DIRECTIONS FOR TEACHERS

LISTENING SECTION

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION IN ENGLISH

Tuesday, January 23, 2007—1:15 to 4:15 p.m., only

BE SURE THAT THE LISTENING SECTION IS ADMINISTERED TO EVERY STUDENT.

1 Before the start of the examination period, say:

> **Do not open the examination booklet until you are instructed to do so.**

2 Distribute one examination booklet and one essay booklet to each student.

3 After each student has received an examination booklet and an essay booklet, say:

> **Tear off the answer sheet, which is the last page of the examination booklet, and fill in its heading. Now circle "Session One" and fill in the heading on each page of your essay booklet.**

4 After the students have filled in all headings on their answer sheets and essay booklets, say:

> Look at page 2 of your examination booklet and follow along while I read the **Overview** and **The Situation**.
>
> **Overview:**
> For this part of the test, you will listen to an account about saving the ocean environment, answer some multiple-choice questions, and write a response based on the situation described below. You will hear the account twice. You may take notes on the next page anytime you wish during the readings.
>
> **The Situation:**
> In order to increase membership in the environmental club at your school, you have decided to give a presentation to students in your school on saving the ocean environment. In preparation for writing your presentation, listen to an account about the ocean environment by Peter Benchley, author of the novel *Jaws*. Then use relevant information from the account to write your presentation.
>
> Now I will read the passage aloud to you for the first time.

5 Now read the passage aloud, including the attribution at the end. Read with appropriate expression, but without added comment.

Listening Passage

More than twenty years ago, I set out to write a story about a town menaced by a marine predator. Intrigued by a newspaper item about a fisherman who had caught a 4,550-pound great white shark off the coast of Long Island, I wondered what would happen if such a creature were to visit a resort community … and wouldn't go away.…

My ambitions for the story were modest, my expectations for its commercial prospects were nil. For one thing, it would be a first novel, and conventional wisdom held that nobody read first novels. For another, it was a first novel about an unlikely subject, a fish. I knew the story couldn't be filmed; no one could catch and train a shark to perform for the cameras, and movie technology wasn't sophisticated enough to create a credible animal.

So much for what *I* knew.

I've often been asked why *Jaws* became the weird cultural phenomenon it did, and to this day I have no satisfactory answer. Luck played a part, certainly; so did timing; so did my inadvertent tapping of a profound, subconscious, atavistic [natural] fear in the public, fear not only of sharks but of the sea itself, of deep water and of the unknown.

I do know one thing, however: if I were to try to write *Jaws* today, I couldn't do it. Or, at least, the book I would write would be vastly different and, I surmise, much less successful. I see the sea today from a new perspective, not as an antagonist but as an ally, rife less with menace than with mystery and wonder.

And I know I am not alone. Scientists, swimmers, scuba divers, snorkelers, and sailors all are learning that the sea is worthy more of respect and protection than of fear and exploitation.

Twenty years may be but a wink in the long span of humanity's relationship with the sea, but since the early 1970s our knowledge of and attitude toward the oceans and the animals that live in them have grown and changed more than at any time in history.

Today I could not, for instance, portray the shark as a villain, especially not as a mindless omnivore that attacks boats and humans with reckless abandon. We know now, as we didn't then, that the majority of shark attacks on human beings are accidents (often cases of mistaken identity), that a person has a much greater chance of being killed by lightning, bee stings, or feral pigs than by sharks, and that even the most formidable great white shark does not attack boats: rather, responding to complex and confusing electromagnetic signals in the water, it tests a boat, exploring it with its mouth to determine if it is edible. (Of course, if a 3,000-pound shark chooses to sample a scuba diver, believing it to be a sea lion, apologies may be a bit late to mean much.)

No, the shark in an updated *Jaws* could not be the villain; it would have to be written as the victim, for, worldwide, sharks are much more the oppressed than the oppressors. Every year, more than a hundred million sharks are slaughtered by man. It has been estimated that for every human life taken by a shark, 4.5 million sharks are killed by humans. And rarely for a useful purpose.

Many are killed because they are perceived as a nuisance; others are drowned on lines or in nets and discarded as waste. I have seen the sea bottom off Costa Rica littered with the bodies of sharks that were stripped of their fins — to make soup in Asia — and thrown back into the water to die.

Sharks are far from being the only animals subject to this waste of precious resources; in the shrimp trawl fishery, for example, nine pounds of sea life are killed and discarded for every pound of shrimp harvested.

Warning flags are already flying. In 1989, after forty years of steady increase, the world's fish catch declined as a direct result of overfishing. Salmon have disappeared from parts of the Pacific. Catches of cod and bass have been severely limited, in desperate hope of preventing the extinction of entire species. In 1992, the Canadian Government closed down the cod fishery off Newfoundland, and 50,000 people were thrown out of work.…

Overfishing is not the only threat to the oceans, nor is it only those whose lives depend on the sea who are at risk and at fault. We are all guilty, and we will all pay the price of ignorance, neglect, and abuse.

When we flush our untreated waste into streams, rivers, and the sea, nitrogen and phosphorus disrupt nature's balance by supporting algal blooms and a consequent depletion of oxygen to the point where marine life cannot survive. Parts of many bays and sounds are already practically dead zones.

When toxic chemicals, from those under our kitchen sinks to the by-products of industry, run off into coastal waters, they may enter the food chain and contaminate the fish we eat — sometimes with devastatingly tragic results.

When we drive our cars on roads that border waterways, rain washes oil residue into the water, causing more widespread, long-term pollution than any spill from a grounded tanker, pollution that weakens marine wildlife when it doesn't kill directly. Overall, spills from ships account for only 5 percent of the oil in the oceans. The yearly runoff of petroleum products from a metropolitan area of five million people is approximately the same — 11 million gallons — as the amount of oil spilled from the *Exxon Valdez*.

When we build along precarious coastlines and estuaries, the wetland borders where rivers meet the ocean, we often destroy habitats that support a multitude of useful and beautiful creatures. In the United States, crabs, oysters, clams, and shrimp that were once plentiful are no longer.

When we cut down trees and strip hillsides bare, rains wash soil into rivers and streams and out to sea, fouling the breeding grounds of salmon and trout and other animals. Silt from tropical deforestation chokes the living coral that makes up barrier reefs, the habitat of thousands of species whose ultimate value has not even been explored by science.

The ways we are nourished by the sea, the ways our lives benefit from the sea — materially as well as spiritually — are nearly infinite. And we are well on our way to ruining it all. What madness that would be. What suicidal folly.

With luck, the tide of devastation can be turned before it results in irreversible catastrophe. There are already a few hopeful signs.

Thanks to environmental legislation, the water quality of some of our rivers and bays has begun to recover.

Some fish stocks have been renewed. Restrictions on the catching of striped bass, for example, have brought the species back from what may have been the brink of extinction.

Ocean-dumping regulations have been tightened. The use of enormous drift nets — some as much as forty miles long — has been banned on the high seas.

Modern telecommunications allow scientists to assess the size and locations of fish stocks, and to detect problems such as silting and pollution earlier than ever before.

To be successful, however, more and more of us will have to change our attitude toward the sea, away from our sense of species superiority and our conviction that every living thing on the planet exists solely to satisfy our caprices, wants and needs, and toward an appreciation of the commonweal and of the unity and mutual dependence inherent in nature's design.

— excerpted from "Oceans in Peril"
Ocean Planet, 1995

6 After reading the passage aloud once, say:

> You may take a few minutes to look over **The Situation** and your notes. (Pause) Now I will read the passage aloud a second time.

7 Read the passage a second time.

8 After the second reading, say:

> Now turn to page 4 of your examination booklet, read the directions, and answer the multiple-choice questions. Be sure to follow all the directions given in your examination booklet and your essay booklet. You may now begin.