

16

Threats to life in our ocean

Level: 



Let's think!

1. What does the growing list of endangered species say about humans?
2. Which endangered animal would you save?

PLAYLIST



READ ALONG



Text 1

At the beach, enormous shells are found.

Never have humans done anything to turn things around.

The sad story of the sea turtles are left untold.

Impossible to revive as their bodies turn cold.

Whales, sadly, are not on full alert.

Humans pollute and poach, posing harm and hurt.

And yet, humans can stop and fix what we have done.

Let the sea recover, let past evil deeds be undone.

It is time to act, for the whales and the sea turtles, to make our stand.

Now and forever, the sea and the land.

Go now—the future of all life forms is in your hands.

~110 words



5



10

Text 2

Iceland announces it will end whaling

1 Commercial whaling is an industry that has caused the population of most whale species to plummet to dangerous levels. It has raised global awareness of the fate of many whale species and led to growing criticism of the practice. Before the 19th century, there were around a quarter of a million blue whales. Today, only one-tenth of them are left in the world. Likewise, there were about 21,000 North Atlantic right whales before whaling, but there are fewer than four hundred today. These statistics are alarming.

2 Iceland, Norway and Japan are the only three countries that still hunt whales commercially. Recently, Iceland's fisheries minister have announced that they will end the practice in 2024. The decision is due to

the dramatic decrease in the demand for whale meat and the small economic gain from whale hunting. The controversy over the practice is also a reason. 10

3 Little did we know that the ban on commercial whaling came into force as far back as 1986. Back then, the International Whaling Commission (IWC) announced that all of its member countries had to agree to hunt only whales of certain species within designated economic zones. Japan, claiming that their whaling was for scientific purposes, began to launch large whaling programmes. Yet, the scientific merits of these programmes were questioned. As for Norway and Iceland, they opposed the regulation and continued whaling. Iceland even left the IWC in 1992. Ten years later, the deadlock was broken and the country rejoined the IWC. However, 852 fin whales were slaughtered in Iceland since it resumed whaling in 2006. The good news was that only one whale was hunted from 2019 to 2021. The demand for whale meat decreased dramatically during that period. Only then did the two major whaling companies in Iceland decide to suspend the summer whaling season for the first time in 17 years. Sadly, the fin whale hunt started again in 2022 and a total of 148 whales were hunted in six months. 15 20

4 The drop in the demand for whale meat in Iceland can be attributed to the local continuous anti-whaling protests and Japan's resumption of commercial whaling. Some supermarket chains have dropped Icelandic whale meat because of consumer pressure. As Japan withdrew from the IWC and resumed commercial whaling in 2019, the global demand for Iceland's whale exports also dropped significantly. Besides, as whalers have to go farther offshore to areas that allow whale hunting, fewer of them are taking part in the hunts as they are taken aback by its high operating cost. 25

5 Marine conservationists are advocating for whale-watching trips and so are ecotourism operators. Hoping to turn the tide against whale hunting, they have launched the 'Meet us, don't eat us' campaign. It proposes boosting Iceland's economy with whale watching, encourages eateries in Iceland to be whale-friendly and educates visitors to Iceland about whales. With their joint effort, Iceland has accepted the suggestion about ceasing commercial whaling in 2024. It is believed that the conservationists will welcome the decision to finally put an end to the practice. 30

~500 words

Looking into Grammar

We can use **inversion** to put emphasis. We do so by inverting the subject-verb order. Common expressions that are used with inversion include negative adverbials such as *Never ...*, *Little ...* and *Hardly ...*, and other expressions such as *Only until / then ...* and *So / Neither / Nor ...*

- ✓ *Never have humans (~~humans have~~) done anything to turn things around.*
- ✓ *Marine conservationists are advocating for whale-watching trips and so are ecotourism operators (~~ecotourism operators are~~).*

? Underline TWO similarly structured sentences in paragraph 3 of the article.

Read Text 1 and answer questions 1–6. For multiple-choice questions, choose the best answer and blacken ONE circle only. (12 marks)

1. Find ONE word that refers to sea turtles in stanza 1? _____

2. (i) Find a line in which alliteration is used to talk about threats to marine life.

(ii) Mark each picture with a tick (✓) if it has been mentioned.



3. 'Found' and 'around' is an example of a rhyming pair. Find FOUR more pairs of rhymes.
(i) _____ and _____ (ii) _____ and _____
(iii) _____ and _____ (iv) _____ and _____

3 Words that have the same ending sound form a rhyming pair.

4. Look for words that mean the same as the following:

- (i) _____ (*adj.*) very big
(ii) _____ (*n.*) intentional acts

5. Complete the summary by filling in each blank with ONE word taken from lines 6–8.

The poet hopes that by stopping people from (i) _____ the sea and (ii) _____ marine animals, the sea can return to its state in the past.

6. Based on the information in the poem, what is the poet's 'stand' (line 9)?

- A. to forgive people who abuse animals
B. to rescue whales and sea turtles that have been injured
C. to fight against keeping sea animals in captivity
D. to start protecting the environment from now on
- A B C D

Read Text 2 and answer questions 7–14. For multiple-choice questions, choose the best answer and blacken ONE circle only. (17 marks)

7. According to paragraph 1, why have there been growing criticisms about the whaling practice?

8. Complete the table based on the information in paragraph 1.

Type of whales	Population before whaling	Population after whaling
Blue whales	around (i) _____	around (ii) _____
North Atlantic right whales	around (iii) _____	below (iv) _____



9. 'Deadlock' (line 16) is a metaphor. It means _____.
- A. a condition that promotes the development of things
 B. a problem that delays progress
 C. a point that has no hope of making progress
 D. a situation in which agreement cannot be reached

A B C D

10. Based on paragraph 4, complete the summary by writing ONE word to fill in each blank. Make sure your answers are grammatically correct.

Since Japan resumed whaling in 2019, there has been a (i) _____ drop in the global demand for (ii) _____ whale meat. (iii) _____ against whaling and the increase in operating (iv) _____ have further discouraged the activity.



11. Find a phrase in paragraph 5 which means 'reverse the trend'. _____

12. Draw lines to match the following speech bubbles with the countries mentioned in the article.

Live whales play an important role in our economy.

• Japan

Research on whaling has been conducted.

• Iceland

13. Determine whether the following statements are True (T), False (F) or Not Given (NG).

	T	F	NG
(i) No minke whales were slaughtered under the regulation of commercial whaling in Iceland.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(ii) Despite the regulation, Japan continued whaling in the name of science.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(iii) Many whalers in Iceland became unemployed after the public interest in whale meat declined.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(iv) Developing whale tourism is a way to sustain Iceland's economy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. What are the purposes of this article?

- I. to explain what commercial whaling is
 II. to mention how commercial whaling is replaced in Iceland
 III. to criticise the impact of commercial whaling
 IV. to provide information about Iceland's decision to end whaling

- A. I, II and III C. I, III and IV
 B. II, III and IV D. all of the above

A B C D

14 The title of an article and the topic sentences usually give a brief idea of what it is about.

Pre-DSE Level Up

Q1: To find the word that refers to sea turtles, complete the sentences below. Fill in each blank with NO MORE THAN TWO words.

It is a figure of speech. (i) _____ are a part of (ii) _____. The term is used to mean the whole.

Vocabulary

GLOSSARY



A. Complete the article below with the given words. Make sure your answers are grammatically correct.

advocate (v.)

alarming (adj.)

attribute to (phr. v.)

awareness (n.)

deadlock (n.)

designated (adj.)

ecotourism (n.)

enormous (adj.)

plummet (v.)

poach (v.)

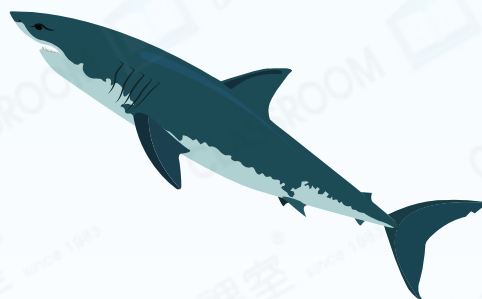
Act now to save the ocean



It is (1) _____ that humans are doing serious harm to marine life.

Humans dump non-biodegradable substances such as plastic bags and poisonous chemicals into the ocean. This endangers the lives of marine life, especially sea turtles, whales and dolphins, causing their numbers to (2) _____.

Although laws have been enacted to protect endangered marine species, many countries continue (3) _____. For (4) _____ fish like sharks, illegal hunters throw them back into the sea after cutting off the body parts they need, while sea turtles are still being killed for profit.



Habitat destruction can be (5) _____ human's insufficient (6) _____ of wildlife conservation. In recent years, some green groups have started to (7) _____ ecotourism. Such tours are usually held in (8) _____ areas, like wetland and rainforests. (9) _____ enables people to learn about the importance of protecting the environment and go travelling at the same time. However, inadequate funding from the government has discouraged travel agencies from organising these tours. The green groups are consistently lobbying the government to increase the budget, which has resulted in a / an (10) _____ between the green groups and the government.

B. Look at the pictures. Write the correct names in the spaces provided.

Endangered marine species

green sea turtle

hammerhead shark

northern fur seal

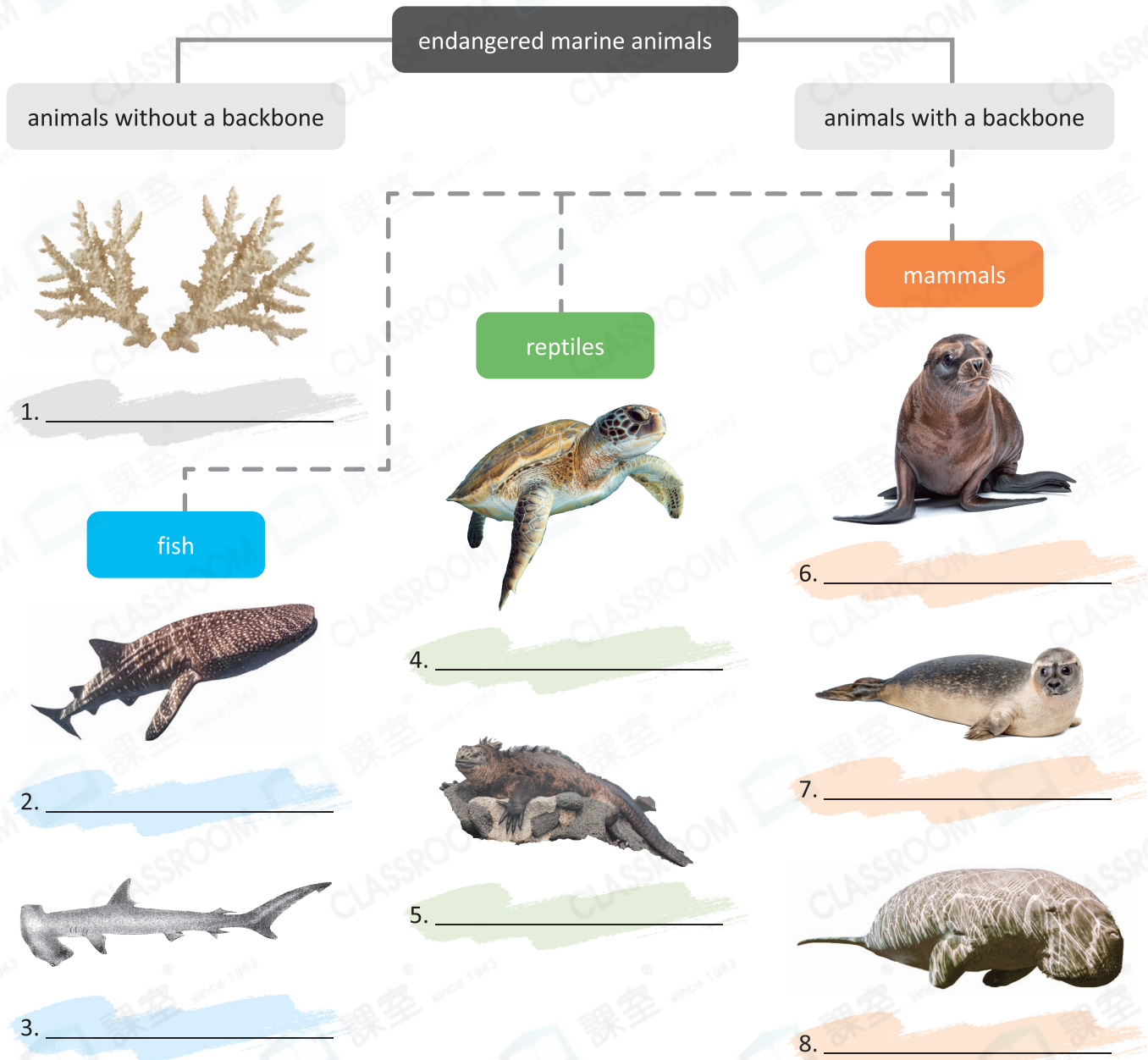
northern sea lion

sea iguana

South American manatee

staghorn coral

whale shark



Writing

How can we protect marine life?

Write an article about ways to protect marine life in about 200 words.