

Worksheet 1

Mayday

Dot, Dot, Dot...

A storm raged in the night. Huge waves, driven before a bitter south-westerly, rolled across the shallow waters of Bass Strait and thundered onto the bleak East Gippsland coast, dashing themselves on the rocks... Towering 30 metres out of the blackness, their thousands of tonnes crashed down relentlessly.

An **ellipsis** is a form of punctuation that consists of three small dots written one after the other (it is also known as the **points of ellipsis** or quite simply dot, dot, dot). An ellipsis can be used to indicate the deliberate removal of text when quoting from an original source. In the excerpt above, an ellipsis has been inserted to represent a dramatic pause. The points of ellipsis can also represent an unfinished thought, indicating there is more to come. They can help an author add surprise, mystery and suspense to a text. The author of *Mayday* has used ellipses throughout the story to add a sense of urgency and tension to the retelling of a dangerous and suspense-filled real life experience.

Task 1: Rewrite the excerpts below from *Mayday* by inserting an ellipsis between the matching sentences.

They dropped down and squinted at the name in red along the hull	can anyone hear me?
As for small boats	I was a bit worried that he might have had a cerebral haemorrhage.
I had to pull it out, lever it, and then get the hell out of the way	what is your position?
This is Cookie Cutter	Every so often I looked up and saw a big roller coming, and I just hung on and hoped to hell I didn't get washed off.
MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY. Cookie Cutter here. MAYDAY	all the railings were gone.
He was tired, weak, a lot of pain in his back, pinpoint pupils, a lacerated skull	Cookie Cutter.
You've got to remember it was pitching and there was nothing to hang on to	There was no reply.
I hear you Cookie Cutter	heaven help them.

Extension Activities:

- Write an informative text about one of the deadliest wild weather incidents in Australia's history (e.g. Cyclone Tracy - 1974, Sydney to Hobart Yacht race - 1998, Black Saturday - 2009, Queensland floods - 2010-2011).
- Create a tourist brochure for one of the main islands of Bass Strait - King Island or Flinders Island. Include information such as population, climate, natural features, local produce, historical facts etc.