

Lesson: Coral Creations

Phase of learning

Kindergarden - Pre Primary, Years 1 - 2, Years 5 - 6, Years 7 - 8

WA Curriculum

K-10 Science

Region

North Coast, Gascoyne Coast, West Coast, South Coast, Indian Ocean Territories

Summary

Students will learn about the make-up of a coral reef and the symbiotic relationship that exists between coral and algae by making themselves a sweet treat.

Outcomes

- Students will learn about the make-up of a coral reef.
- Students will learn about the symbiotic relationship that exists between coral and algae by making themselves a sweet treat.

Duration

30 minutes

Preparation

This lesson may follow the Lesson: [Discovering Coral Reefs](#) or the Lesson: [Sharing a Shell](#)

In this lesson, students will learn about the make up of the coral reef by creating lolly coral polyps. Alternatively, if you did not want to use lollies for this lesson, you could use different coloured plasticine to replace the lollies.

To create the lolly version of the coral polyps, you will require:

- 1 bag white chocolate melts, melted
- small patty cases (1 per student)
- marshmallows (1 per student)
- hundreds and thousands
- 1 bag jelly snakes, cut into approximately 2cm lengths and 1/4 width of the snake
- teaspoons for transferring the chocolate into patty cases

You will need to download Teacher Resource Sheet: [Cross section of a coral polyp](#) for use on your interactive whiteboard or print a copy to share with your students. Alternatively, if students have completed the Lesson: [Discovering coral reefs](#), they can refer to the student worksheet completed in that lesson.

Steps

1. Hold a class discussion of what a coral reef is. Are corals plants or animals? Is the reef one single animal, or many all living together? Explain to students that a coral reef is made up of hundreds of coral polyps all living together. This is called a colony. Explain to students that similar to the way the hermit crab, anemone and bristle worm all lived together in (and on) the hermit crabs shell in the story Sharing a Shell, coral lives with special algae called zooxanthellae (zoo-zan-thell-A).
2. Put 'Appendix 1: Cross section of a coral polyp' up on your smart board/whiteboard. Discuss the parts of a coral polyp with students.
3. Show students 'prepared' lolly coral polyp. Discuss what each of the elements are and what they represent.
4. Provide students with materials to create their own coral polyp.
 - Melt the white chocolate to be the limestone skeleton. Add a teaspoon of this to the patty case.
 - Add a marshmallow to be the stomach.
 - Use a bamboo skewer to push pre-cut jelly snake pieces into the marshmallow – these are the tentacles.
 - Sprinkle with hundreds and thousands – these represent the zooxanthellae.
5. Put all coral polyps together to make the reef. Take photos of the students with their reef and polyp and scribe their recount (or get them to write their own recount) of what a coral reef is made up of and how they made their own reef.
6. Eat your coral polyps!

Related resources

[Lesson: Sharing a Shell](#)

[Lesson: Discovering coral reefs](#)

[Teacher Resource Sheet: Cross section of a coral polyp](#)

Keywords

coral reef, coral polyp, symbiotic, zooxanthellae,