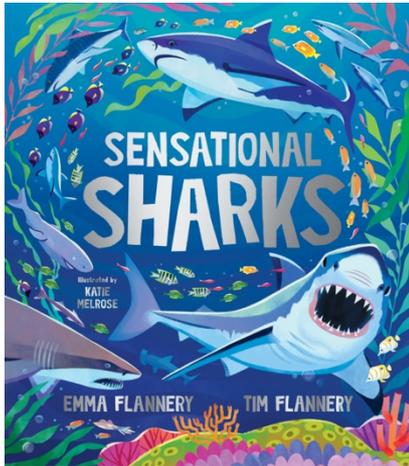


## Teacher's Notes



### *Sensational Sharks*

Written by Tim & Emma Flannery

Illustrated by Katie Melrose

Teacher's Notes by Bec Kavanagh

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### LEARNING OUTCOMES

#### RECOMMENDED FOR

Primary aged readers (ages 4-8, grades 2-3)

#### KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- Learning areas: English
- General capabilities:
  - AC9E2LA08
  - AC9E2LA09
  - AC9E3LY01
  - AC9E3LY03

### THEMES

- Nature & animals
- Ecosystems
- Conservation
- Fear

### SYNOPSIS

How would you react if you saw a shark swimming towards you? Even if you're not afraid, it would be pretty intimidating to be confronted with all those teeth, right?

*Sensational Sharks* brings these incredible creatures of the ocean into the light. In this straightforward, informative picture book, readers will learn how fascinating sharks really are – what they do eat (and what they don't), and how they move through the water and catch their prey.

Did you know that we *need* sharks to keep the ecosystems of our oceans in check? *Sensational Sharks* dispels many of the myths and stereotypes around sharks that make so many people fear them, and show them for the powerful, spectacular (and only occasionally frightening) creatures they truly are.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ ILLUSTRATOR

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**Professor Tim Flannery** is one of the world's leading scientists, explorers and conservationists. He has held positions in renowned institutions across Australia and internationally, including Director of the South Australian Museum, Visiting Chair in Australian Studies at Harvard University and Distinguished Research Fellow at the Australian Museum. He was named Australian of the Year in 2007. He has published more than thirty books, including the award-winning *Here on Earth* (2010), *The Weather Makers* (2005), *Atmosphere of Hope* (2015) and the best-selling *Explore Your World* series, many of which he co-wrote with his daughter and fellow scientist Emma Flannery. He is a frequent presenter on ABC Radio, NPR and the BBC, and has also written and presented several series on the Documentary Channel.

**Emma Flannery** is a scientist and writer, who has co-written many of the best-selling *Explore Your World* books with her father, Tim. Her curiosity for the natural world has seen her travel and work in some of its most wild and interesting places. She has explored caves, forests and oceans across most of the globe's continents in search of the elusive fossils, animals and plants that help us understand our planet and who we are in it. With postgraduate experience in geology, chemistry and palaeontology, Emma's research and writing has been published in scientific journals, children's books and a number of museum-based adult education tours. She has worked for and with universities, government agencies and museums. She is the co-founder of Museophiliac, an independent curatorial service that has produced programs for the City of Sydney and the Australian Museum, aimed at bringing science to life for a range of audiences. Her passion for science has an infectious and playful enthusiasm that inspires curiosity in children and adults alike. She hopes to continue to produce fun and accessible science communication.

**Katie Melrose** was born and raised along the Southern Californian coast where her love for art and reading was cultivated at a young age by her parents. After graduating with a BFA in illustration from California State University of Fullerton, she quickly delved into illustrating books. Katie is extremely bookish, getting through more than 100 books a year (shout out to audio books!). You'll mostly find her with a brush, but when she's without, she'll be in the kitchen, cooking up a storm and pretending she's a chef – perhaps her second greatest passion in life after illustration.

## THEMES

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*Sensational Sharks* explores a number of themes, including nature and fear, but connecting all of these is an underlying theme of understanding and conservation. There's a lot of misinformation about sharks out there! Misinformation can be dangerous because it makes people more afraid than they need to be, and this can lead to more culling or reckless behaviour. Before you read the book, what were some of the myths you believed about sharks? How did the book help you to understand what sharks are *really* like?

What does **conservation** mean? How is this explored in the book? Choose one of the facts from the book that might change people's attitudes towards sharks if they were aware of it. Design a compelling poster to help people see sharks in a new light.



## WRITING STYLE

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*Sensational Sharks* is a non-fiction book, which means that all the information inside is really true. But would you be as interested if you opened the book only to discover pages and pages of facts? Writers Tim and Emma Flannery use informal, conversational language, questions and even humour to present these facts in a more interesting way. This makes it seem more like you're having a conversation than learning!

Think about something you're passionate about – can you use these techniques (asking questions, using slang or conversational language, or making jokes) to write a paragraph that conveys it to a reader in an interesting way?

## COMPREHENSION

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- How many species of shark are there?
- What do sharks eat? Do all sharks eat the same thing? Do sharks eat people?
- What is a shark's superpower?
- What's the most surprising shark fact you learned from this book?
- What part of a shark's body will survive the longest after its death?
- What do all sharks have in common?
- What do sharks use their fins for? What would happen to a shark if it didn't have its fins?
- What would happen to a shark if it stopped moving?
- How long have sharks existed on earth?
- Why do humans kill sharks? Do you think this is ok?
- Why is it so important to share what we've learned about sharks with other people?

## WRITING EXERCISE

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Tim Flannery calls great white sharks 'sneaky sharks'. Why? Imagine that you are a great white and write a story that describes you sneaking up on your prey. Do you catch it?

## ILLUSTRATION STYLE

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Although the illustrations in the book aren't strictly scientific, they're realistic representations of the sharks that the authors have written about. Katie Melrose captures the unique qualities of different sharks in the book – from a close-up of the wide and serrated teeth of the great white shark to the shovel-shaped nose of the goblin shark. But Melrose also captures the tone of the language in the book in her illustrations, using colour and occasionally comical expressions to capture the humour and lightness of the text. It's ok to play, as long as we keep the facts the same!



## CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

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- Not all sharks want to live in the same kind of habitat! What are some of the different types of habitats that sharks like to live in? Choose one of the sharks in the book and draw a picture of its ideal habitat.
- Make a list of shark vocabulary – words you might use to describe sharks. Draw a picture to accompany each word to show what it means.
- What do sharks eat? Imagine you've got a shark coming to dinner (yikes!) and write a menu for a perfect feast. Of course, the book warns you never to invite a shark to dinner, so you might have to make your feast a takeaway!
- What are some of the superpowers sharks have? If you could choose one, which one would you choose and why?
- Draw a picture of a shark egg. Describe how it's different to a bird's egg.

## RELATED READING

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*Creepiest Crawly Critters* by Tim and Emma Flannery

*Weirdest Creatures in Time* by Tim and Emma Flannery

*Deep Dive Into Deep Sea* by Tim and Emma Flannery

*Wildlife Compendium of the World* by Tania McCartney

*Wild Family* by Ben Lerwill

*Deep In the Ocean* by Lucie Brunellière

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

