CORAL REEF ECOLOGY

Concepts
Scientific terminology

HCPS III Benchmarks
SC 4.5.3

Duration
1 hour

Source Material
PRISM
MARE

Vocabulary
Cylindrical
Encrusting
Lobes
Oblong
Solitary

Learning Scientific Coral Terminology

Summary

Students will work in pairs to use their own words to describe coral pictures and compare their words with a list of scientific terminology, meanwhile learning new jargon to describe corals.

Objectives

- Students will be able to use scientific terminology to describe coral pictures.

Materials

Science text on the back of each picture used in Describe a Coral Lesson 1.3
"Observation Words" worksheet (1 per student)
"Observation Word Answers" Sheet

Making Connections

Students will recall the coral description activity in Lesson 1.3 and will learn to describe the corals in new ways, using more efficient, specific, and descriptive words. This lesson reinforces how scientists make initial observations and revisit topics to refine the descriptions of their observations through concise scientific writing.

Teacher Prep for Activity

Photocopy "Observation Words" worksheet.

Background

No Additional Background is Needed.

Procedure

1. To begin, make a list of the Observation Word categories from the "Observation Words" worksheet on the board or on chart paper. Ask the students to give example words for each category. Write their responses under the appropriate category. *Note: Guide the students in developing a comprehensive list using the "Observation Word Answers" sheet.*
2. Pass out one coral picture or card from Lesson 1.3 and an "Observation Words" worksheet to each student. *Note: if there are not enough cards for each student, have them work in pairs sharing one card but each completing their own worksheet.*
3. Explain that they should look at the picture and use observation words to describe what they see. They should record the words and descriptions on their worksheet under the correct category.

Hint: If the students need additional help, select one coral picture or card and do an example as a class.

4. Next, ask the students to flip the coral picture or card over and look at the scientific descriptions. Have the students compare the scientific text to their own observation words. Ask the students:
   How well did your comparisons match that of the scientists?
5. To end the session, have the students write down the additional scientific words on their worksheet. Allow them to change or finish filling in observation, evidence and inference words in the "Observation Words" worksheet.

Assessments

Completed "Observation Words" worksheet

Name:_____
Date _____

Observation Words Worksheet

Size words

Growth words

Shape words

Habitat words

Color words

Observation Word Answers

Size words
Small
Large

Shape words
Leaf-like branches
Finger like
Table form
Encrusting
Plate-like
Branching
Irregular lobes
Flat ridge like lobes
Curling narrow ridges
Roughly circular
Oblong
Finely- branched with many divisions
Bushy
Thick
Cylindrical
Vertical branches
No divisions

Color words
Pale green
Green
Olive green
Creamy brown
Dark chocolate
Tan
Pale brown
Yellow-brown
Light reddish brown
Blue to turquoise
Light gray
Purple
Blue-gray

Growth words
Outward
Upright
Solitary

Habitat words
steep sloping
vertical reef faces
shallow, high wave energy environments
wave-exposed environments
reef flats and slope
tide pools
coral rubble at base of reefs
protected areas in shallow areas