



Climate Change and Coral Reefs

Reading Worksheet — Level C | tahricteaches.com

Coral reefs are beautiful places in the ocean. A **reef** is made of coral, and coral looks like colorful rock, but it is alive! Coral reefs grow in warm, shallow seas near the equator. People often call them the "rainforests of the sea."

Reefs are very important for ocean life. A coral reef is a **habitat** for thousands of fish and other sea animals. Small fish hide in the coral to stay safe from danger. Big fish come to eat and find food. Without reefs, many ocean animals would not have a home.

Climate change is a big problem for coral reefs. When people burn coal and oil, the air around the Earth gets warmer. This makes the ocean **temperature** rise too. Coral is very sensitive to heat. Even a small change in temperature can hurt it badly.

When the water gets too warm, coral starts to **bleach**. The coral loses its bright color and turns white. Bleached coral is weak, and it can die if the water stays warm. If too much coral dies, the fish lose their home.

We can all help **protect** coral reefs for the future. We can use less plastic and stop pollution in the ocean. We can also save energy at home every day. Many countries are working together to fight climate change. Every small action can help save coral reefs and sea life.

A. Vocabulary

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. reef ____ | a. to lose color and turn white |
| 2. coral ____ | b. very large area of salt water |
| 3. habitat ____ | c. hard, colorful substance made by tiny sea animals |
| 4. temperature ____ | d. easily broken or damaged |
| 5. bleach ____ | e. usual weather conditions in a place over a long time |
| 6. pollution ____ | f. dirty or harmful substances in air, water, or land |
| 7. protect ____ | g. to keep something safe from harm |
| 8. ocean ____ | h. long line of rock or coral near the ocean's surface |
| 9. fragile ____ | i. natural home of an animal or plant |
| 10. climate ____ | j. measurement of how hot or cold something is |

B. True or False

- | | |
|---|--|
| ___ 1. Coral reefs are sometimes called the "rainforests of the sea." | ___ 2. Coral is not a living thing. |
| ___ 3. Many fish live in coral reefs. | ___ 4. Climate change does not affect ocean temperature. |

- ____ 5. Warmer water can cause coral to bleach.
- ____ 6. Bleached coral turns bright blue.
- ____ 7. Coral reefs grow best in cold water.
- ____ 8. People can help protect reefs by stopping pollution.
- ____ 9. Fish never use coral reefs as a home.
- ____ 10. Scientists are worried about rising ocean temperatures.

C. Fill in the Blanks

Word Bank: reef, habitat, temperature, bleach, protect, pollution, ocean, fragile

1. A coral _____ is home to many sea animals.
2. The coral reef is a _____ for thousands of fish.
3. When the water gets too hot, the ocean _____ rises.
4. Hot water can make coral _____ and turn white.
5. We must _____ coral reefs from pollution and warm water.



D. Comprehension Questions

1. What is a coral reef?
2. Why do coral reefs matter for fish?
3. What happens to coral when the ocean gets too warm?

E. Discussion Questions

1. What are some things you could do to help protect the ocean?
2. Why do you think it is important to save coral reefs for the future?



Answer Key

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A. Vocabulary: 1-h, 2-c, 3-i, 4-j, 5-a, 6-f, 7-g, 8-b, 9-d, 10-e

B. True/False: 1-T, 2-F, 3-T, 4-F, 5-T, 6-F, 7-F, 8-T, 9-F, 10-T

C. Fill Blanks: 1-reef, 2-habitat, 3-temperature, 4-bleach, 5-protect

D. Comprehension:

1. A coral reef is a colorful, living structure made of coral that grows in warm, shallow seas.
2. Coral reefs give fish a safe habitat where they can hide, find food, and live.
3. The coral loses its color and turns white, which is called bleaching, and it can die if the water stays too warm.

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