The Silver Sea
By Alison Lester and Jane Godwin
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Let's go down to the Silver Sea, Come on, I'll hold your hand... Take a journey beneath the waves in this magical adventure created by young people at the Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne with much-loved Australian authors Alison Lester and Jane Godwin. Their unforgettable collaboration explores the hidden treasures of our seas and celebrates the joy of exploration - and of returning home.

Themes:
- Exploration and adventure
- Freedom
- Sharing Experiences

Discussion Questions & Activities:
- Before reading the book, discuss the story behind it.
- Invite students to examine the illustrations and ask if they can pick the different styles and materials used. How do these illustrations work together to tell a story?
- As a class, discuss what it would be like to be in hospital, and any similar experiences the students might have had. Would it be scary? How do you handle feeling scared? What would you like to draw if you were stuck inside?
- Break into groups and have students attempt to create their own picture book, each taking on different roles: writing, illustrating, creating the cover. How hard is it to work together? Do they think they create better things together or apart?
- Ask the students to write about an adventure they have been on. This could be anything from a trip to the shops to a holiday overseas. What were the good things about this adventure? What were the bad things? Were there times that were scary, and how did the students handle this fear? What did it feel like to return home at the end?
- The children in this story have a wonderful time on their adventure, but are also happy to return to the surface at the end. Where do the students return to after an adventure? What is their home like? Who would be there waiting for them to return?
- In what ways can the students explore the world in their everyday life? Plan an expedition to the backyard/school ground. Write down the kind of things they might find, and what kind of creatures they might see. Were their guesses correct? Did the students see anything unexpected?
- There are many marine animals in the story. Ask the students to identify their favourite animal from the story and write down everything they know about that animal: habitat, noises, origin, movement, diet.
- Ask the students to write a story about their favourite animal. Have them study the illustrations in The Silver Sea and use them as inspiration for their own illustrations to accompany their own story.
- These children have such a great time on their adventure because they have each other. Who would they take on an adventure? Ask the children to draw their ultimate adventure buddy.
- This book is full of lovely rhymes about the ocean. Discuss the way the rhymes work and encourage the students to write their own rhyme celebrating what they love about the ocean.
- Ask the students to draw their favourite place to go outside. Do they have a favourite park, or do they love to go to the beach? Invite them to write a description of what it is they like about this place and how it feels to be in nature.