

Shark cull opposition intensifies in Australia

Level 3 • Advanced

1 Key words

Fill the gaps in the sentences using these key words from the text.

compound
unprecedented

indiscriminate
spate

fatality
unprovoked

predator
backfire

cull
deter

1. A _____ is the act of killing a large number of animals, especially in order to stop the population from becoming too large.
2. If something is described as _____, it has never happened or existed before.
3. A _____ is a death caused by an accident, war, violence or disease.
4. An _____ action is one that is done without consideration for any harm or damage it may cause.
5. A _____ of something is a large number of things of the same type, usually bad things, that suddenly happen in a very short period of time.
6. A _____ is an animal that kills and eats other animals.
7. If you _____ a problem, you make it worse.
8. If an action is _____, it is made on someone who has done nothing wrong.
9. If plans or actions _____, they have the opposite effect to the one that you wanted.
10. If you _____ someone, you make them decide not to do something.

2 Correct the statements

These statements all contain a factual error (according to the text). Read the text and correct the errors.

1. New South Wales has the fastest-growing population of all Australian states.
2. Sixty people have died in shark attacks in Western Australia in two years.
3. Humans kill nearly ten million sharks each year.
4. In 2012, there were 800 unprovoked attacks by sharks worldwide.
5. Australia has averaged five shark-related fatalities a year for the last 50 years.
6. Drumlines are floating drums anchored to ships.

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Thousands take to beaches to protest against controversial catching and killing of sharks longer than three metres

Adam Vaughan
3 February, 2014

- 1 Opposition to Western Australia's shark cull has intensified as thousands of people took to beaches across the continent to call on the state's premier to end the policy, and RSPCA Australia and Virgin Atlantic owner Richard Branson spoke out against it. The controversial catching and killing of sharks longer than three metres began after what the state government called an "unprecedented" number of shark attacks on Western Australia's coast, which saw a 35-year-old surfer killed in November 2013. He was the sixth person to die from a shark attack in two years.
- 2 However, according to the Shark Attack File, Australia as a whole has averaged one shark-related fatality a year for the last 50 years. Kate Faehrmann, a board member at the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, said from a protest in Perth: "We've been saying all along that this policy won't work. Drumlines, used to catch the sharks, are indiscriminate killers. They'll kill sharks whether they're one, two, three metres or more, as well as dolphins, turtles and other things. That's why the community doesn't want it."
- 3 Thousands of people protested on Perth's Cottesloe Beach and Sydney's Manly Beach, as well as hundreds at Glenelg, in south-west Adelaide, and at beaches in Victoria and Queensland. Faehrmann said the protests had shown Australians wanted sharks protected: "What's amazing is so many people in Australia love sharks. This has demonstrated something about the national psyche, that, despite *Jaws*, despite all the fear, people are coming out in their thousands across the country to say, 'That's their ocean. We respect them, we love them and we don't want them killed.'" Anthony Joyce, a surfer who once had his foot caught in a shark's mouth, said: "The number of sharks they are going to kill is going to make no difference in the scheme of things."
- 4 The state government has refused to provide a running tally of sharks killed, though there

have been reports of sharks smaller than three metres being released after getting caught on drumlines, floating drums anchored to the sea bed with bait hanging on hooks beneath them. Conservationists argue there is no evidence the cull will reduce the number of shark attacks on humans, as no previous cull has solely used drumlines. Researchers at the University of Western Australia say the recent spate of shark attacks in the state may have more to do with the state having the fastest-growing population in Australia, rather than a rising number of sharks.

- 5 Richard Peirce, chairman of the UK-based conservation charity, the Shark Trust, said that the cull would be ineffective and potentially lure more predators towards the coast. "The activity in Western Australia is compounding the human tragedy of shark attacks. It is very sad that a government that could be seen to take positive initiatives with regards to shark-human interactions by trialling alternatives to indiscriminate killing has ignored the best advice and opted for an approach that is ineffective and counterproductive," he said. "The indiscriminate nature of drumlines is often overlooked – even if monitored through the day, leaving the lines in overnight has the potential to attract other predators into the area, attracted by those sharks and other species hooked and injured."
- 6 Globally, in 2012, there were 80 unprovoked attacks by sharks, seven of which proved fatal, compared to nearly 100m sharks killed by humans each year. RSPCA Australia released a statement saying it believes the cull is unjustified. "There is no evidence that the increase in attacks is a result of increasing shark numbers. Rather, it is consistent with a changing population and human behaviour; that is, there are greater numbers of people in the water," it said.
- 7 Richard Branson told Fairfax Radio the policy was backfiring. "I'm sure one of the reasons Western Australia Premier, Colin Barnett, did it was because he was thinking it would encourage tourism. It's going to do quite the reverse, I think. You're advertising a problem that doesn't exist in a major way and you're deterring people from wanting to come to Perth and your beautiful countryside around it. All you're going to achieve, I think, is to worry people unnecessarily."

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3 Comprehension check

Choose the best answer according to the text.

- Why, according to the RSPCA Australia statement, are there more shark attacks in Western Australia?
 - because there are more and more sharks in the seas around the state
 - because there are more people in the water than before
 - because they are attracted by smaller creatures caught on drumlines
- What is the problem with drumlines?
 - They kill various types of sea creatures, as well as sharks.
 - They don't work.
 - They are expensive to maintain.
- Why might the cull deter tourists?
 - because tourists like sharks
 - because it advertises the fact that there are sharks
 - because it is bad publicity for the state of Western Australia
- What have the demonstrations shown?
 - that people want sharks to be killed
 - that many people are afraid of sharks
 - that many people respect and love sharks

4 Find the word

Find the following words and phrases in the text.

- a two-word phrasal verb meaning *go to a place* (para 1)
- a two-word phrasal verb meaning *officially ask a person or organization to do something* (para 1)
- a two-word noun phrase meaning *the attitudes and values of a particular country* (para 3)
- a five-word expression used for saying how a particular event relates to a more general situation (para 3)
- a noun meaning *a record of the number of things that someone has done* (para 4)
- a noun meaning *food used for attracting and catching fish* (para 4)
- a verb meaning *attract* (para 5)
- an adjective meaning *having the opposite result to the one you intended* (para 5)

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5 Negative prefixes

Without looking back at the text, add *in-*, *counter-* or *un-* to form negative adjectives. Then, check your answers in the text.

1. _____ discriminate
2. _____ precedented
3. _____ provoked
4. _____ effective
5. _____ productive
6. _____ justified

6 Word-building

Complete the sentences using the correct form of the word in brackets at the end of each sentence.

1. _____ say that there is no evidence that the cull will reduce the number of shark attacks. [CONSERVE]
2. The cull could _____ lure more predators towards the coast. [POTENTIAL]
3. The cull may simply worry people _____. [NECESSARY]
4. The increase in attacks is _____ with an increase in population. [CONSIST]
5. Opposition to the cull has _____. [INTENSE]
6. No previous cull has _____ used drumlines. [SOLE]

7 Discussion

Discuss this statement: 'Wild animals have as much right to exist on this planet as humans do and it is quite wrong to kill them.'

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KEY

1 Key words

1. cull
2. unprecedented
3. fatality
4. indiscriminate
5. spate
6. predator
7. compound
8. unprovoked
9. backfire
10. deter

2 Correct the statements

1. **Western Australia** has the fastest-growing population of all Australian states.
2. **Six** people have died in shark attacks in Western Australia in two years.
3. Humans kill nearly **100** million sharks each year.
4. In 2012, there were **80** unprovoked attacks by sharks worldwide.
5. Australia has averaged **one** shark-related **fatality** a year for the last 50 years.
6. Drumlins are floating drums anchored to **the sea bed**.

3 Comprehension check

1. b
2. a
3. b
4. c

4 Find the word

1. take to
2. call on
3. national psyche
4. in the scheme of things
5. tally
6. bait
7. lure
8. counterproductive

5 Negative prefixes

1. in-
2. un-
3. un-
4. in-
5. counter- (*Unproductive* also exists and means *not achieving any positive results.*)
6. un-

6 Word-building

1. conservationists
2. potentially
3. unnecessarily
4. consistent
5. intensified
6. solely