

**BOARD OF STUDIES**  
NEW SOUTH WALES

**SCHOOL  
CERTIFICATE  
EXTERNAL  
TEST**

**SPECIMEN  
OPTION B**

**ENGLISH-literacy**

**SECTION 1**

**STIMULUS  
BOOKLET**

## Directions to students

The Stimulus Booklet is used to answer questions in Section 1 Reading/Viewing.

# Conversations With . . . Tammy Van Wisse

*Lisa Santamaria profiles the champion marathon swimmer*

**How serious is the problem of water pollution on a global scale?**

Very serious due to ever increasing populations.

**Which country's water have you found to be particularly problematic in terms of pollution?**

Well I would have to say that the waterways around New York are not in great condition. Also the Bay of Naples in Italy is pretty filthy. We used to do a race from the beautiful island of Capri to Naples and it was like going from crystal clear blue water to brown! Yuk!

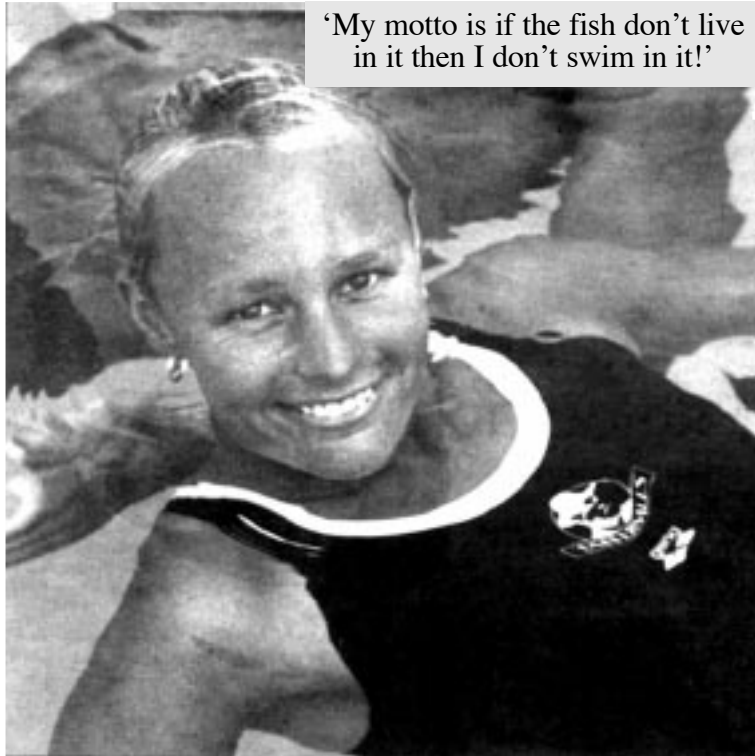
**How do Australian waters stand up internationally in terms of pollution?**

In terms of international standards, we have no pollution problems. However, we must aim to maintain and even improve our waterways—the time to do something is now before the problem develops.

**Has pollution from water ever hindered your health and fitness? What precautions do you take to guard against this happening?**

Pollution is a marathon swimmer's nightmare. If the water is dirty, then normally we get sick. It's an occupational hazard. I guess you could call us human pollution monitors—marathon swims such as the Manhattan race are often used to focus attention on the importance of clean waterways. I can only hope that people take notice, especially when I tell them that I spent two days in bed extremely sick after Manhattan as a direct result of poor water quality.

But I do take precautions against the really bad stuff—I make sure that my Hep A, B and tetanus injections are always up to date and my motto is: if the fish don't live in it then I don't swim in it!



'My motto is if the fish don't live in it then I don't swim in it!'

*Photo: Courtesy Lucy Di Paolo—The Examiner*

**How has marathon swimming changed the way you appreciate the environment?**

Marathon swimming has given me the opportunity to go where only ships dare and I feel a very strong affinity with the aquatic environment (probably because I spend more time in the water than I do on land!!)

I guess it has made me very protective of marine life (my friends!)—after all, I have experienced first hand how sick you can get from dirty water, imagine how the fish must feel.

**What is the best thing about swimming in natural bodies of water as opposed to indoor swimming pools?**

The best thing is watching the fish go by instead of the black line! Actually for me, the attraction is being in an uncontrollable environment—pitting yourself against mother nature. It offers a challenge that swimming pools just can't compete with. Also the chlorine is a real killer. Give me salt anytime.

ITEM 1. (Continued)

**And the worst?**

Sharks with big teeth.

100 salinity and soil degradation. The trees are the key.

75 **What is the most memorable encounter you have had with a marine animal on a swim?**

In February 1996, I encountered a pod of dolphins in Bass Strait.

80 The water temperature was seven degrees and I had been swimming for 15 hours. I was looking pretty bad, close to hypothermia and my coach, Dawn Fraser, was considering pulling me out of the water.

105 **What person do you admire most for their contributions to conserving the environment?**  
David Attenborough—he has shown us all the delicate links between nature and the environment and made it extremely interesting.

85 But then, like magic, the dolphins came and played around me for about 20 minutes. I was in heaven.

110 **Where do you see yourself in ten years, still doing marathon swims?**

Swimming will always be a part of my life but I think in ten years time, it will purely be a couple of laps at the local pool—not marathons.

90 About two hours later I completed my 97 km swim across Bass Strait. Sometimes I wonder if I would have made it without that special appearance from the dolphins.

115 **Would you encourage young people interested in swimming to follow in your footsteps? (or should I say wake?)**

I hope there are young kids thinking of becoming marathon swimmers. It's a crazy life, but then who wants to be normal!

95 **What do you consider to be the most serious environmental issue facing Australia at the moment?**

Reafforestation—the careless actions of the past need to be addressed. We should start strategically planting trees to reduce the further detrimental land effects such as

120 **What is the next swimming challenge you have in your sights?**

125 You'll have to wait and see. I'm still looking through the atlas for unswum waters.

## Time and Tide

*We say we love the sea, but treat it carelessly. We take for granted its pleasures and its riches—plenty more where that came from. Well, not forever, and maybe not for long. Author and ocean lover **Tim Winton** sounds the alarm for the endangered deep.*



I grew up by the sea. Sometimes I think I grew up in the sea, so often was I immersed in it. At the very least I know that the sea helped me grow up. The big blue has always been a source of awe and mystery in my life. And even now it sustains a sense of childlike wonder in me that I have tried to make available to my children. The living, teeming sea connects me to my past, to the lives of my ancestors and to the future I imagine will come after me.

As a toddler I stood on the powder-white sand of Cottesloe Beach to see the winter shore break hammer against the land. The vibration, the sheer power, travelled from my feet and up my legs. It made my knees knock and buzzed in my spine. I was afraid but I wanted to be in it. I learned to ride a Coolite surfboard between the sandbars at Scarborough Beach. Foam fell behind me like a growling avalanche and dolphins spun out of my path. After power, I met plenty. From a clinker built dory\* I sat with my father and peered down into the turquoise

blur to see wild mobs of silver trevally rise to our scattered pollard\*. At Mettam's Pool I put on a mask and snorkel for the first time and began to haunt the reefs all the way to Trigg Point. Seeing the world underwater, I was weightless, comfortable, almost at home. I saw tumbling masses of tailor, lines of crayfish marching out to sea in single file. Plankton passed like dizzy spots before my eyes. Every day I learnt from the sea that I'd better get ready to be surprised.

Some days at dawn, I sat on a dune and saw the new-lit ocean spread before me. It was barely possible to imagine that Africa and the other continents lay somewhere beyond the horizon. My island, my continent, felt like the only land on Earth and all around me the sea went on forever to become the sky. It was overpowering. Indestructible. My family caught crays and crabs and octopus and abalone and 50 kinds of fish from it. It fed us, soothed us simply by being close by, surged through our dreams. I thought all that space, all that plenty, was my birthright and that it would be forever and always.

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\*clinker built dory - a kind of boat.

- 4 - \*pollard - bait used to attract fish.

## ITEM 2. (Continued)

And then one wintry day at age 13, in a town I was only new to, I saw a sperm whale methodically dismantled and rendered into oil and fertiliser. Forty feet and 40 tons of swimming creature. It had been harpooned. A grenade had exploded inside its long, blunt head. As it came tail-first up the slick planks of the ramp, I saw the trenches\* the sharks had left in its side. From a launch a deckhand was shooting sharks with a .303. They drifted sideways like crippled aircraft. The water was pink and mad with birds. Back on shore men in beanies and seaboots cheerfully tore blubber from the whale in long, glistening strips. Underneath the flesh and muscle stood out red and white. A saw took the great head away and men sectioned the carcass up. It was then that I realised the sea and its many wonders might not be forever and always after all.

After that day I saw more than just how the sea affected me. I saw what we all did to the sea. I prowled the school library. I walked the beaches seeing new things. Like the gross cadavers\* of great white sharks hung as trophies on the Albany town jetty, their weight chalked across them. I saw the thousands of blowfish on the wharf where children had stamped them playfully to death. The sewage outfall near my favourite herring spot. The algae choking the inner harbour where the phosphate works and the wool mill pumped their effluent. All the dead mullet on the tideline.

The sea wasn't just a garden and a playground. We used it as a dumping ground. We treated it with a kind of thoughtless contempt. We took and took and took. At age 16, I returned to the reef I had snorkelled since age 8. But the abalone seemed small and scarce. There were hardly any fish. No tarwhine, no sweep. Every scalyfin and red-lipped morwong had a spearhole high on its back. One day in the car park north of Trigg Point I saw two men trying to close the boot of their Datsun on a haul of undersized abalone so big the mass of

shellfish looked like a writhing alien the size of a beanbag. For a while I took friends to my old reef to introduce them to the underwater world, but by the late 70s I'd given up. There was too little to see. I felt like the beach bore: 'Ya shoulda been here yesterday.' But I went back alone now and again, unable to break the habit. I heard my father and his friends talk about how far they were travelling now in order to catch a feed of fish.

When I became a father I wanted my kids to experience the beach life I'd had in suburban Perth but I soon realised that things had changed too much and there was no way it could be given to them. We moved north to the central west coast so they could see living reefs, swim in clean water and experience nature unself-consciously. They've swum with sea lions and dolphins, manta rays. They've seen seabirds nesting, encountered a leopard seal a whole ocean away from its home. They know what a nudibranch is, have a healthy respect for fire coral. They have killed fish and eaten them; they begin to know the consequences of all their taking and playing. I try to talk to them about the future. Because I've seen a little piece of the future. In the Aegean\* where nothing moves but the plastic shopping bags. Where the beautiful granite world beneath the Greek Islands is desolate, stark and ravaged by dynamite fishing. Where a basking shark is hunted and killed and displayed on the dock to reassure tourists too stupid to notice it has almost no teeth. Where you have more need of detergent in your beach bag than sunscreen, such is the oil-gobbed state of the beaches. Where in the tavernas crooked-limbed old men tell stories of times when fish boiled in the bays, the water was dark with squid and the seabed thick with sponges. Now only memories remain. The squid come frozen from Thailand, the old men have become bums and the young rarely believe them.

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\*trenches - deep gashes.

\*cadavers - dead bodies.

### ITEM 3–POETRY

*Terry Whitebeach has written this poem about watching a science student who studies Fairy Penguins at Marion Bay. The science student's name is Rosemary and she has a pet wombat called Bear.*

#### **The Science Honours Student, Accompanied by Pet Wombat, Studies the Fairy Penguins at Marion Bay**

Rosemary is here again  
with Bear, and I wonder  
at the scientific  
method.

She processes blood samples,  
tickles the penguins' throats  
till they throw up  
so that she can examine  
the contents of their stomachs  
and learn their feeding habits.

Bear snuffles around  
while she writes up results.  
I am impressed  
by this young scientist  
who seems to know  
just what she's doing —  
increasing her knowledge  
of penguins.

I have long since  
given up such certainties . . .  
hear their chatter  
in the dunes at night,  
and see their tracks  
when I go down to the beach  
in the cold dawn,  
and wonder . . .

For me there is  
nothing knowable  
about penguins, as I stand  
on the outside of their world  
trying to see in.

*Terry Whitebeach.*



# SEA THINGS IN THEIR NATURAL STATE



## The Sea needs National Parks too!

Did you know that Marine National Parks act as insurance for our oceans against the threats of over-fishing, pollution and exploitation?

Less than 1% of Victoria's marine environment, a tiny 385 hectares (less than a quarter of the area of Tullamarine Airport) is currently protected from all forms of exploitation.

For further information on what you can do, contact the **Victorian National Parks Association**.  
10 Parliament Place, East Melbourne 3002 • tel (03) 9650 8296 • fax (03) 9654 6843



# National Parks *beyond the shore*



Sea Anemones.

## 1 *The Sea needs National Parks too*

With around 13% of the state protected as National Parks, Victoria has a valuable reserve system ... on land. But this vision has largely stopped at the shore. Less than 1% of Victoria's marine environment—a tiny 385 hectares, smaller than a quarter of the area of Tullamarine Airport—is currently protected from all forms of exploitation.

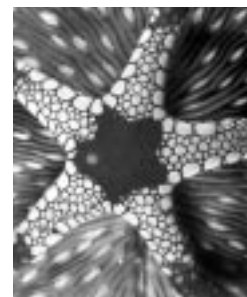
### Parks in name only

Marine protection remains grossly inadequate and the future for Victoria seems bleak. The Environment Conservation Council, a state government advisory body, has put forward a series of recommendations for marine parks.

10 These are parks in name only which may allow such exploitation as mineral, gas and oil exploration as well as recreational and commercial fishing.

These parks will not adequately protect our seas. Only full National Park protection will ensure the health of our marine environment for the future.

We would not accept such poor protection and lax management of our parks on land. At least 15% of our precious marine environment must be fully protected now and for the future in Marine National Parks.



Mosaic Seastar.



Diver with Round-faced Batfish.

## *Marine National Parks benefit all of us*

Scientific research worldwide shows that fully protected marine areas allow the plant and animal communities within them to flourish and can support up to 25 times the marine life of adjacent fished areas. Such protection has economic, biological and social benefits, including:

- enriching fish stocks beyond park boundaries—Marine National Parks allow fish to live longer and grow larger, increasing the number of young fish moving into adjacent waters;
- improved nature-based tourism and diving opportunities—more than 30 dive and snorkelling operators currently use Popes Eye Marine Reserve in Port Phillip Bay, generating millions of dollars annually;
- protected areas for marine research, which allows more informed comparison with fished areas and better scientific management of our fisheries;
- education—Marine National Parks are ideal sites to experience and learn about the rich variety in protected natural communities.



Big-bellied Seahorse.

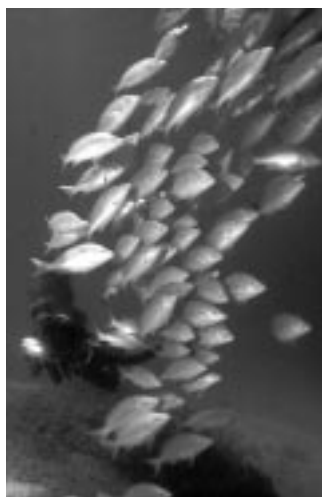
## ITEM 5. (Continued)

### *We need to get it right, now ... for the future*

Currently fisheries are in crisis worldwide. The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United States reports that 70% of the world's commercially important fish stocks are fully fished, over-exploited, depleted or slowly recovering. The World Conservation Union, IUCN, has stated that 95% of the world's fisheries are unsustainable at current fishing levels. In Australia, the Bureau of Resource Sciences claims that only 9 out of 100 fisheries are capable of sustaining increased fishing levels. Marine National Parks can act as insurance against the effects of this over-exploitation.

### *Fully protect at least 15% of our coastal waters, now*

We believe that only fully protected Marine National Parks encompassing all marine habitats throughout the state will secure a future for our marine environment.



Diver with Hussar.

#### Our Vision

- Marine National Parks that protect at least 15% of the state's marine waters as part of integrated marine management;
- Marine National Parks that give protection which is simple and secure: no fishing, no disturbance, no mining exploration or extraction, no marine farming .. but everyone welcome to come, enjoy and learn;
- Marine National Parks that truly represent Victoria's splendid range of marine environments, including our metropolitan bays;
- Marine National Parks that act as insurance for our oceans against the threats of over-fishing, pollution and exploitation.



Sea Anemone and Clown Fish.

### *Marine National Parks can protect our marine environment*

#### Please help to support Marine National Parks

Marine National Parks have an integral role to play in the conservation and sustainable management of our bays and oceans. Now is the best opportunity to ensure protection. Your letters will make a difference.

Write, phone or fax your local member of state parliament asking that at least 15% of Victorian waters be protected in Marine National Parks:

#### For further information on what else you can do contact the Victorian National Parks Association

10 Parliament Place, East Melbourne 3002  
• tel (03) 9650 8296 • fax (03) 9654 6843



**The VNPA is an independent, member-based organisation which welcomes your membership and financial support. Donations are tax-deductible.**



Australian Fur Seal.

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*Extract from 'Time and Tide'. Written by Tim Winton and reprinted with kind permission from Good Weekend Magazine, Sydney Morning Herald, 8 November 1997.*

*Photograph: 'The last break', Frank Hurley. Kodak (Australasia) Pty Ltd Fund.  
Collection: National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.*

*'The Science Honours Student, Accompanied by Pet Wombat, Studies the Fairy Penguins at Marion Bay', Terry Whitebeach, from 'Four New Poets', Penguin Books Australia Ltd, 1993.*

*Photograph: wombat. 'Australia's Unique Animals', Viking O'Neil 1975, p17. Penguin Books Australia Ltd.*

*Photograph: fairy penguins. 'Australia's Birds', New Holland Publishers, 1997. Photographer Dave Watts.*

*Photograph: dolphin. Courtesy Australian Picture Library/Pacific Stock.*

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*Leaflet: Courtesy Victorian National Parks Association.*

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