

7. Presenting research on marine conservation

By now, you would have noticed that there is a lot of information out there about how to look after the sea. It's not surprising that we can get a bit overwhelmed by it all. To make it easier for people to take in the information and remember it, you can condense the information. You can use punctuation to do this.

At the end of this work ebook you will be creating a webpage on 'saving our seas'. It will be your job to make it easy for your audience to understand your research on how to ocean dreaming. Learning how to condense information will help you do this.

Condensing information through punctuation

When collating (gathering together), summarising and presenting research, semicolons, colons and dot points will help you clearly express your ideas. The use of this type of punctuation allows you to use fewer words than a usual summary. Creating summaries are also valuable tools for preparation for exams or times when you need to remember information, such as delivering presentations. Summaries are used on web pages to present information in a way that is easy to identify when skimming a text. They are also quick to read.

Dashes: Dashes mark a separation between words and phrases, while still showing a link. They allow the writer to omit words.

Colons: Colons tell the reader that what comes next in the sentence will develop the first part of the sentence. When we use colons and we want to add a list of things we can use dot or bullet points.

Dot points: Dot points are used for making points in a summary. Dot points go down the page as opposed to continuing across the page.

Exercise 11: Condensing information

- a. The following condensed information does not have punctuation. Add dashes, a colon, dot points and a full stop so the extract makes sense.

Results for a 2011 CSIRO and Earthwatch research survey on marine debris include

marine debris concentrated near major population centres across Australia's coastline

main items that wash ashore cigarette products and plastic bags

Condensing information about sea lions

Read the passage below about the Australian sea lions under threat and how the information has been condensed using dashes, colons and dot points.

Australian sea lions

Australian sea lions exist nowhere else on earth other than the shores and seas of our country. These beautiful animals live in small populations along the coastline of South Australia and Western Australia.

Biologically, Australian sea lions are peculiar creatures - females only breed once every 18 months and tend to stay close to where they were born. These characteristics mean each of the small populations is genetically distinct from its neighbour, and the unnatural death of even a single female can have a large impact on a colony's survival. The smaller the population, the higher the impact

a death is.

Historically hunted for their fur, their numbers are at such low levels that the species is listed as 'Vulnerable' under Australian law.

<http://www.marineconservation.org.au/pages/threatened-spec-australian-sea-lions-137.html>

Let's condense this information so it's easier to read. Notice how dashes, colons and dot points have been used to condense information below.

Information about Australian sea lions includes:

- only exist in Australia
- females breed every 18 months
- stay close to where they were born
- small populations are genetically distinct from their neighbours
- an unnatural death of one female – impacts on a colony's survival
- small population – higher impact
- hunted for their fur in the past – therefore numbers at low levels.

The colon signals that brief information about the topic is to come – details about Australian sea lions. Each dot point is brief and begins with lower case to continue the sentence. Dashes are used to link ideas without too much detail. The last dot point ends with a full stop as the sentence has ended.

Now it is your turn to experiment with using dashes, colons and dot points.

Exercise 12: Condensing information

- a. Read the following extract from a newspaper article about West Australian Government's pilot program to cull sharks after a spate of shark attacks.

WA shark cull: 172 caught on drum lines off popular beaches

By Courtney Bembridge and David Weber

May 7, 2104

More than 170 sharks have been caught under the West Australian Government's catch and kill program, which ended last week.

Drum lines were set off five Perth beaches and another two in the South West following a spate of fatal shark attacks in WA, attributed mostly to great whites.

The trial program ran for about three months and the State Government is hailing it as a success.

A total of 172 sharks were caught. Of those, 50 tiger sharks larger than three metres were destroyed, with the biggest shark caught at Floreat Beach measuring at 4.5 metres.

Eight other animals were also captured, including stingrays, however no great white sharks were caught under the trial program.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-05-07/shark-catch-and-kill-data-released/5435682>

Quiller

- b. Condense the information using dashes, colons and dot points. When you are adding dot points, see if you can make each dot point continue on from the sentence starter in way that makes grammatical sense.
- Use the following sentence starter:
Information about the West Australian Government’s catch and kill sharks program includes:

Writing space

Extend yourself

Exercise 13: Using punctuation to condense information

- a. Write in dots points all that you have learnt about one of the following areas of marine conservation you have studied so far in this workbook. Write 4-6 dot points. Use the appropriate punctuation.
- The effects of ocean pollution.
 - The effects of plastics on marine life.

Writing space

