



AUSTRALIAN STEM VIDEO GAME CHALLENGE

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2026 THEME OCEANS

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2026 THEME

OCEANS

The deep sea is a vast, changing and fascinating wilderness.

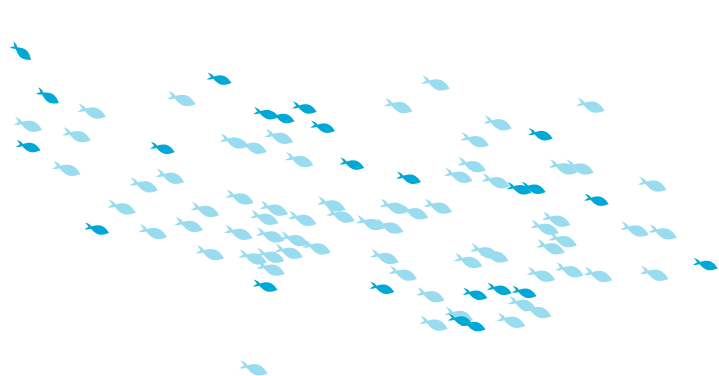
Helen Czerski

IT'S NOT HARD TO FIND SOME AMAZING FACTS ABOUT OCEANS ...

- | Oceans cover 71% of Earth's surface and hold over 96% of all Earth's water.
- | If all the salt in the Oceans could be removed and spread evenly over Earth's land surface, it would form a layer over 150 metres thick.
- | Oceans provide more than half of the oxygen we breathe.
- | 90% of all living creatures on Earth live in Oceans, including some of the smallest and the very largest.
- | The Mariana Trench of the Western Pacific is deeper, at almost 11 km, than the height of the Earth's tallest mountain, Mount Everest which reaches 8,849 meters.

And yet, even with these and many more of the things we know about Oceans, less than 10% of Earth's Oceans have been mapped to any significant detail. There's a lot we don't know about Oceans.

So this is your task for the Australian STEM Video Game Challenge (STEM VGC) this year: **develop a video game with Oceans as the theme.**





HOW WILL YOU DO THAT?

As always with the STEM VGC, how you connect your game to the theme is completely up to you.

Oceans are big places – you’ve got a lot to work with.

Here are a few ideas to get you thinking. You might like to focus on the Ocean as a habitat. Your game might include:

- | sound waves to navigate, communicate and track sea life
- | the deep Ocean ecosystem, from the microscopic to the macroscopic
- | cooperative relationships between different sea creatures
- | migration or movement of animals through the ocean.

No water, no life. No blue, no green.

Sylvia Earle

You might like to focus on environmental challenges related to the Ocean. Your game might include:

- | rising sea levels
- | unsustainable fishing practices
- | changing temperature, salinity or pH
- | threats to marine biodiversity
- | pollution, such as plastic or oil
- | deep sea mining.

The boundary between the land and the sea is often fuzzy.

Helen Czerski

You might like to focus on exploring or navigating the Ocean. Your game might include:

- | using clocks, sextants or maps of stars to navigate the Oceans across distance
- | shipwrecks, caves or underwater ruins
- | boats, ships and submarines
- | snorkelling and diving

I need the sea because it teaches me.

Pablo Neruda

You might like to focus on art or creativity connected to the Ocean. Your game might include:

- | the music of marine communication such as whale song, dolphin whistle and fish grunts
- | shapeshifting of octopuses or colour-shifting of cuttlefish
- | coral reefs
- | colours and textures found in the ocean

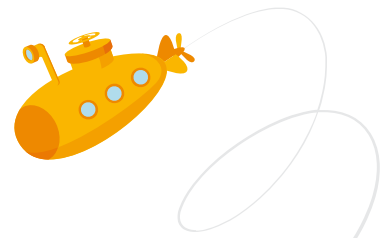
We dive not to escape life, but for life not to escape us.

Unknown

You might like to build a game that combines two (or more) of these, or you may have your own totally different approach. There's no right or wrong way to explore the Ocean theme, just you, your team and your creativity.

NOW GET DEVELOPING ...





There are many jobs related to Oceans. What if your game was inspired by one of these real careers?

Aquaculture farmer



Lifeguard

Cartographer

Marine biologist

Deckhand

Ship driver

Diver

Surfer

Fisherman

Tourism operator

The sea, once it casts its spell, holds one in its net forever.

Jacques Cousteau

