

2017 Senior Summer Reading
The World is Blue – Sylvia Earle

ISBN: 978-14262-0639-9 (softcover)

ISBN: 978-1-4262-0541-5 (hardcover)

ISBN: 978-1-4262-0558-3 (e-book)

*“ ‘Green’ issues make headlines these days, but many seem unaware that without the ‘blue’ there could be no green, no life on Earth and therefore none of the other things that humans value. **Water – the blue – is the key to life**”. – p. 15*

1. Limitless Ocean Bounty, Infinite Resiliency

Until recently our views regarding the ocean have looked at a limitless resource that would ‘hold steady, no matter what we took out of it – or put into it’ – (p.24). We now know that this not true

Choose 3 of the following 6 topics to discuss: (*chapter 1 – mammals, fish, shellfish, garbage; chapter 2 – biodiversity, resources*)

Use examples from the book (and other relevant sources) to discuss how humans have used these ocean resources and the resulting impact on those resources. How have our views changed in recent times regarding ocean resources?

2. The Ocean is in Trouble; Therefore so are We

“The ocean drives climate and weather, regulates temperature, absorbs much of the carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, holds 97 percent of Earth’s water, and embraces 97 percent of the biosphere” – (p.17). In chapter 3: (Changing Climate, Changing Chemistry), Earle discusses the evidence and impacts of climate change and the role that the ocean plays. Present climate policies focus on the atmosphere NOT the ocean.

Summarize the role the ocean plays in climate change, the impacts on the ocean and how/why a climate change policy needs to include the oceans

3. Now is the Time: Governing the Ocean (p. 203 - 219).

Effective conservation efforts, both on land and in the sea, are often stymied as Policy that is implemented is later withdrawn (recent example – the Paris Climate Agreement). The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1973) provides a treaty that governs human activities on and in the world’s oceans; however it is not ratified by the U.S.

What do you think a 'Law of the Sea' treaty should have in it and NOT have in it to effectively protect our ocean, its resources and 'life-support' services? (Use examples from the book and other sources). Include who should have ownership of the sea.

4. *Now is the Time: Protecting the Ocean* (p.241-259)

In 2009, Sylvia Earle was selected to present a 'One Wish to Change the Earth' TED talk. The script of that talk is found on pp. 264 – 270.

View the talk by going to:

https://www.ted.com/talks/sylvia_earle_s_ted_prize_wish_to_protect_our_oceans

What are Marine Sanctuaries and Protected Areas? Why is it so hard to create these Marine Protected Areas? Do you believe that “now is the time” and that Sylvia Earle’s wish of protecting ocean “ ‘hope spots’ large enough to save and restore the ocean” can/will be sustained? From her TED talk and passages in the book, what are the actions that scientists, citizens and students can do to preserve our ‘life support system’? Overall thoughts on the TED talk?

5. *The World is Blue: How our Fate and the Ocean’s are One.*

“With every breath we take, every drop of water we drink, we are dependent on the existence of Earth’s living ocean. These are assets worth protecting as if **our lives depend on them**, because in no small measure, **they do**” – Sylvia Earle

The oceans are highly interconnected in almost every aspect of our lives. Summarize how ‘Our Fate and the Ocean’s are One. (Be sure to give detailed examples that demonstrate the ocean’s ‘interconnectedness’ to us).