Reef Word Detectives

Use nearby details to unlock science vocabulary.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.4 "Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle words or phrases about coral reefs whose meanings you can figure out from nearby details. Underline the nearby clue words or sentences that help you determine each meaning.

Helping Coral Reefs

1. Coral reefs are built by tiny animals called coral polyps. Each polyp makes a hard skeleton, and many skeletons join to form a reef. Reefs provide shelter for fish, crabs, and sea turtles. They also protect coastlines by weakening waves before the waves reach shore. Because reefs support so many living things, scientists study ways to keep them healthy.

2. When ocean water stays unusually warm, coral polyps may lose the colorful algae that live inside them. This event is called bleaching, so a bleached coral looks pale or white. The algae give corals food made from sunlight. Without enough food, corals become weak. If cooler conditions return soon, some corals can recover over time.

3. To help damaged reefs, some scientists grow small coral pieces in underwater nurseries. A nursery is a protected place where young corals can grow before being moved. Divers attach healthy fragments, or broken pieces, to frames in the water. Later, they transplant the grown corals onto a reef. Scientists monitor the new corals by checking whether they survive, grow, and attract fish.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. In paragraph 1, what does the phrase "provide shelter" mean? Which nearby details help you determine its meaning?

2. What does "bleaching" mean in paragraph 2? Use details from the paragraph in your answer.

3. In paragraph 3, what are "fragments"? What words in the passage explain the term?

4. What does "monitor" mean in the last sentence? What do scientists do to monitor the corals?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write two sentences about a plant or animal. Use one science word that may be new to a reader, and include a context clue that shows its meaning. On a new line, write the word and its meaning.

ANSWER KEY

Reef Word Detectives

GRADE 5 · RI.5.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle words or phrases about coral reefs whose meanings you can figure out from nearby details. Underline the nearby clue words or sentences that help you determine each meaning. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	In paragraph 1, what does the phrase "provide shelter" mean? Which nearby details help you determine its meaning?	**It means give animals a safe place to live or hide. The nearby details name fish, crabs, and sea turtles that use reefs.**
2	What does "bleaching" mean in paragraph 2? Use details from the paragraph in your answer.	**Bleaching is when corals lose the colorful algae inside them and look pale or white.**
3	In paragraph 3, what are "fragments"? What words in the passage explain the term?	**Fragments are broken pieces of coral. The passage directly explains them as "broken pieces."**
4	What does "monitor" mean in the last sentence? What do scientists do to monitor the corals?	**Monitor means carefully check or observe over time. Scientists check whether the corals survive, grow, and attract fish.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Bats are nocturnal animals, so they rest during the day and search for food at night. Their night flights help them find insects in the dark. Word: nocturnal. Meaning: active at night.

Accept science vocabulary with a clear, accurate meaning supported by a context clue in the two sentences. The meaning statement should match the clue and be factually correct.