

What's going on this week?

UNESCO (the United Nations cultural body) has said that the Great Barrier Reef in Australia should be put on a list of World Heritage Sites that are 'in danger' due to damage caused by climate change. The world's biggest coral reef system has suffered several bleaching events in the past five years, which caused widespread loss of coral. Scientists say the main reason is rising sea temperatures as a result of global warming, caused by the burning of fossil fuels.

Main question:

Are some places around the world more important than others?

Listen, think, share

- Look at this week's poster. Talk about what animal we can see on the poster and where in the world we think it is. Explain that it is a green turtle in the Great Barrier Reef in Australia. Can we find where this is on a map or globe?
- Explain that the Great Barrier Reef is classed as a World Heritage Site. Does anyone know what a World Heritage Site is? World Heritage Sites are chosen by UNESCO for being very special and worthy of protection, there are 32 in the UK – do you know the nearest to where you are?
- Read through the information found on the assembly resource, which explains what is happening in the Great Barrier Reef. Whose job do you think it is to protect the area? Talk about why you think so many people choose to visit. Would you like to visit?
- UNESCO think the area should be added to an 'in danger' list because of the impact of climate change – hoping this will mean the government there will do more to protect it. This may mean less tourists will visit, what do you think?
- Can you think of any other places that you believe are very special? What makes it special? Are there any places that are special and taken care of in your local community?
- Watch this week's useful video (link found overleaf), which shows a turtle's perspective of the Great Barrier Reef. Talk about the things you notice and like from the video.

Reflection

Our world is full of special and unique places. Some will require our care to ensure they are protected and will still be here in years to come!

KS1 Focus

Question:

What is a coral reef?

Listen, think, share

- Write 'coral reef' on the board? Have you heard of this before? Do you know what a coral reef is? Where might we find a coral reef?
- Explain that a coral reef is an underwater habitat. They are home to a huge number of marine species.
- Look at resource 1, which shares some more information about coral reefs. Would you like to visit a coral reef? Why? Did you know that coral reefs are formed by tiny creatures called polyps?
- Remind the children that coral reefs need warm, shallow water to form. Many are found near the Equator. What is the Equator? Look at a world map or globe and locate the Equator.
- Coral grows in many different shapes and sizes. Look at the picture of a coral reef found on resource 1. Can you describe some of the shapes you can see? Can you spot a mushroom, a tree or a brain?
- Coral reefs are home to many plants and animals such as seaweed, sponges, snails and clams. Lots of fish live in coral reefs too. Resource 1 shares some examples of these fish. Have you seen fish like these before? Where? Which one do you like best? Why?

Reflection

A coral reef is an underwater habitat. They are built by polyps, the living part of coral, and it is home to many marine species.

KS2 Focus

Question:

Why are coral reefs important?

Listen, think, share

- What do we know about coral reefs? Where are they found? How are they formed? Can you name any marine species that live in them?
- Explain that coral reefs are formed by tiny creatures called polyps, which are the living part of coral. As coral polyps die, they become hard. New polyps grow on top developing the reef. Did you know coral reefs were formed from living creatures?
- Do you think coral reefs are important? Why? Look at resource 2, which explores some of the reasons why coral reefs are important. Which do you think is the most important reason? Can you rank them from most important to least important? If you cannot, explain why.
- Explain that climate change and rising sea temperatures is the main cause of destruction to coral reefs around the world. Did you know coral reefs were threatened? Whose responsibility is it to protect them?
- For each of the points on resource 2, discuss the impact coral reef destruction would have.
- Although climate change is the main cause of the destruction of coral reefs, there are other threats such as overfishing and damage from boats used by tourists. People depend on tourism and fishing for food and jobs. What do you think should be done in this situation?

Reflection

Coral reefs are important for many different reasons. Raising awareness of these reasons and the causes of coral reef destruction may help more people be involved in its protection.

KS2 Follow-up Ideas

Option 1: Explain that a coral reef is an ecosystem.

- What do you think an ecosystem is?

Many marine species live within a coral reef. Ask the children to read and research to find out about a plant or animal that lives in a coral reef.

- What is it called?
- What does it look like?
- What does it eat?
- How is it adapted to its environment?

Ask the children to create a fact file or a non-chronological report and include a picture too!

Option 2: Share the following fact with the children:

'Coral reefs cover less than 1% of the Earth's surface but are home to 25% of all known marine species.'

- Discuss what this means.
- What percentage of marine species do not live in coral reefs?
- What percentage of the Earth's surface is not coral reef?
- Can you record 25% as a fraction and decimal fraction? Repeat for 1%.
- Explain how you would find 25% of an amount. How would you find 25% of a surface?
- How would you find 1% of an amount or surface?

Challenge - If 25% of children in your class were working in 1% of your classroom, how many children would there be in how much space?

KS1 Follow-up Ideas

Option 1: Look at a world map or a globe.

- Can you name and locate the continents?
- Where is Australia?

Explain that the Great Barrier Reef is found in the Coral Sea off the coast of Queensland. Show the children on the map/globe.

- Can you find the Equator?

Tell the children that the Equator is an imaginary line all the way around the Earth. It divides it into two equal parts: the Northern Hemisphere and the Southern Hemisphere.

- Can you locate continents or countries in each Hemisphere?

Coral reefs are found near the Equator.

- Can you name any countries near the Equator?

Use the opportunity to explore a world map!

Option 2: Share pictures of coral reef. Ask the children the following:

- What colours can you see?
- What shapes are there?
- What does this coral look like?
- Can you describe this coral here?

Remind the children that coral can be many different shapes, sizes and colours. They might look like trees, fans, mushrooms, flowers or even brains!

Ask the children to create their own coral reef collage.

Consider the materials they could use to create their shape and colours.



This Week's Useful Websites

This week's news story

www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-australia-57562685

This Week's Useful Videos

Turtle's eye view of the Great Barrier Reef

www.wwf.org.au/what-we-do/oceans/great-barrier-reef#gs.3y3ja2

This Week's Virtual Assembly

www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss

This Week's Useful Vocabulary

Climate change – the change in conditions such as temperature and weather over a period of time.

...damage caused by **climate change**.

Fossil fuels – a fuel such as coal, oil or natural gas formed in the earth from plant and animal remains.

...caused by the burning of **fossil fuels**.

Global warming – an increase in the overall temperature of the Earth's atmosphere.

Scientists say the main reason is rising sea temperatures as a result of **global warming**.

Protection – to prevent something from harm.

World Heritage Sites are chosen by UNESCO for being very special and worthy of **protection**.

Unique – being the only one of its kind.

Our world is full of special and **unique** places.

Widespread – over a large area or to a great extent.

...as a result of global warming, caused **widespread** loss of coral.