

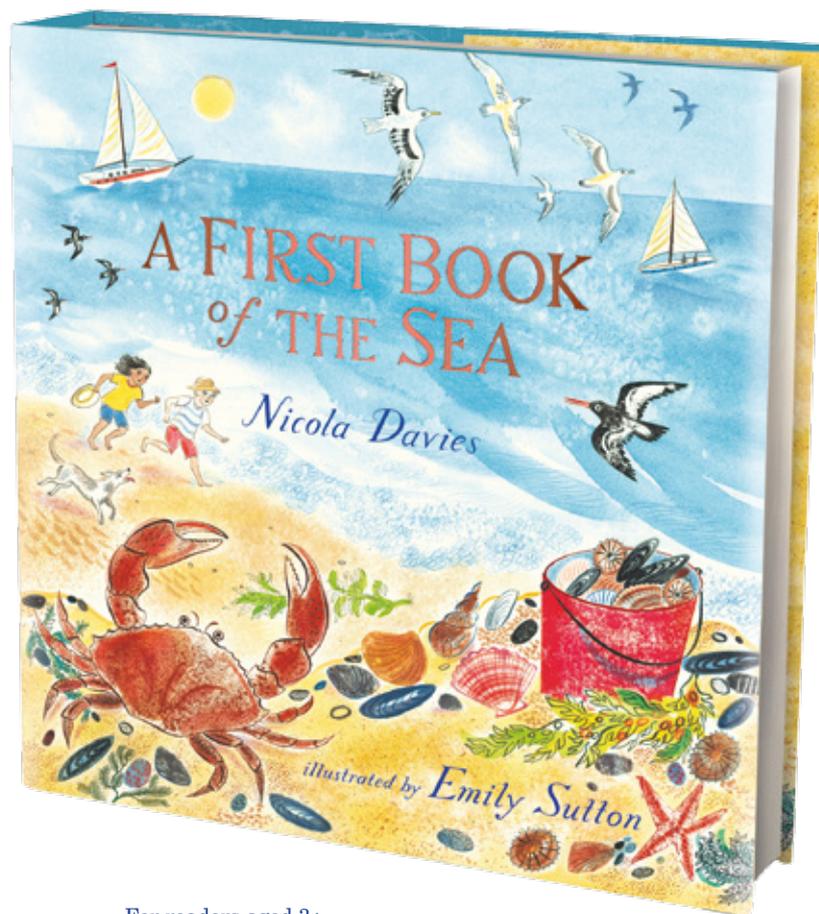
WALKER BOOKS

# TEACHERS' NOTES

by Eva John

# A FIRST BOOK *of* THE SEA

Nicola Davies illustrated by Emily Sutton



For readers aged 3+  
9781406368956 • Hardback • £14.99

The discussion points and activities are deliberately open-ended to encourage the development of pupil independence and problem-solving. Talking and writing partners are recommended for many of the tasks in order to build pupil confidence.

2 GENERIC ACTIVITIES  
4 DOWN BY THE SHORE  
11 JOURNEYS  
15 UNDER THE SEA  
19 WONDERS  
24 FINAL THOUGHTS

Please visit the websites of the author  
and illustrator:  
[www.nicola-davies.com/](http://www.nicola-davies.com/)  
[www.emillustrates.com/gallery](http://www.emillustrates.com/gallery)

# Generic Activities

## SUGGESTIONS FOR COLLABORATIVE CLASSROOM DISPLAY

**Global search:** world map and key to locate the creatures' habitats and migrations. Pupils can develop a key and indicate possible locations on the map as they read about and research each creature.

**Classification chart:** mammals/birds/fish/crustaceans

Mammals	Birds	Fish	Crustaceans

**Endangered animals chart:** critically endangered/endangered/vulnerable/lower risk (these categories can be simplified for younger pupils).

Critically endangered	Endangered	Vulnerable	Lower risk

**Habitats display,** where pupils can place pictures or names of animals to be found there. The background can reflect the type of habitat.

The following can be simplified for younger children:

Coastal	Open ocean	Deep ocean	Tropical reefs	Polar seas

**Class books** – for poetry, information reports, stories, plays, art – in a variety of formats: e.g. eBook, audio book, concertina book, portfolio, big book.

**Thought and speech bubbles** to attach to the illustrations, allowing the children to compose sentences for each of the creatures, developing recall and inference.

**Alphabestiary** – a compilation in poetry or prose for an A to Z of the sea.

## INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES

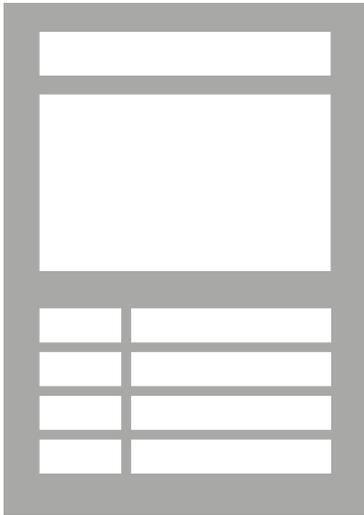
**Fact files on creatures**

Creature name:	
Features	
Habitat	
Diet	
Family	
Interesting facts	

Ideally, these could be completed electronically to enable import of photographs.

### **Trump cards**

Using research information and their fact files, pupils can agree to the categories and collectively produce a set of cards electronically, allowing the import of photographs, which can then be printed off, laminated and used.



Examples: <http://hubpages.com/games-hobbies/printable-trump-card-game>

**Puppets** – to use in poetry performance, monologue, duologue, plays, stories.

Stick, string, shadow, hand, sock, finger puppets.

Use of green screen filming could provide the correct habitat background.

**Sketch pad** to compile observations, ideas and sketches. Ideally, look at illustrators' sketchpads (many examples are on the internet) to see how they gather ideas and play with them.

**Infographics:** a helpful activity to decide on key facts and use of pictures and diagrams.

**Life cycles** – for each of the animal classes: e.g. blue whale, albatross, sharks, eels, crabs.

**Word clouds:** (e.g. Wordle app) designs incorporating the words collected by the children relating to the sea, encouraging them to think about word choice, synonyms, colour and design – a good way to encourage spelling accuracy!

# Down by the Shore

## DOWN BY THE SHORE

### Talk for thought

- What is the predominant colour on this page, and why do you think this is?
- Explain what has happened over millions of years in your own words.

### Performance poetry

- Act out the first part of the poem as it is read aloud.
- How do the last four lines make you feel?
- How can you add movements and actions to these lines?

### Writing

- List all of the things that you like to do at the seaside, writing each one on a different slip of paper.
- Look at the second line of *Down by the Shore*. What is special about it? Can you craft any of your lines in a similar way?
- Read your lines to see if you can get rid of any unnecessary words, or add any interesting details.
- Play around with the order, saying each line aloud to find out what sounds best.
- Practise and perform.

### Scientific investigation

- Look at a sample of sand through a microscope. Describe what you can see: the shapes and colours.
- What does it remind you of?
- Predict and find out whether sand from different beaches looks different or the same. Why do you think this is?

### Design time

- Which sandcastle design do you like best? Why have you chosen that particular one?
- Create your own sandcastle design, either in 2D, using glue, card and sand, or 3D, if you have enough sand in an outdoor area.
- Investigate and explain how to make the best sandcastles. How wet does the sand have to be?
- If you can visit a beach, you could have a sandcastle building competition. What criteria would you need to agree beforehand? E.g. tools allowed, size, time allocation.
- Find an area with very wet sand and create 'drippy sandcastles' by letting wet sand trickle through your hands and build up into towers. Who can build the highest?

## FIRST TO SEE THE SEA

### Talk for thought

- What does Nicola Davies mean by '*As if the whole ocean had been lost and found again*'?
- Describe how you feel when you see the sea.

### Writing

- Create a collaborative poem: '*Who will be the first to...*'
- Everyone in the class writes their own ending to this line, being as imaginative as possible.
- Collect all the lines together, playing around with the order to create a class poem that you can all perform. Remember to end with a strong line!

### Illustration conversation

- Look carefully at the illustration and see how observant you can be. List all the different things you can see. Who can find the most?
- Has anyone noticed something special about the number plate?

## PADDLING

### Talk for thought

- What sort of games can you play at the water's edge?
- How does the sea share '*all its wonders with your paddling feet*'?

### Writing

- '*Somewhere in this water there are ...*'
- Extend the poem by creating your own verses to insert before the final line. Think about the rhythm, sound and taste of your words.

## SANDCASTLE

### Talk for thought

- What happens to the water in the moat of sandcastles? Why does this happen?
- Why do people build sandcastles when they know that the sea will destroy them?

### Design time

- From junk material, create your own castles with drawbridges, paths, tunnels and arches. Decide which the best materials are to use. Film each stage of construction.

### Writing

Either:

Create a story about your castle. Who lives there? What adventures do they have?

Or:

Use prepositions to create a story/poem opening:

Over.....

Along.....

Through.....

Underneath.....

Or:

Write a set of clear instructions for building your castle.

## SEAGULLS

### Vivid vocabulary

- '*preen*' – what does this word mean? Try using it in a sentence.

### Rapid research

- Find out five fascinating facts about seagulls.

### Talk for thought

- If you were a bird, what colour/s would you choose to be?
- What reason does the poet give for the seagulls being white?

### Illustration conversation

- Look at the background of the illustration. How do you think the artist created it?

### Creative challenge

- Experiment with paints, pastels and chinks to create your own sky backgrounds.
- On a separate piece of paper, create pictures of gulls which you can cut out and stick on to your background. You could add your 'five fascinating facts' to the picture.

### Writing

- Pretend you are a seagull wheeling overhead. What can you see below?
- Link everyone's ideas with a chorus, perhaps: '*Swooping and soaring, riding on the air.*'

## ON THE PIER

### Vivid vocabulary

- What do the following mean:  
'pier'  
'strike a pose'

### Illustration conversation

- Try to find all the people mentioned in the poem in the illustration.
- Describe something else you can see in the picture and see if other people can pick out which part you are focusing on.
- Which part of the pier would you like to go to?

### Playtime – drama

- What do you notice about the lines in this poem? Practise performing it, with different people saying each line.
- In pairs or small groups, choose which people you are in the illustration and create a conversation that you might be having. Perform to the class.

### Writing

- Write about what the different people in your family like to do on a day out together.

### Design time/numeracy challenge

- Design a pier attraction or stall outside:
- What stock will you need?
- How much will it cost?
- How much will you charge if you want to make a profit?

## WAITING FOR THE WAVE

### Vivid vocabulary

- What do you think 'break zone' means?

### Talk for thought

- What effect does the first line have, as you say it aloud?
- Spot the simile. Why does it work well?
- What do you notice about the last three lines? What do they convey to you?
- What does the writer mean: *'In all the world there is only you'*?
- Have you ever felt like that? If so, when and where?

## CATCHING A WAVE

### Writing

- Watch videos of catching waves.
- Create a wave of words to describe the feelings of catching a wave. You might want to use a thesaurus to extend your range of choice.
- Create your own large waves with paints, pastels and chinks, looking at the techniques used by the illustrator.
- Add your wave words.

## LIGHTHOUSE

### Vivid vocabulary

- 'murk' – what does this word suggest to you?

### Thesaurus chorus

- Using a thesaurus, find as many synonyms for 'dark' as you can. Choose your favourite.
- When the 'conductor' counts to three, say your word in a 'dark' voice.
- Repeat the above activity for the word 'light' and say your word in a 'light' voice.
- Create your own voice poem of 'Dark and Light,' thinking about tone, pitch, dynamics and tempo.

### Mexican word wave

- Sit in a circle.
- Choose your favourite word (for dark/light).
- Select the starting point in the circle.
- That person says their word, followed by the person on their left, moving clockwise.
- Extra challenge: if a word is repeated, both people stand up. Which are the most popular choices?

### Illustration conversation

- Look carefully at how this page has been designed. What do you notice?

### Talk for thought

- Find the personification in the first line of the poem. Why do you think the poet chose this image?
- What does 'endlessly repeating' tell you about the light?
- What does the writer mean by 'Beneath the waves, the wrecks call'?
- How do you feel at the end of the poem?

### Rapid research

- Find different images of lighthouses on the internet. In what ways are they the same and what differences can you spot?
- What difficulties have to be overcome when building a lighthouse?

### Design Time

- Design and construct your own model lighthouse from junk.
- Extra challenge: see if you can make a light flash in your model. You could use LED night lights or construct your own circuit.

## PUFFIN

### Talk for thought

- What does the poet mean by 'I fly through the sea easy as sunlight'?
- Find the sand eels in the illustration?
- What are the puffin's 'silver whiskers'?
- Why do you think the sand eels are described as shivering?
- What does the puffin find difficult?
- Why do you think the puffin takes the sand eels all the way to the cliff top?
- Who is speaking in this poem?

### Rapid research

- Find out at least five favourite fascinating facts about puffins.
- In what ways are puffins different from black-backed gulls?
- Find out the collective nouns that can be used when talking about a group of puffins. Which do you think is most suited to the character of a puffin?

### Artistic challenge

- Create your own picture of a puffin by carefully observing the illustration by Emily Sutton and any other images you have found, possibly flying, landing or swimming.
- Create your own class puffin colony.
- How can you use your fascinating facts on the display to encourage people to read them?

## PEBBLES

### Talk for thought

- What have the children been busy doing on the beach?
- What facts about pebbles have you learned from this poem?
- Why do you think the poet selected the words: *'rubbing and rolling, rolling and rubbing.'*

### Scientific observation

- Sort a collection of pebbles.
- What criteria will you use?
- Take photos of the different groups of pebbles and see if other people can deduce what criteria you have used.
- What observations can you make about your pebbles?
- Choose your favourite one. What do you particularly like about this one? You may want to use a magnifying glass to examine it more closely.
- What happens when your pebble is wet? Write a description, thinking about closely observed detail and the sound and rhythm of your words.

### Creative challenge

Either:

- Create your own cake shop. Decide on prices and currency. Could you use shells instead of coins? If so, how much will each type of shell be worth?

Or:

- Create a rock creature and design a habitat. What sort of diet does it have? Where might it have been and what sort of adventures might it have had? Create your own diary of a pebble's travels.

Or:

- Create patterns and pictures using pebbles. Take photographs of these for a class pebble pattern book. Add captions.

## SHORE CRAB

### Talk for thought

- Why are the words, *'Delicate! ...Wary! ...Dainty!'* written in a larger font?
- What is surprising about the crab?
- What does the poet mean by *'periscope eyes'*? Why do you think she chose this phrase?
- What simile is used in the last line?

### Creative challenge

Either:

- Note how many legs crabs have. What is special about the front two?
- Create your own jointed crab, using card and paper fasteners. Think about how you will ensure that you keep the legs in scale with each other.

Or:

- Find out how a periscope works and design your own.

## FISHING FOR DINNER

### Talk for thought

- Which part of the world do you think this sort of fishing might be happening in. Why?
- What simile does the poet use? Why is this effective?
- Why do you think the poet chose the word, *'spatters'*?
- Why is it important to catch *'just enough fish for dinner'*?

### Illustration conversation

- Look at the different ways the illustrator has used lines in this picture.
- Create a picture of your own where you use lines in different ways.

## Scientific investigation

- Find out about the different types of fish you can buy at the fishmongers or the supermarket.
- How are these fish sold: fresh/tinned/frozen/bottled?
- Where do the fish come from?
- Examine the labels on the food. What do these tell you?
- How are fish caught?
- What does the word 'sustainable' mean? Which types of fishing are sustainable, and which types deplete fish numbers?

## I LOVE HARBOURS

### Vivid vocabulary

- Check that you fully understand the meaning of the following words:  
*harbour*  
*rigging*  
*hulls*  
*fenders*  
*container ships*

### Talk for thought

- Identify the person in the illustration who is speaking in the poem.
- What types of boats can you see?
- What sort of clues are there to suggest the sort of catch the fishermen will have?
- Spot the verb which can also be a noun. Why is this an effective choice of word?
- What senses does the poem appeal to?

### Creative challenge

Either:

- Think of somewhere you like to be. What sort of smells, sounds and sights are there? Create your own description, using the senses, to convey why your place is so special.

Or:

- Think of other places that might have the 'promise of adventures'. Decide on a land or sea setting and plan an adventure story. Think about what the complication or problem might be that has to be solved. Remember to add details to bring the story to life when you write it out in full.

## FINDING SHELLS

### Talk for thought

- Do you agree with the poet, that shells are 'little bits of beauty'?
- What other things do you consider to be 'little bits of beauty'?
- Why does 'your heart sing for a moment'?
- When else have you experienced the joy of discovery?
- What does the poet mean when she says, 'someone else might need them'?
- Look closely at the illustration for a clue.

### Rapid research

- Using the internet or a reference book, try to identify and name as many shells as possible that you can see in the picture.
- Look at a variety of shells: find different ways of grouping them.
- Choose one shell that you particularly like and find out about the creature that lived in it.

### Creative challenge

- Write a description of your shell; 'notice tiny details' – colour, shape, texture, size.
- Create a display and see if people can match up the shells with the descriptions. This could be done electronically as a quiz.

## ALL DAY

### Vivid vocabulary

- Check that you understand what the word '*backwash*' means.

### Talk for thought

- What time of day is shown in the illustration?
- Why do you think they didn't say a word?
- What effect does the sea have on you?
- Find all the words relating to sound in the poem.

### Thesaurus chorus

- Collect sound words that could be associated with the sea in all its different moods.
- Choose your favourite word.
- When the 'conductor' counts to three, say your word.
- Now follow the directions of the conductor as s/he points to different people or groups. S/he may ask you to repeat your word.
- Think about tone, pitch, dynamics and tempo to suit your choice of word.

### Mexican word wave

- Sit in a circle.
- Choose your favourite sea word.
- Select the starting point in the circle.
- That person says their word, followed by the person on their left, moving clockwise.
- Extra challenge: if a word is repeated, both people stand up. Which are the most popular choices?

### Creative challenge

- Create a collaborative sound poem of the sea.

# Journeys

## JOURNEYS

### Vivid vocabulary

- Check that you understand the meaning of the following words: *'migrations'*, *'limpets'*.

### Talk for thought

- Read the following lines aloud:  
*'from the long migrations of whales to the tiny trips of limpets across a rock'*.
- How does the first half sound when compared with the second half? Why is this?
- Watch films on limpets and whales.
- What extra information have you discovered?
- Where would you choose to journey to and why?

### Rapid research

Either:

- Find out about different types of whales. Research one that you are particularly interested in. Present your information to the class, deciding which method you would prefer: e.g. animation, film, electronic, book, infographic.

Or:

- Find out about someone who has undertaken a sea journey. Create a presentation. Think about items that will make your presentation more interesting: e.g. models, maps.

## SEA SHANTY

### Vivid vocabulary

- What is a sea shanty?

### Talk for thought

- What do you notice about the pattern of this sea shanty?
- What activities are taking place on deck, apart from hauling ropes to raise sails?

### Magical music

- Using instruments, voices and/or electronic programs, create your own music for this poem.
- Practise and perform.

### Rapid research

- Find out about other sea shanties and listen to some. What do you notice?

### Creative challenge

In pairs, write your own words for a sea shanty, with a chorus, thinking about what the sailors jobs on the ship are and the sights they might see.

Compose your own music for the words.

Practise and perform.

## LIMPETS

### Talk for thought

- What do you think the poet means by, *'Limpets live on tide time'*?
- Why do you think the limpets walk when the tide is in?
- Why do limpets *'clamp their shells tight against the rock'* when the tide is out?
- How do you think they do this?
- Why do you have to be careful if you go exploring while the tide is out?

### Number cruncher

- Find out what size an average limpet is. How many times would that fit into your arm's length?

### Rapid research

- Find out about tides.
- How long is it between high tide and low tide?
- Which is the nearest beach to where you live? Using a tide table from the internet, see if you can find out when the next high and low tides are.

## BLUE WHALE'S MAP

### Talk for thought

- What does the poet mean by, they will '*still be in their kingdom*'?
- Who do you think knows more about the world and what it is made of?

### Global search

- Using a globe or map, identify where Chile, China, Alaska and Australia are.
- Why do you think the writer chose Chile, China, Alaska and Australia?
- See if you can identify some of the other countries shown in the illustration which aren't named.
- Can any of these countries be paired together in the same way as in the poem?
- What is the circular feature in the top right corner of the illustration?
- Use a compass to find north, then work out where south, east and west are.

### Rapid research

- Find out at least five fascinating facts about blue whales.

### Size wise

- Mark out in chalk on the playground how big a blue whale is.
- Find out how many miles they travel.

## THE VOYAGES OF CAPTAIN ZHENG HE

### Vivid vocabulary

- Check that you know the meaning of the following words:  
'bold'  
'incense'  
'amber'

### Talk for thought

- Why do you think Captain Zheng He returned to China with a giraffe?
- How do you think Captain Zheng He obtained it?
- What would be the difficulties of transporting a giraffe?
- What sort of character do you think Captain Zheng He was?
- Identify him in the illustration.
- What do you notice about his ship?
- Look at the chorus of the poem. Why do you think the first word changes each time?

### Creative challenge

- Taking it in turns to add a sentence, create a collaborative class story or play of how Zheng He obtained the dragon spit for trading. Think about why people would want dragon spit.
- Decide how you are going to record your story or play – using audio, film, storyboard, book, puppet show, drama.

## SARGASSO

### Talk for thought

- How can you have a sea without a shore?

- How does this poem make you feel?
- How does the writer play with words?
- Why do you think the Sargasso Sea is full of life?

### **Creative physical challenge**

- In small groups, create a dance to the words of the poem, choosing one person as the elver.
- Think about how your performance could be improved, perhaps with props and percussion.
- Practise and perform.

## **ELVER**

### **Talk for thought**

- What is an elver?
- What is remarkable about elvers?
- How does the writer convey the idea that this is an awe-inspiring achievement?
- Where is the elver in the illustration?

### **Writing**

- Create a poster, animation, infographic or dance showing the life cycle of an eel.

## **STAR SCHOOL**

### **Talk for thought**

- Before reading this poem, and without looking at the illustrations, predict what this will be about.
- What sort of life do you think the old man and his grandson have?
- Why is '*like stepping stones*' a fitting simile?
- What are the '*green stars lost in blue*'? Why do you think the writer chose to describe them in this way?
- Why is he teaching his grandson about the stars?
- Why do you think the boy has to make the voyage?

### **Rapid research**

- Using a reference book or the internet as a reference, create star constellations using pebbles.
- Find out some information about how people use stars for navigation.
- What do we use to help us navigate now?

## **SEA TURTLE**

### **Talk for thought**

- Where do you think the children are and why do you think they are there?
- What is remarkable about the turtle?
- How does the writer create a sense of immense space and how does the illustrator show this?
- Think of a number of different creatures: if you were to describe their size, what would you compare them to, so that someone else could visualise the size immediately?

### **Size wise**

- Find out the length of your playground in metres. How many playgrounds long is 3,000 metres?

### **Rapid research**

- Find out more about turtles in Nicola Davies's book *One Tiny Turtle*.
- Using this infographic, create a corridor display with questions for other people in the school community to answer.  
<https://www.worldwildlife.org/pages/infographic-sea-turtles>

## SAILOR'S JIG

### Vivid vocabulary

- What is a jig?

### Talk for thought

- Identify the different sail names on the illustration. Why do you think they have been given these particular names?
- Why do you think sailors danced on board their ship?
- Clap to the rhythm of the words of the poem as you say them. What pattern can you hear?
- Create your own sailor's steps to the rhythm. Write/film a set of instructions so that other people can perform it.

### Physical challenge

- The hornpipe is another name for a sailor's jig. See if you can find an example on the internet. Try to work out the pattern of moves and perform it.

### Writing

- Read the names of the different knots together and work out how many syllables there are in each name.
- Create your own jig poem, with a pattern of your own choosing and choreograph a sailor's jig to fit this new rhythm. Write/film a set of instructions so that other people can perform it.

## END OF THE JOURNEY

### Talk for thought

- What sort of small boat do you think Nicola Davies is thinking of?
- Why do you think she uses the phrase, '*close to the ocean's skin*'?
- Why is she telling us to do this '*Once in your life, at least*'?
- How does the writer convey that this experience is special?
- When have you had a very special experience?

### Illustration conversation

- How does Emily Sutton, the illustrator, convey that this is dawn?
- Comment on some of the details you have noticed in the illustration.

### Writing

- Write about an experience you have had. Give it the same title as the poem: *End of the Journey*.

# Under the Sea

## UNDER THE SEA

### Talk for thought

- Why do we know so little about the deepest parts of the sea?
- How would you feel about exploring this underwater world?
- What makes it so difficult to explore?
- How do you feel about a *'whole new world, waiting to be explored'*?

### Rapid research

- Find images of creatures from the deep on the internet.

### Creative challenge

- Create pictures of these unusual creatures for a class collage, book or ebook.
- Imagine what it is like to be your particular creature and write a description of life in the deep.

## DEEP

### Talk for thought

- How does *'Deep'* link to the words, *'Under the Sea'*?
- Add thought and speech bubbles to the illustration.
- What does the poet mean by:  
*'So deep the weight of water up above you  
Could squish you like a bug.'*
- Why do you think:  
*'You feel you are an alien in their world.'*
- If you were offered the opportunity to explore the deep, would you accept or decline? Why?

## LONGLINE FISHING

### Talk for thought

- What is bait?
- Looking at the illustration, and with the information in the poem, how do you think you do longline fishing?
- What suggests this is dangerous, uncomfortable work?
- Why do you think the birds are circling the boats?
- What sort of birds do you think they are?

## BOTTOM TRAWLING

### Talk for thought

- How does the Nicola Davies feel about bottom trawling?
- Pick out the negative words she has chosen to reinforce her opinion.
- Why do you think some fishermen do bottom trawling?
- What happens to the small fish and corals?
- What does the word *sustainability* mean?
- Which of the two methods, longline or bottom trawling is more sustainable?

### Investigation

- Look at labelling on fish tins, such as tuna. Why is it important to look at labels on the food we buy?
- Find out which types of fish are sold in your supermarket and whether they are considered to be under threat due to overfishing.

## GIANT SQUID

### Talk for thought

- Why is the first verse in *italics*?
- What is a myth?
- Why do you think there were myths about the giant squid?
- How does Nicola Davies feel about giant squid and the people who tell the myth? Which words indicate this?

### Size wise

- Measure your playground and work out how many lengths of the playground would equal the length of a giant squid, according to the myth.
- How long would you estimate a giant squid to be?
- Research and find out the average size of a giant squid. Who had the closest estimate?
- How many times larger is the mythical giant squid than the real one?

### Performance

- Read the poem through again and practise performing. Think about who will say which verse, what tones and gestures could be used.

### Writing

- Find out more about the giant squid and decide how to present your information.  
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/invertebrates/g/giant-squid/>

## DEADLIEST OF ALL?

### Talk for thought

- Before looking at this page, what do you think the answer is to the question in the title?
- Create a class list of all your ideas before reading the poem.
- How do you think the blue-ringed octopus can kill if its bite is so small?

### Illustration conversation

- Looking carefully at the picture, what do you notice?

### Investigation

- Make a list of all the plastic items you have in school and at home.
- How does plastic strangle, suffocate and poison?

### Environmental challenge

- Find out more about plastic pollution. There are lots of infographics on the internet.  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/42810179>
- How can we all individually do something about this huge global problem?
- Draw up an action plan for school and home.

## FLASHLIGHT FISH

### Vivid vocabulary

- Check that you fully understand the meaning of the following words:  
*flashlight*  
*Morse code*  
*fiesta*  
*lanterns*

### Talk for thought

- Why do you think Nicola Davies calls the gathering of fish a festival?
- What other names could you think of for flashlight fish?

## Rapid research

- Find out how to communicate the words *flashlight fish* in Morse code and use a torch to do this – in a dark space!
- Create a short message in Morse code using a torch, glow sticks or a drum and see if other people can work out what it is.
- Find out what this process of illumination by creatures is called.
- Discover which other living things are able to transmit light.  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/adaptations/Bioluminescence>
- Think about how you could communicate this information, possibly by using luminous paint, pens or crayons

## Writing

- Watch a film on flashlight fish.
- Jot down any ideas you have for creating a haiku poem that captures their quality.
- A haiku has three lines: five syllables, seven syllables, five syllables.
- Just for fun, try an electronic haiku generator. You need to collect words you would associate with flashlight fish: setting, adjectives, nouns and verbs.  
<https://www.poem-generator.org.uk/haiku>

## SHARKS

### Talk for thought

- Before reading the poem, talk about how you feel when you hear the word *shark*. What images and thoughts does it conjure up?
- After reading her words, how do you think Nicola Davies feels about sharks?
- What makes her description more menacing?
- Do you think predators are necessary? Give reasons for your opinion.

### Scientific investigation

- What happens to food chains when predators are taken out?
- Find out some facts so that you can create a food chain mobile for living things in the sea.

### Further reading

- *Surprising Sharks* by Nicola Davies. Find out surprising facts about sharks.

### Illustration conversation

- What sort of techniques has the artist used to create water and light effects?

### Creative challenge

- Experiment to create your own sea backgrounds.
- Create an information report on a shark of your choice that you have researched and then add a picture of this shark to your sea background, with your report. You could make a large class concertina book and create a quiz for your readers to complete.

## SEAWEED JUNGLE

### Talk for thought

- What have you noticed about seaweed when you have been to the beach?
- How many creatures are mentioned in the poem?
- Explain, in your own words, how their movements are different. You may need some thinking time and a thesaurus to help you create rich answers.
- How does Nicola Davies convey the different movements?
- Why do the seals appear like '*liquid silver*'?
- Where else might you see '*scatter-dapples*' of sunlight? Can you find any paintings on the internet where artists have captured this?
- Say the whole poem out loud. Which are your favourite lines, and why do you like them?

### Performance

- Say the first verse out loud together.
- What speed of reading works best?
- How does it feel as you say the words?
- What else do you notice about the words Nicola Davies has selected?

### Rapid research

- Find out what seaweed can be used for.
- Find out and list the different names of seaweed.

### Writing

- Count the syllables and create a poem, using some (not necessarily all) poetic features, such as similes, metaphors, alliteration, rhythm and rhyme.
- Say your poem out loud to see if it works well or if there are any revisions you'd like to make.
- Practise and perform.

## MOTHER SEA OTTER

### Vivid vocabulary

- Make sure you know the meaning of the following words:  
*anchored*  
*abalones*  
*urchins*  
*clams*

### Talk for thought

- Did anything surprise you in this poem?
- Why do you think the poet decided to write about mother otters?
- Explain, in your own words, how the mother otter cares for her young.

### Rapid research

- Find out more fascinating facts about sea otters.

## SHIPWRECK

### Talk for thought

- Why are the clay pots *'like a clutch of broken eggs'*?
- When, approximately, do you think this wreck dates from?
- What are *marine archaeologists*?
- Why do you think the evidence of her cargo is described as *'ghostly'*?
- Why are female pronouns used when referring to the ship, such as *'she'* and *'her'*?
- What do the remains of the wooden boat remind you of?
- Why do you think the sailors' bones have gone, but the pots and ship skeleton remain?

### Rapid research

- Find out about a ship that was wrecked.

### Extension activity

- Using images from the web, create a classification game where people have to identify which items belong to the following categories:  
*Flotsam*  
*Jetsam*  
*Lagan*  
*Derelict*

# Wonders

## WONDERS

### Talk for thought

- Before reading this, predict what Nicola Davies might choose to write about.
- How do we know about the wonders of the world that the writer talks of?
- What do you think the writer's message is to the reader?
- Why does the writer refer to Earth as '*our beautiful blue planet*'?
- Compare this with *Pebbles* on page 22. What similarities and differences are there?

### Writing

What wonders would you like to see most? Make a wish list, conveying why you are making these choices.

## ROCKPOOL

### Talk for thought

- Short and sweet! What does this poem mean?
- If you have ever explored a rockpool, what did you discover?
- What must you always remember to do when you find specimens in nature?

### Illustration conversation

- What different creatures can you see in the picture?
- What is the name of the birds with the red beak, flying overhead?

### Writing

- Write a job description for an explorer. Think about the qualities that would be required.
- Write an application letter in answer to an advertisement for explorers. Explain the attributes you have which would make you the ideal choice.

### Scientific observation

- If possible, go to a rockpool and become an explorer.
- Take photos and make notes of what you discover, using reference books and the internet to find out more. [http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/habitats/Tide\\_pool](http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/habitats/Tide_pool)
- Create a diorama of a rockpool, using a shoe box, providing a key so that people can identify the different creatures and plants that you have modelled and drawn.

## FLYING FISH

### Talk for thought

- Look at the title. Can fish fly?
- Read the poem. Has your viewpoint changed at all?
- When do they wriggle?
- What does '*shimmer*' suggest?
- Why does the poet use the word '*glide*' three times?

### Illustration conversation

- Looking at the illustration, how would you say the fish manage to '*fly*'?

### Creative challenge

- Take on the role of a flying fish and write a monologue of why and how you fly and how you feel as you travel through the water and the air.
- Make a card flying fish mobile and hang your monologues from this for people to read.

## NIGHT LIGHT

### Talk for thought

- What is the special property these creatures have?
- If the boat leaves such a long trail, what does this tell you?
- How do you think it feels to see phosphorescence in the water at night?

### Rapid research

- Find out about phosphorescence.  
<https://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/news/bioluminescence-sea-life>

## ANTARCTIC

### Talk for thought

- What picture do you have in your mind after reading this? Which part have you focused on, and why do you think this is?
- Spot the simile and the metaphor. What do you visualise as a result?
- What techniques has the poet used in the third line? What effect do these words have, when read aloud?
- Why are the leopard seals lurking?
- Why do you think the icebergs are breaking off? What effect might this have?
- Compare this poem and illustration with the one on page 68. What similarities and differences do you notice?

### Global search

- Locate the Antarctic on a map or globe.
- What is at the opposite end of the globe?
- What do you notice about the two names of the areas at opposite ends?
- What do you think the *Ant* part of Antarctica might mean?

## SEA PEOPLE

### Talk for thought

- In which part of the world do you think these sea people might live, and why do you think this?
- What do they mean by the words, '*The sea is our universe*'?
- How do you think the sea fills their songs with stories?
- What sort of stories do you think these might be?
- How do you think these people feel about their lives?
- What material is their boat made from?
- Why do you think the children ride on the tails of sharks?
- How do the fish know where to tell them to go, do you think?
- What is one of the swimmers holding under the water?
- How do you think these people manage, living at sea all the time?

## ALBATROSS

### Talk for thought

- What is special about the albatross?
- What words has the poet chosen to describe the nature of the albatross?

### Rapid research

- Find out five fascinating facts about the albatross.
- Investigate the threats to the albatross on:  
<https://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-kids/facts-about-nature/facts-about-birds/saving-albatrosses/>

## Number cruncher

- Using the information you have found, make up some numeracy questions to encourage people to become interested in the plight of the albatross.

## SHOAL

### Talk for thought

- What is a shoal?
- Pick out the words to do with movement and all the words to do with colour.
- How do you think the fish know how to move together?
- What is so effective about the last line?

### Creative challenge

- Watch a video of a shoal.
- Collect your own shoal of movement and colour words to create your own poem, thinking about the rhythm.
- Using percussion/voices/home-made instruments/electronic music programs, create your own composition either to accompany your poem or Nicola's.

### Physical challenge

- Gather into a large group in the hall or outside. Try to synchronise your movements so that when one person changes direction, all follow.
- Discuss what strategies you need to use in order to be successful.
- Now repeat, as Nicola's poem is read aloud with musical accompaniment.
- Repeat and then try with some of the poems that you have created.
- Film and write reviews of each other's performances.

## FAVOURITE DOLPHIN

### Talk for thought

- How many types of dolphin can you count in this illustration?
- How many different kinds of dolphin do you think there are?

### Writing

- In groups, find out about one type of dolphin. Decide how you are going to present the information, when you gather everyone's work together as a class: electronic or hard copy; infographic or information report; poetry or prose.

### Rapid research/drama

- Find out about dolphins helping human beings and choose one of these stories to tell to your class, as if you were the human involved.

## MANTA RAY

### Talk for thought

- Why does the image of 'A giant slice of shadow' work so well?
- Why do you think the poet chose the words, 'flaps and flies'?
- What does 'long, lazy loops' tell you about the way the manta ray moves?

### Playtime/drama

- Working in pairs: imagine you are the diver. Close your eyes. Describe how you feel as you swim beneath this huge creature.

### Creative challenge

Create a manta ray which you can suspend from the ceiling. What colours will you need to use. Suspend fascinating facts about manta rays from the 'giant slice of shadow.'

## PEARL DIVER

### Talk for thought

- What is the pattern used to structure this poem?

### Illustration conversation

- How has the illustrator reflected the poet's words?

### Creative challenge

- Think of something small in nature, on land or in the sea, gradually focusing in, from a long shot to a close up.
- Use the same structure as in *Pearl Diver*:  
*Inside the ..... the \*\*\*.*  
*Inside the \*\*\*, the xxx.*  
*Inside the xxx, the yyy.*  
*Inside the yyy, the zzz.*  
*Inside the zzz, the ....*
- Practise and perform.

### Rapid research

- Find out how pearls are formed.
- Why do you think they are regarded as precious?

## PLANKTON

### Talk for thought

- What is unusual about this page?
- What do you think might lie behind? No peeping yet!
- Explain, in your own words, what plankton is.
- What do you notice about some of the type used in this poem?
- What do we term something that is too small to see with the naked eye?
- Why is plankton so important?
- What important message does this poem give?

### Illustration conversation

- How would you describe some of the plankton in this illustration?
- Find a plant like a tiny snowflake.
- Find an animal like a tiny space alien.

### Rapid research

- Find images of plankton on the internet. Make your own drawings and create a short story or poem about them.

## HUMPBACK SONG

### Vivid vocabulary

- What does the word '*indigo*' mean?
- Make a collection of synonyms for blue.

### Talk for thought

- What does the first line start with?
- Pick out the personification and explain why it works well.
- Why does the writer say, '*to set the stage*'?
- Find examples of onomatopoeia. Which do you like best? Which words suggest the movement of sounds.

## SING LIKE A HUMPBACK

### Illustration conversation

- Try sprinkling coarse salt crystals on wet watercolour paint. What happens? Why do you think this is?
- Use this technique to create your own humpback painting. Incorporate some of the other techniques that the illustrator has used.

### Magical music

- Listen to the song of the humpback whale.
- Split into groups of five.
- Each person takes a turn to practise their sound.
- Choose a conductor who can bring the sounds in, in different orders.
- Practise, then sing to another group.
- Finally, join all the groups together and do a whole class performance.
- Record and review all of the performances.

### Rapid research/creative challenge

- Create a group presentation on humpbacks. You could use your song, film clips, voice-overs, art work.

## ISLAND DREAMING

### Talk for thought

- Look at the pictures. How are the islands different?
- What features can you identify?
- What creatures can you spot?
- Can you discern whether each island has a hot, cold or temperate climate?
- What sort of island would you choose to visit? Why?

### Creative challenge

- Create your own map of an island.
- What sort of weather, terrain, flora and fauna does it have?
- Annotate your map with details of these around the edges.

## HAPPINESS

### Illustration conversation

- What creatures can you see in this illustration?

### Talk for thought

- What time of day do you think it is?
- What do you think makes the boy in the illustration happy?
- Why do you think this is?
- Do you ever enjoy being alone? If so, where do you like to be?
- What makes you happy?

### Writing

Either:

- Create a four line poem of your own about happiness, considering the details carefully, thinking of the senses.

Or:

- Create a poem, following these instructions, brainstorming ideas:

Line 1: a simile

Line 2: a question

Line 3: an instruction

Line 4: a wish

# Final thoughts

## Talk for thought

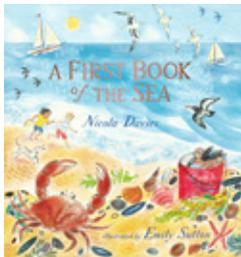
- What have you enjoyed most in this book?
- What have you learned that you didn't know before?
- How has it made you feel about the sea?

## Poetry

- Celebrate what you have learned with string poem bunting.
- Create string poems on the subjects that you are particularly interested in.
- Write them up on pieces of thin rectangular card with a 3cm border at the top, allowing the card to be folded over 1.5cm from the top and stapled over a long piece of string. Think about which colour card would suit the subject you have chosen, or create a background illustration, as Emily Sutton has for Nicola Davies's poems. Your poems can then be hung up to decorate your classroom or corridor.
- Find the best words in the best order for your lines. You could choose:
  - Alliterative words (words beginning with the same sound)
  - Words with the same number of syllables
  - Words ending in *ing*
  - Words with the same vowel sound – assonance. E.g. *waves, rays, hazy*
  - Words with the same consonant sounds occurring within a number of words – consonance. E.g. *swish, shimmer, vision, dashes*.
- If you work using sticky notes, you can play around with the word and line order, chanting the song aloud, to find out which words work best.

## Action

- Think about all the small things you, and others, can do to make a difference to the future of the oceans.

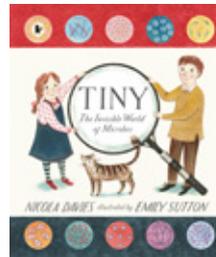


### ***A First Book of the Sea***

By Nicola Davies and Emily Sutton

For readers aged 3+

9781406368956 • Hardback • £14.99

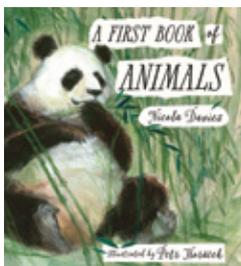


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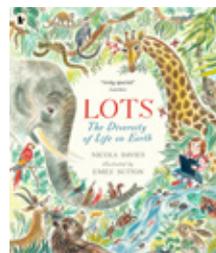


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