Coral Reefs

Name _____ Date _____

Nonfiction | 193 words | Two main ideas

I read it: ☆ to myself ☆ to a grown-up ☆ to a friend

1 Coral reefs cover less than one percent of the ocean floor, yet about one quarter of all ocean animals depend on them. Fish, turtles, sea stars and sharks find food and shelter among the reef's branches and caves. For this reason, scientists often call coral reefs the rain forests of the sea.

2 A reef may look like colorful rock, but it is built by animals. Each coral is a **colony** of tiny animals called polyps. A polyp builds a hard cup of **limestone** around its soft body. Over thousands of years, billions of these cups pile up to form a reef. The largest, Australia's Great Barrier Reef, stretches for about 1,400 miles.

3 Corals get most of their food from tiny algae that live inside their bodies. The algae also give corals their bright colors. When ocean water becomes too warm, however, the corals push the algae out and turn white. This is called coral bleaching. If the water stays hot for too long, the corals can starve and die.

4 Around the world, people are working to protect reefs by cutting pollution, protecting reef fish and even growing young corals in underwater **nurseries.**

How did I do? ☆ ☆ ☆

Scan for more free practice

Coral Reefs: questions

Name _____ Date _____

I can find answers in the text. Look back at the text to check.

1 Circle the best answer

1. Why are reefs called rain forests of the sea?

(a) they are full of trees (b) many animals live there (c) it rains on them

2. What are polyps?

(a) small plants (b) a kind of fish (c) tiny animals

3. What causes coral bleaching?

(a) too many fish (b) winter storms (c) water that is too warm

2 True or false? Circle one.

Corals are plants. **True** **False**

The algae give corals their bright colors. **True** **False**

The Great Barrier Reef is about 1,400 miles long. **True** **False**

How did I do? ☆ ☆ ☆

Scan for more free practice

Coral Reefs: words and writing

Name _____ Date _____

1 Match each word to its meaning. Draw a line.

colony	○	○ a hard rock made from shells and skeletons
limestone	○	○ places where young things are grown
nurseries	○	○ a large group living together

2 Write your answer in a full sentence.

This passage has two main ideas. What are they? Give one detail for each.

3 Draw and label something you learned.

How did I do? ☆ ☆ ☆

Scan for more free practice

FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS

Answer key: Coral Reefs

1 Circle the best answer

1. b) many animals live there

2. c) tiny animals

3. c) water that is too warm

2 True or false

False: Corals are plants.

True: The algae give corals their bright colors.

True: The Great Barrier Reef is about 1,400 miles long.

3 Word meanings

colony: a large group living together

limestone: a hard rock made from shells and skeletons

nurseries: places where young things are grown

4 Written answer (sample)

Coral reefs are home to many ocean animals, such as fish and turtles. Reefs are in danger from warm water, which causes bleaching.

Scan for more free practice