

TEACHING NOTES

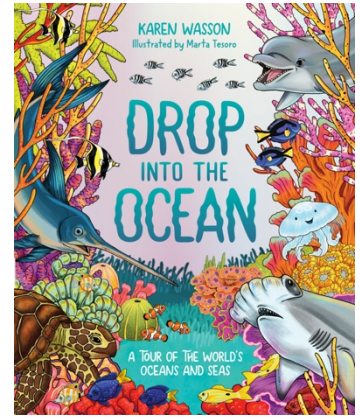
Drop into the Ocean

Karen Wasson

Illustrated by Marta Tesoro

Teacher notes by Sue Warren

Recommended for ages 6+, year levels F–4



SYNOPSIS

Drop into the Ocean is a beautifully illustrated children's science book for kids aged 6 and up. Join Neptune the jellyfish on a sensory journey through the world's oceans and seas with a narrative that weaves in onomatopoeia and a series of fun facts.

Welcome to the ocean! It covers over 70 per cent of our planet and is home to literally trillions of animals and creatures. Our tour begins in the crystal-clear waters of the Mediterranean Sea. From here we will meet many different marine creatures, frolicking and exploring the world's interconnected oceans with us. We'll pay a visit to the Great White Cafe, play and romp through the kelp forests, get lost in the depths of the Mariana Trench, and sing with the whales. Our oceanic adventure comes to an end on sunny Australian shores.

Featuring whimsical illustrations by Marta Tesoro and a shiny cover, drop in and come along on an immersive journey of oceanic discovery. There's so much to see, hear and do in the ocean.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Karen Wasson is a children's author based in Melbourne, Australia. Her fiction and non-fiction writing for children has appeared in *The School Magazine*, *Double Helix* and UK publication, *The Toy*. In 2023 she was awarded an ASA/CA mentorship. She has also been shortlisted for the Australian Writers' Centre Furious Fiction competition and the Wyndham Writing Awards, and in 2022, was shortlisted for Hardie Grant Children's Publishing's Ampersand Prize. Karen's middle grade graphic novel with Hardie Grant Children's Publishing will be published in 2024. www.karenwasson.com

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Marta Tesoro is an illustrator and animator who has been in the industry for over 20 years. She has worked on multiple TV series that have aired on both local channels and streaming services. She has also animated for commercials, music videos, games and has illustrated for books, educational materials, exhibitions and commissions. Marta does hand-drawn illustrations which she scans, colours digitally and edits in Photoshop. She loves to draw plants, animals and nature with a dark or cute twist – sometimes both – amplifying the two sides of her personality. www.rabbittownanimator.com

ABOUT THE BOOK

Richly and vividly illustrated, in such a way that echoes the vibrancy of ocean life itself, this book has enormous value in terms of the excellent use of narrative non-fiction writing. The information is presented in small chunks of text with liberal use of figurative language including onomatopoeia, alliteration and puns. Divided into geographic sections, this will provide much factual support for classroom units of work, as well as for personal leisure reading, and feed into children's inherent curiosity about the natural world.



KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

Learning areas: English; Science; Humanities and Social Sciences (Geography); The Arts

General capabilities: Literacy; Personal and Social Capability; Ethical Understanding; Critical and Creative Thinking; Intercultural Understanding

THEMES

Theme 1: The earth's oceans are a valuable resource.

- *'Earth's oceans are one enormous body of water...'* (pp. 4)
- *'This watery wonderland is the heart of our planet...'* (pp. 46)
- *'[It] is home to around 80 per cent of all life on Earth...'* (pp. 46)

Theme 2: There is a rich diversity of life in Earth's oceans.

- *'From microscopic phytoplankton to the mighty blue whale, everything has a place in the ocean.'* (pp. 4)
- *'...see amazing sights and meet some of the fabulous creatures who live here!'* (pp. 4)
- *'It's thought the ocean is home to around 80 per cent of all life on Earth, but so much of it is yet to be explored!'* (pp. 46)

Theme 3: The oceans need our care and conservation actions to protect all life.

- *'...there are many things you can do to help it survive and thrive.'* (pp. 46)
- *'Pick up rubbish, turn off a light or write a letter to those that make decisions.'* (pp. 46)
- *'It might feel like these actions are just a tiny drop, but when it comes to protecting our ocean, every drop counts.'* (pp. 46)

Theme 4: Geographical knowledge helps to build understanding, tolerance and respect.

- *'Before it was known that the Earth was round, the Norwegian Sea was thought to mark the edge of the world!'* (pp. 13)
- *'...form a tangle of thick roots that provide food and shelter for many animals...'* (pp. 44)
- *'...and protect entire shorelines from being washed away.'* (pp. 44)
- *'Sand has been through a long process before it rocks up on a beach ... broken down over thousands or even millions of years!'* (pp. 45)

COMPREHENSION

Before reading

- 'What do students already know about oceans and seas? Brainstorm using a strategy such as Hot Potato and create an anchor chart of existing knowledge (this could be the first addition to a class learning wall).
- Is this book fiction or non-fiction? Can we tell simply by looking at the cover (usually the case)? What clues do we have that it is, in fact, non-fiction?



- Which creatures do students recognise on the front cover e.g. parrot fish (Nemo), sea dragon, squid?
- What wonderings do students have? Create a 'Wonder' space in the learning wall and encourage students to add their questions (themed sticky notes would create a fun addition for these).
- Consider the title 'Drop into the Ocean'. Introduce the term 'pun' and discuss how this title is a play on words. As the book is shared, note other examples.
- Invite students' thoughts on the artistic style of the illustrations. What feelings do they evoke? Examine the end pages – what do these represent?
- Ask students if anyone has been to an ocean themed venue (e.g. Sea Life) or has been on some kind of outing that involved finding out more about the sea (e.g. glass-bottomed boat excursion). Invite them to share their experiences.

After reading

Literal

- What are some of the geographical regions visited? How many altogether? How many are in the Northern Hemisphere and how many are in the Southern? What climatic zones are they in?
- Using individual blank world map templates, locate the regions mentioned and label. Use Google Earth to virtually visit some/all of these.
- Create vocabulary lists of the words used such as the onomatopoeia, or subject specific (e.g. strait, prey).
- Identify words that use Latin or Greek roots (e.g. phytoplankton). Break these down and define them. Add to the learning wall.

Inferential

- What can students explain about Neptune's role? (i.e. that he is a narrator). What other literary forms use a narrator?
- What do students notice about the style of writing? (Ideally, they will be able to discern it is written in a narrative style with humour).
- Why are some animals found in some but not all regions?

Applied Knowledge

- Have any of the students' wonderings been answered? If so, which ones? Discuss and add to the learning wall.
- What new wonderings do students have? Add to the learning wall. Organise into a template if desired.
- What understandings do students now have about the diversity of marine life?
- What can they conjecture about the threats to ocean health and what measures can be put in place to address these?



WRITING ACTIVITIES

- **Voyagers:** Where would students choose to go? Which ocean or sea would they want to visit and explore? What would entice others to visit this location? Create a brochure to expound the wonders and attractions of their chosen destination. This could be either paper-based or digital.
- **Oceanographers (Non-fiction report):** Undertake a mini-research project on oceanography. What is it? Are there different types of oceanography? How does one train? What jobs can an oceanographer do? Who are/were famous oceanographers?
- **Biography Snapshot:** Choose a famous oceanographer and create a one-page biography snapshot of him/her. These could be collated into a class book or a slideshow presentation or a gallery walk to share with peers or parents. Some suggestions:
 - Jacques Cousteau (1910-1997)
 - Sylvia Earle (1935-)
 - Phillippe Cousteau Jr (1980-)
 - Matthew Fontaine Maury (1806-1873)
 - Marie Tharp (1920-2006)
 - James Rennell (1742-1830)
 - Susan Wijffels (1965-)
 - Matthew England (1966-)
- **Word Work:** Figurative language is used extensively throughout the text, particularly onomatopoeia, puns, alliteration, idioms. Add definitions of these to the learning wall. Do some vocabulary detective work and find examples throughout the book. Can students find examples of other literary devices (e.g. assonance, personification, metaphor, simile)?

Onomatopoeia	Puns	Alliteration	Idioms
Gobble (pp. 20)	Fan-sea worms (pp. 27)	Slippery snakes (pp. 23)	Horsing around (pp. 26)
Chomp (pp. 20)	Oar-some (pp. 32)	Seaside symphony (pp. 43)	Say cheese (pp. 28)

- **Oceans of Poetry:** Poets have long taken inspiration from the oceans and sea. Share examples with students from classics such as ['Sea Fever' – John Masefield](#) to light-hearted modern poems such as ['Deep Sea Dance' – Ken Nesbitt](#). Share examples from various sources, and have students write and illustrate their own. These might also be pattern poems such as shape, acrostic, haiku or cinquain etc. Some student-written examples here [at Science Rhymes](#).
- **Diary of a ...:** Write a diary entry – 'day in the life of' – for a chosen creature incorporating information from the book as well as from independent research. Use a narrative non-fiction style of writing.
- **Guardians of the Seas #1:** Tap into available programs for students (see resources below) to learn more about how young people can become involved in protecting our oceans and seas. Collaboratively write an action plan to educate and involve the school community in activities and information-sharing.
- **Reviewers:** Choose a book, either fiction and non-fiction, with an ocean/sea theme. Write a [Shelf talker](#) (short review with a rating) to recommend to another reader.
- **Playwrights:** As a class write a play that will persuade an audience to take more care of the ocean. This could become an assembly presentation, an exposition piece for parents, or as a culminating activity for the end of a unit of work. Small groups could each write an act based on each section of the book. Elaborate costumes are not needed. Encourage creative thinking with the use of masks or simple additions created with paper and found materials.
- **Sea Myths:** The Kraken is mentioned: '*This sea also gave rise to mythical stories of the giant, tentacled sea creature, the kraken*' (pp. 12). What other mythical sea creatures have students read about or seen? Some might know of sea serpents, mermaids, selkies, sirens. Read and discuss the origins of these, any similarities across cultures or geographical regions and how such stories might have evolved. Choose one and write an explanation of in which location it is found and what stories or cultural references are associated with it.



- **History Buffs:** Research the history and timeline of underwater exploration and development of equipment such as: diving bells, submersibles, snorkel, free diving, SCUBA equipment, submarines, underwater photography.
- **Neptune the Narrator:** Neptune is a [moon jelly\[fish\]](#). Do some research and find facts about these including habitats, distribution, feeding, life cycle and record – a [template](#) might be useful for this. What is the connection between moon jellyfish and plastic bags?

CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

- **Create an Underwater Seascape:** There are many [ideas searchable](#) to transform a teaching space into an immersive underwater experience, many of which need only simple materials. Involve students in making/crafting various parts of the entire scene (e.g. origami, paper plate craft, collage, found materials). Add call-outs, fact boxes, labels or captions to various aspects to make it interactive.
- **Guardians of the Sea #2:** As part of the class action plan: create informational posters, either paper-based or digital to share in public spaces either at school (front office, foyer or library) or wider, such as public library, shopping mall or community centre.
- **Library Landscapers:** Design and execute a display for your library focused on ocean resources held in the collection.
- **Living Postcards:** Small group activity: devise and execute a seascape with each person playing a part in a tableau. Peers guess what each person represents. Extension: Develop this into a [touch-screen film](#) in which students can share a fact, add an opinion or explanation.
- **Mime it:** A group activity where one student mimes the creature of choice and others have to guess what it is.
- **Design Thinkers:** Consider one problem faced by the ocean and/or the creatures who live in it. Use the [Design Thinking](#) approach to develop a solution or 'fix'. Use a project such as [Ocean Cleanup](#) (Boyan Slat, innovator/inventor at 18) or [Straw No More](#) (Molly Steer, 11, initiator) to springboard ideas and inspiration.
- **Get ArtSea:** There are many ideas for ocean/sea themed art activities: a basic internet search will provide endless possibilities, most of which require easily obtained materials (a selection in the resources below).
- **Endpaper Art:** Using the endpaper art as inspiration create 'coral reef' designs using a variety of approaches such as printing with found materials (e.g. yarn/string, textured fabric, colouring techniques with wash or marbling).
- **Brain Breaks:** Crab walks, seal galumphing, penguin waddles, sea cucumber crawling. Be inventive!
- **Shell it:** Shells for craft are easily obtained from various suppliers. These could be used to create scenic art pieces or create creatures as were once popular as [tourist souvenirs](#).
- **Movie Makers:** Create a reel to highlight one of these, or own choice, (this could be stop-go animation with toys, or live-action) in a format such as interview, role play or documentary style (numerous free ocean sound effects downloads available):
 - Favourite ocean zone
 - Issue of concern
 - Favourite creature or species
 - An original narration of some aspect of interest
 - Interview with expert



RELATED CONCEPTS

- **Maths:**
 - Understanding Units of Measurement (formal and informal) – Distances, Capacity, Volume, Area, Qualitative/Relational comparatives.
 - Measurement and Geometry – Positional language, mapping, grid references, latitude and longitude, orientation, directions.
 - Measuring Time – calendars, telling time, sequences, months of the year, elapsed time (e.g. weeks, days), time zones.
- **Science:**
 - Living things have basic needs, including food and water.
 - Living things have a variety of external features.
 - Activities of humans apply pressure to natural environments.

RELATED RESOURCES

Books

Hardie Grant
The Ocean Gardener
Clara Aganuzzi

Like the Ocean We Rise
Sarah Wilkins & Nicola
Edwards

Tales from the Ocean
Chae Strathie
Illustrated by Erin Brown

*Above and Below: Sea and
Shore*
Harriet Evans
Illustrated by Hannah Bailey

Underwater Australia
Darren Jew

*Explore Your World: Deep
Dive into Deep Sea*
Tim Flannery
Illustrated by Sam Caldwell

Others:
*The Deep End: Real Facts
about the Ocean*
Drew Sheneman

Voice of the Sea
John Williamson
Illustrated by Alison Innocent
& Jonathan Chong

A Journey Under the Sea
Craig Foster & Ross Frylinck

*How We Came to Be:
Surprising Sea Creatures*
Sami Bayly

*Creatures from Sea Country
Big Book*
Kiz Costelloe

Poetry:
*Under the Sea: Children's
Poetry Collection*

Useful Websites

- [What is Oceanography?](#)
- [Want to Know More about Oceanography? CSIRO](#)
- [Ocean Life Education: Sea Week](#)
- [Sea Museum](#)
- [Oceanography National Geographic Society](#)
- [Young Ocean Explorers \(virtual classroom\)](#)
- [EcoMarines \(Queensland schools\)](#)
- [Reef Guardians \(Australian Government\)](#)
- [Ocean Conservancy](#)
- [The Sea Cleaners](#)
- [Sea Week Australia](#)
- [First Nations Books and Resources - for National Sea Week](#)



Art and Craft

- [The Craft Train: 30 Easy Ocean Themed Crafts and Activities](#)

- [Natural Beach Living: Under the Sea themed crafts](#)

- [15 Easy and Engaging Ocean Themed Crafts For Kids](#)

Film

- [9 Inspiring Ocean documentaries](#)
- [10 Documentaries to Boost Your Commitment to Conservation \(Sea Cleaners\)](#)

- [Species Spotlight: Moon Jellyfish](#)
- [Moon Jellyfish: 10 Facts You Didn't Know](#)
- [My Octopus Teacher](#)
- [Ocean: ABC Kids](#)

For the Juniors:

- [Exploring Under the Sea](#)
- [Breathing Underwater](#)
- [How do Mangrove Trees Survive?](#)
- [Under the Sea \(ClickView\) or Internet Archive](#)

Music

- [Under the Sea \(The Little Mermaid\)](#)

- [Octopus's Garden \(The Beatles\)](#)

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM (VERSION 9.0) OUTCOMES

English	
Year 1	AC9E1LA04 , AC9E1LA09 , AC9E1LE02 , AC9E1LY02 , AC9E1LY06 , AC9E1LY07 AC9E1LA03 , AC9E1LA06 , AC9E1LA07 , AC9E1LA08 AC9E1LE02 , AC9E1LE03
Year 2	AC9E2LA08 , AC9E2LY02 , AC9E2LY06 , AC9E2LY07 AC9E2LE02 AC9E2LE03 AC9E2LY03 ,
Year 3	AC9E3LA09 , AC9E3LA10 , AC9E3LE02 , AC9E3LY02 , AC9E4LY02 , AC9E3LY06 , AC9E3LY07 , AC9E3LE04 , AC9E3LY05 , AC9E3LE05
Year 4	AC9E4LY06 , AC9E4LY07 AC9E4LA04 AC9E4LA11 , AC9E4LE03 , AC9E4LY03
HASS	
Year 1	AC9HS1S06 AC9HS1K04 AC9HS1S04
Year 2	AC9HS2S02 AC9HS2S04 AC9HS2S05
Year 3	AC9HS2S05 AC9HS2S06 AC9HS3S06
Year 4	AC9HS3S01 AC9HS4K05 AC9HS4K06 AC9HS4S01
Science	
Year 1	AC9S1I06
Year 2	AC9S2I06
Year 3	AC9S3I06
Year 4	AC9S4U02 AC9S4H01 AC9S4H02 AC9S4I06
The Arts	
Years 1-3	AC9AVA2E01 AC9AVA2D01 , AC9AVA2C01
Years 3-4	AC9AVA4P01
Design and Technology	
Years 1-2	AC9HP2P03
Years 3-4	AC9TDE4K04

