

04. Literature



The Raphaëla Le Gouvello education packet - Windsurfing solo across the Indian Ocean

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The crossing



The sea, source of inspiration

«I am the sea. You know me. I am salty. I am blue when the sky is blue, green when the sky is ... green. If you prefer me red, I am the Red Sea. Black? I am the Black Sea. Yellow. Coral. Etc. I have seen you on my beaches, all of you, with your sand castles, your fishing rods, your suntan lotions, and your shrimp baskets. I am the sea, sea me, ha, ha! The sea! While you sleep, I hide the pink starfish and the little crabs in rocks for you to find in the morning. I lick your feet with my hundred thousand dachshund tongues. But I can be the high wind - I carry hats away! But I can be the tempest - I carry boats away, make flags flutter and snap! You must never forget who I am. I am very old. Sailors cross themselves when I knock on the doors of all the port cafes. I am the sea, with its fish, its whales, its submerged gardens, its treasures stolen from the King of Spain; the sea, with its flowers, its black nights and its drowned sunsets; the sea, with its seahorses, the sea with its shells, THE SEA.»

René Fallet: *Bubble or the Voice of the Ocean*



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Questions

- ▶ Compare these two texts. What differences do you find? Which one do you prefer? Explain why.
- ▶ For whom is each text written? Who is the narrator?
- ▶ In the text by René Fallet, the sea functions like a character. How does the author accomplish this?
- ▶ For Albert Richard Wetjen, what must one do to truly understand the sea?



The Call of the Sea

«You think it's blue and by the time you find a word for just that color, it has already changed to deep purple or grey or green or black or even violet, then it turns black or blue again. You think it looks restless and suddenly the wind falls, the surges



die away, and there is not a splash on the horizon, not a wrinkle, not a movement, only a vast expanse, of pale satin, to meet our eyes. You think it looks calm and suddenly it's raging, sweeping across the piers, throwing ships against the reefs, scattering the clouds ...

And, finally, it is only after sailing long enough and far enough that you come to understand how the sea can be all of that at the same time. It is restless and calm, raging and playful, multicolored and uniform, salty and sweet, hot and cold, hostile and welcoming, tragic and mischievous. It can be all that! Adapting to every temperament, every dream, every hope and every pain.»

Helen Exley: *Call of the Sea*

Activity

- ▶ On a map of the Earth, try to find the seas mentioned in the text by René Fallet.
- ▶ In *Call of the Sea*, find the words that describe the sea. Look up their meanings.
- ▶ Using the end of this text as a model, create other opposing pairs of adjectives that could be used to describe the sea.
- ▶ Imagine that you are the sea. Write a text that begins in the same way René Fallet begins: «I Am the Sea.».

