

1. Australia – The Great Barrier Reef

Before you read ...

Find the Great Barrier Reef on the map. What do you know about it? Predict the answers to these questions.

- 1 Who – or what – made the Great Barrier Reef?
- 2 What animals live on the reef?
- 3 What can you do if you visit the reef?

Reading

- 1 Read the article to check. Translate the words from the Vocabulary File.

Get into the water

The Great Barrier Reef is one of the Seven **Wonders** of the Natural World. It consists of billions of **tiny** animals, **coral polyps**, which grow on the **shells** of dead polyps. The reef started growing about 20,000 years ago, when the sea level was much lower. At 2,300 km in length and 65 km in width in some places, it is the world's largest coral reef and the only living thing on earth that you can see from space.

The best way to see the reef is to get into the water. The reef is perfect for beginner **divers** who want to learn in the calm, shallow waters around the islands. More **experienced** divers can **explore** the deeper waters on the outer reefs – some of the best places in the world for diving.

The reef has some of the best ocean life in the world, including 1,500 **species** of tropical fish. There are also beautiful **shellfish**, dolphins, whales and Green Sea Turtles. And the 400 species of brightly-coloured corals make diving an incredible experience.

The reef includes hundreds of beautiful tropical islands with some of the world's best beaches. But if you really want to understand the size of the Great Barrier Reef, you need to stop swimming and take to the air in a hot-air balloon! From the air, you can see more islands and relax in **silence** as the balloon gently flies over the reef.

Cairns, the biggest city near the reef, is the perfect place for visitors to stay. You can explore the wonders of the Great Barrier Reef as well as the beautiful islands and pure-white beaches, **spectacular** wildlife and tropical **rainforests**. Why not go for a helicopter **flight** to explore the **ancient** rainforest, amazing **waterfalls**, mountains and **valleys**, all just a few minutes from the city centre?

Vocabulary file

ancient _____	shellfish _____
a coral polyp _____	silence _____
a diver _____	a species _____
experienced _____	spectacular _____
to explore _____	tiny _____
a flight _____	a valley _____
a rainforest _____	a waterfall _____
a shell _____	a wonder _____

Vocabulary

- 2 Complete these sentences with words from the Vocabulary File.

- 1 Please work in _____ – stop that noise!
- 2 The Egyptian Pyramids are one of the Seven _____ of the _____ World.
- 3 There are 200 _____ of birds near the reef.
- 4 Snails and turtles live in their own _____.
- 5 She's a very _____ diver – she dives every year.
- 6 The view from the helicopter was _____ – I loved it!
- 7 I want to _____ the city, to find interesting places.
- 8 The _____ from Sydney to Cairns takes 3 hours.

Comprehension

- 3 Read the article again. Answer these questions.

- 1 How old is the Great Barrier Reef? How big is it?
- 2 How many living things can you see from space?
- 3 Where is the best place to learn to dive?
- 4 Are there more species of tropical fish or corals?
- 5 What are two good reasons for taking a hot-air balloon flight?
- 6 Where is the best place to stay near the Great Barrier Reef?



Be bright

- 1 Corals can only live at the surface (top) of the water. How do you think the corals at the bottom grew?
- 2 Why do you think the outer reefs are dangerous for beginner divers?
- 3 Is it quick to walk from Cairns to the rainforest?
- 4 The Great Barrier Reef is one of the Seven Wonders of the Natural World. What do you think are the other six?

Speaking

- 4 Work in pairs and answer the questions.

- Would you like to visit the Great Barrier Reef?
- What would be the best thing about a holiday in Cairns?

Up to you

- Option 1:** Choose one of the places in Australia that you can see on the map and prepare a poster presenting this place.
- Option 2:** Imagine you spent one day diving in the coral reef. Write a diary entry.
- Option 3:** Are there any places in your country where you can dive? What can you see underwater? Find some information on the Internet and write a short report.