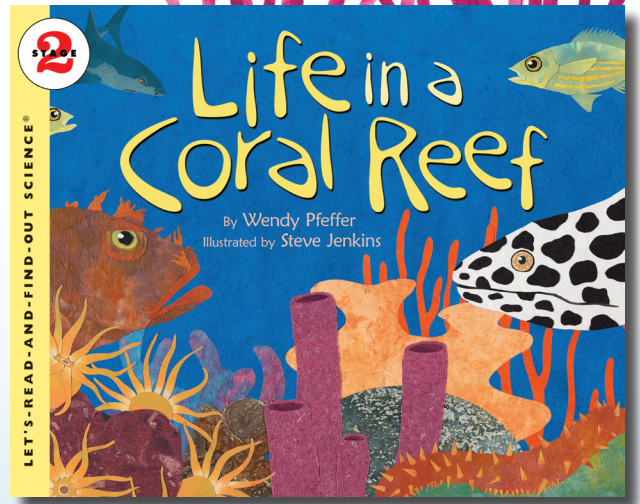


Life in a Coral Reef

By Wendy Pfeffer
Illustrated by Steve Jenkins

About the Book

In *Life in a Coral Reef*, Wendy Pfeffer and Steve Jenkins transport readers to a colorful, complex environment in which fish help and hunt each other, crabs camouflage themselves for protection, and the night is just as lively as the day. Clear and engaging text pairs with vibrant collage illustrations to explain how coral reefs are formed and how creatures coexist in this unique habitat.



Classroom Activities

1. **Art and Science.** How is a coral reef a habitat? How do Steve Jenkins's illustrations make the coral reef come alive in the book? Have your students use a large piece of butcher paper to create a coral reef collage based on information from the book. Provide students with a variety of papers for cutting and tearing. Students should surround the collage with captions identifying the various creatures.
2. **Creative Writing.** Ask students to imagine themselves swimming around a coral reef and then have them write stories about their swims. Why are they there? What do they see and do? How do they feel? How do they respect the reef environment?
3. **Geography and Mapping.** As a class, use a world map to locate and mark the major coral reefs around the world that Wendy Pfeffer includes in the notes at the end of the book. What do your students notice about the locations? Are there any similarities?
4. **Movement and Expression.** Have students act out the stillness and motion that coexist in a coral reef environment. Instruct one group of students to use their bodies to form the coral of the reef. Can they move at all? Have the other group move like the creatures that call the reef home. Which creatures are they? Where do they go? How do they move? Then have students switch roles. For this activity, play music that sounds like water, such as *Arabesques* by Debussy or *Jeux d'eau* by Ravel.
5. **Science.** How is life in a coral reef different during the night than during the day? Have each student make observations of an environment during the day and night. Ask each student's parents or guardians to choose a safe outdoor place near their home where they can take their child to make a five-minute observation when the sun is out and another when it is dark. Students should take notes about what they see, hear, smell, and feel. Discuss the notes in class. Why are places at night different from or the same as how they are during the day?
6. **Social Studies, Science, and Art.** Why are coral reefs important? Raise awareness about the trouble facing coral reefs by having small groups of students create posters that highlight the information on pages 32 and 33 of *Life in a Coral Reef*. Encourage students to do additional research to learn more.

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Activities prepared by Emily Linsay, Teacher at the Bank Street School for Children, New York City, 07/09

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