

Habitats and Environments (Science, Geography)

Coral Reef or Open Ocean?

Did you know...?

Not all parts of the ocean are the same. Two very different habitats are:

Coral Reefs – busy, colourful, full of life

Open Ocean – deep, wide, not much shelter

Your Task:

Cut out the sea creatures and sort them into the habitat where they are most likely to be found.

Coral Reef Habitat

Open Ocean Habitat



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After sorting, answer these questions:

1. Which habitat has more hiding places? Why?
2. Which animals are fast swimmers? Why might they need speed?
3. How might the food chain be different in each habitat?

Extension Task:

Choose one creature. Write 2–3 sentences explaining why its habitat suits it:

Example: **“A Great White Shark lives in the open ocean because...”**

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Coral Reef or Open Ocean?

Objective:

Pupils will compare two marine habitats and explain how animals are adapted to live there.

Curriculum Links (KS2 Science & Geography):

- ★ Living things and their habitats – dependency relationships between animals and environments
- ★ Adaptation – explaining how features suit habitats
- ★ Geography – physical geography of the ocean

Key knowledge:

Coral reefs

Warm, shallow water
Lots of light
Shelters in corals
High biodiversity (many species)

Open ocean

Deep waters, far from land
Less light, depending on depth
Few hiding places
Large predators, migrating animals

Important: Some animals move between habitats during their life cycle (e.g., sea turtles).

Expected sorting answers:

Coral Reef: Clownfish, Parrotfish, Moray Eel, Plankton

Open Ocean: Tuna, Manta Ray, Great White Shark, Sea Turtle

Suggested lesson steps:

1. Introduce coral reefs and the open ocean (show images if possible).
2. Ask: “What might be different about living here?”
3. Pupils complete cut-and-sort activity.
4. Discuss adaptations (speed, shape, camouflage, shelter).
5. Pupils complete the written extension.

Differentiation:

- ★ **Support:** Provide creature fact cards (diet, speed, predator/prey).
- ★ **Stretch:** Pupils choose an ocean animal not listed and research its habitat.

Assessment:

- ✓ Correctly sorted animals
- ✓ Uses vocabulary (habitat, adaptation, biodiversity)
- ✓ Explains how a habitat meets animal needs