

# 48 READING PRACTICE

You are going to read four reviews of a computer game called 'Endless Ocean'. For questions **43-52**, choose from the reviewers **(A-D)**. The reviewers may be chosen more than once.

## Which reviewer...

- 43) criticises the lack of realism in Endless Ocean? .....
- 44) took time to get used to operating controls? .....
- 45) found the game lacked variety? .....
- 46) notes that Endless Ocean provides opportunities for learning? .....
- 47) enjoyed the absence of risk in Endless Ocean? .....
- 48) feels the music is well suited to its subject matter? .....
- 49) found it difficult to review Endless Ocean? .....
- 50) explains the attraction of playing computer games? .....
- 51) thinks Endless Ocean should provide more of a challenge? .....
- 52) concludes that the game is worth playing despite its faults? .....



**A** - The primary goal in Endless Ocean is to explore a fictional ocean and identify species of sea life. This makes it a pretty uncommon species in itself - a videogame which is designed to be soothing and relaxing! The controls are sensitive and the game's graphics are impressive, and the sea life is beautiful in appearance though the information is less than reliable. I was ready to believe in what I was seeing until a polar bear magically appeared on the deck of my yacht - in the South Pacific. But seeing a whale in close-up or the pitch-black depths of the ocean is visually very pleasing. It's just a shame the game doesn't make many demands on the player. Having said that, I'd recommend giving it a go, if only for the relief of playing something that doesn't set time limits or make too many demands on you.

**B** - Some players may find little point in exploring the underwater world of Endless Ocean, but for those who are fascinated by the sea and its creatures, the game will provide a peaceful escape into the depths. The above-water graphics lack detail, but dive below, and it's another story entirely. The challenges of Endless Ocean can be difficult to meet, but this is what makes the game rather intriguing. And also there's no denying that the soundtrack is perfectly matched to the scenery. There are frustrations, however when it comes to navigating your way around the game. The most obvious is that, in an attempt to make the controls accessible, the developers have also made them slightly clumsy. Eventually you get to grips with them, but I felt they could have been better thought out.

**C** - Endless Ocean is a unique game, as its slow pace and fishy subject matter are just as likely to appeal as to put people off and that's what makes it so challenging to evaluate. The developer apparently wished to leave the choice of what to do and when to do it entirely up to the player. The controls are easy to use, but keeping the remote constantly pointed at the screen is tiresome. The soundtrack is uninspiring, but thankfully there's the option of replacing it with your own music. And I suppose it's rather pleasant to go 'diving' without having to worry about whether your air's running out, or whether the shark you're touching is a meat-eater, but while there are some interesting places to go, there's also a lot of empty space, and after a time you start to feel as if you've done it already.

**D** - Most people who spend a lot of time on computer games admit that they do it to find excitement that's missing in their everyday lives. Endless Ocean won't necessarily provide that, as its bloodless, danger-free and unbelievably low in tension. However, it does manage to capture the feeling of swimming around, getting close to aquatic life, and the soundtrack helps the hours to drift by. As you swim, you encounter various sea creatures and have the option of reading more about each one. This particular feature doesn't always work first time because the controls aren't particularly responsive but they don't really need to be - fast reaction isn't a factor in this game. I just had to keep on playing although I knew there were other things I should be going. It's either the most beautiful and relaxing experience you can have while gaming, or the most frustrating. Which it is will depend entirely on your outlook.