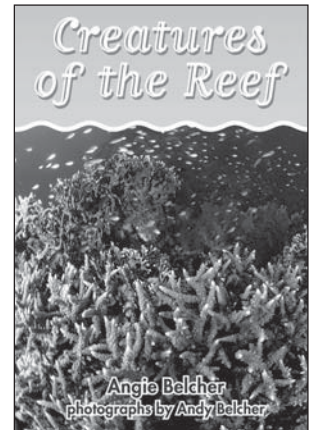


Creatures of the Reef

by Angie Belcher

photographs by Andy Belcher



Book Summary

A coral reef is home to thousands of strange and wonderful creatures. This book describes life in the reef and the unusual ways in which these creatures use each other to survive.

Features of the Book

- Nonfiction content
- Specialized vocabulary – *plankton*, *parasite*, *polyp*, *algae*
- Captions that provide additional information
- Dramatic photographs
- Labeled diagrams
- Fact boxes
- Descriptive language – *like an underwater city*; *like a “fast food outlet”*; *uses its large front claws to bulldoze sand*

Purpose

Creatures of the Reef can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- S** using prior knowledge to make sense of the text;
- S** discussing how photographs assist with comprehension;
- S** reading to become informed;
- S** using text as a model for students’ own writing;
- S** locating and summarizing information;
- S** creating and using an index.

The Guided Reading Lesson

- S** Using prior knowledge to make sense of the text
- S** Discussing how photographs assist with comprehension
- S** Reading to become informed

Introducing the text

Look at the photographs on the front cover and title page.

- *What kinds of creatures might be discussed in this book?*
- *What extra information does the blurb on the back cover give you?*

Read the introduction on pages 3 to 7 and clarify the meaning of “reef.”

- *Can you summarize the introduction in one sentence?*

Ask the students to share anything they know about coral reefs and the creatures that live there.

- *Look at the contents page and find out where the index is. Do the words in the index give you any idea of the focus of the book?*

To help recall the students’ prior knowledge, you could prepare a set of cards containing each word found in the glossary. The students could take turns placing them in one of two piles – the words they know the meanings for and those they are unsure of. Turn to the glossary to confirm meanings and to explain terms the students don’t know.

Ask the students to turn to page 6 and discuss the idea of a food chain. You could draw an example on the board with the students’ help.

Reading and discussing the text

Skim through the rest of the book together and discuss the photographs.

- *Why do you think there are so many photographs?*
- *How does this help you when you are reading?*

Ask the students to read chapters 1 and 2 independently. Encourage them to look closely at the photographs and to read the captions.

- *As you read, note one interesting fact to share with the group.*

When they have finished reading, allow time for the students to share, in their own words, the facts they have chosen. For example:

- Sea horses use their tails to hold onto coral.
- The goby has good eyesight and guards the sandy burrow for the shrimp.

Review the photographs on pages 8 to 10.

- *Would the chapter make sense without these images?*
- *If so, why are they here?*

Discuss the way that dramatic images are used to set the scene for the text and give additional information, especially when paired with captions.

The students can now read the rest of the book independently.



Revisiting the Text

The suggested activities below can be used immediately after the guided reading lesson if appropriate or could be taken as a mini-lesson at a later time.


S Using text as a model for students' own writing

Discuss the factual and descriptive language that the author has used. Share some examples with the students. For example:

- Tube worms disappear instantly into their burrows when there is danger and close a tiny trapdoor behind them.
- Cleaner shrimps have bright colors and bold patterns to advertise their services.

Discuss the way that the author has used adjectives to enhance the writing.

Ask the students to find a chapter or specific part of the book that they thought was interesting and informative. Encourage them to reread this piece of text, make some notes, and then further extend their knowledge by visiting the school library or a related website to gather information.

 The students could then write a report on their chosen topic, using both factual and descriptive language.

S Locating and summarizing information

This book provides a lot of information about the variety of animal life found on a coral reef. Ask the students to skim-read the book to find the names of animals that fit under the following headings:

- Animals that live in the reef
- Animals that help each other
- Animals that use each other.

S Creating and using an index

Ask the students to turn to the index. Discuss the features of an index including:

- alphabetical ordering
- multiple page references
- subheadings within a main entry.

Discuss the kinds of words you would enter into an index, usually key nouns. Ask the students to reread chapter 1 and to note all of the words they would include in an index for that chapter. They can use the blackline master on page 80 to create an alphabetical index for the chapter and check this against the index in the book.