason and restate opinion.

Conduct debates over three days. Students in ‘for’ group one will debate against students in ‘against’ group one (followed by groups two and three on following days). All students should actively listen to debate and decide which group was more persuasive and why.

ACTIVITY 4: Research Report

Students will research a fish found in Western Australian waters. To model the research that students will complete, use Student Worksheet 3: *Fishbone Graphic Organiser* and the information on the Department of Fisheries Factsheet: *Western blue groper* (Blueback is a western blue groper).

Ask students to present information as a poster, presentation or report.

Possible research areas include:

- distribution
- life cycle
- commercial &/or recreational fishery
- habitat
- diet

Student Worksheets

1. [Character Compare Venn Diagram](#)
2. [Exposition Template](#)

Related Resources

Marine WATERS Lesson Plan: [Exceptional Expositions](#)

Student Worksheet

3. [Fishbone Graphic Organiser](#)

Related Resource

Department of Fisheries, WA, Fisheries Fact Sheet: [Western Blue Groper](#)

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Organise a Department of Fisheries incursion or a Naturaliste Marine Discovery Centre excursion.

Fishing for Sustainability is an activity that is offered at the Naturaliste Marine Discovery Centre and through the Department of Fisheries regional community education officers.

Fisheries rules and regulations help manage the State's recreational fisheries in a sustainable way to ensure we have *Fish for the future*. In the education activity *Fishing for Sustainability*, students will apply these rules and regulations to various scenarios while participating in a virtual fishing game.

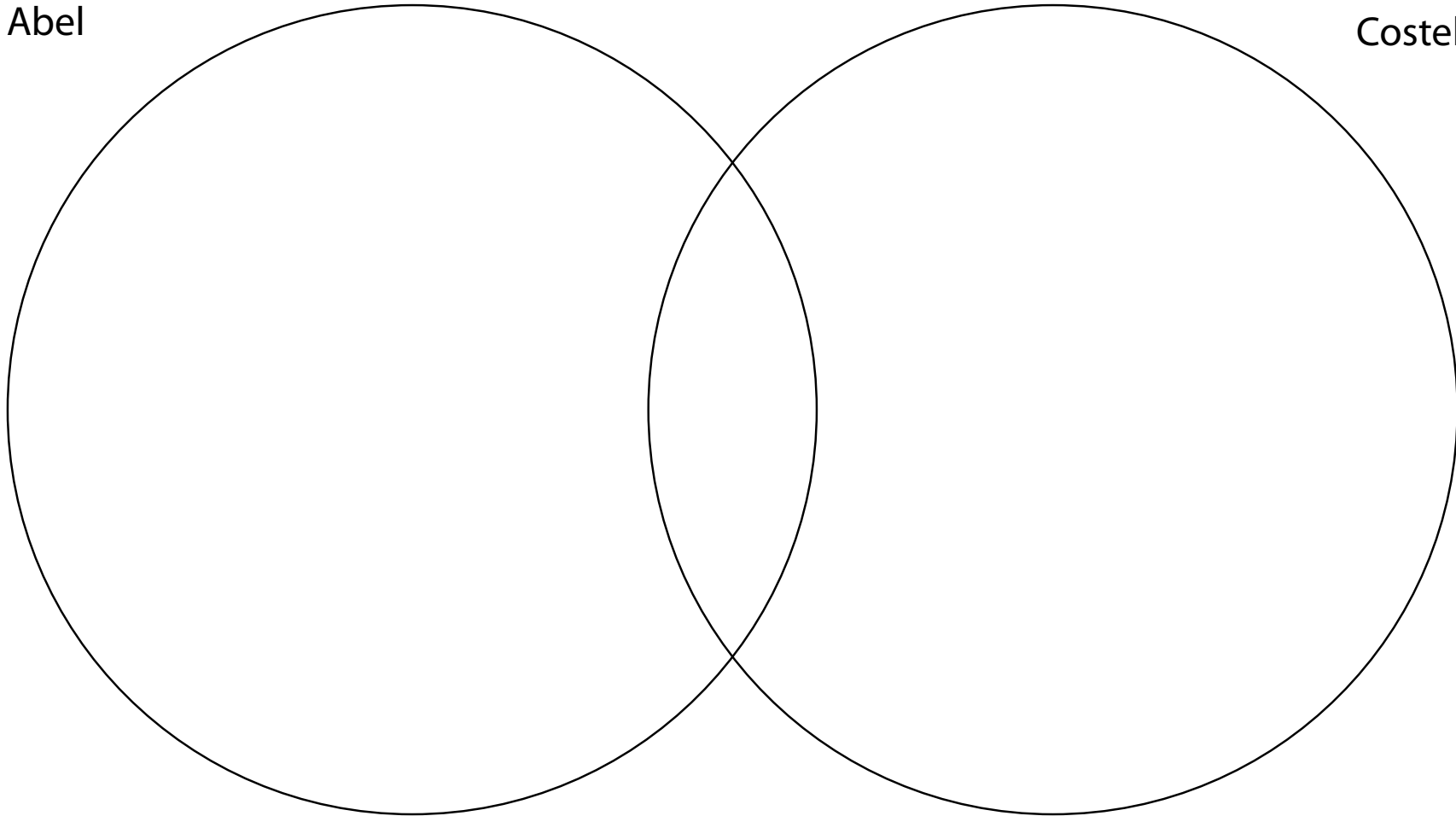
For further information visit <http://www.nmdc.com.au/excursions/fishing-for-sustainability>.

Blueback Character Compare Venn Diagram

Name: _____ Date: _____

Abel

Costello



Character 1: _____

Character 2: _____

Exposition Template

Name: _____ Date: _____

Opinion:

Reasons:

Explanation of reasons:

Restate opinion:

Fishbone Graphic Organiser

Name: _____ Date: _____

Type of fish: _____

