

Great Barrier Reef Threatened

It is considered to be one of the seven natural wonders of the world today, yet right now the Great Barrier Reef that lays off the Queensland coast in Australia is under threat. It is decaying. Its condition is worsening, but why?

There are two main reasons – climate change and coal. The biggest threat to the Great Barrier Reef is climate change. So far, virtually nothing is being done to avert this issue.

The other big threat that the Great Barrier Reef faces right now is the continual expansion of coal ports along the Queensland coast. In a controversial move earlier this year the Australian government approved a plan to dredge a port at Abbot Point in Queensland. It also allowed the dumping of thousands of tonnes of sediment in the sea.

The Great Barrier Reef is home to more than 1,500 different species of fish. There are 400 different species of coral and more than 4,000 species of mollusc and hundreds of different bird species. It stretches about 2,500 km (1,553 miles) along the Queensland coast. It covers an area the size of Great Britain, Holland and Switzerland combined. The reef is made up of a network of 3,000 individual reef systems, islets and sandbars.

Scientists have said the reef is under danger from climate change, coastal development, fishing and poor water quality. The latter is being caused by fertilizers, chemicals and sediments running off farming land into the rivers and creeks along the Queensland coast.

As a UNESCO World heritage site surely the Great Barrier Reef should be protected, a.s.a.p.?

SPEAKING – WARM UP

Think of three things you know about the Great Barrier Reef. Go round the room swapping details with others.

LISTENING – WRITING - DICTATION

The teacher will read some lines of the article slowly to the class.

READING

Students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

SPEAKING - UNDERSTANDING

1) The article – Students check any unknown vocabulary or phrases with the teacher.

2) The article – Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- 1) What is the article about?
- 2) What do you think about the article?
- 3) Was this an easy or difficult article to understand?
- 4) Was this a boring or interesting article?
- 5) Discuss the article.

3) Article quiz – Students quiz each other in pairs. Score a point for each correct answer. Score half a point each time you have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A questions

- 1) Name the reef.
- 2) Name the state and the countries.
- 3) How big is the reef?
- 4) How many species of fish and birds are there on the reef?
- 5) What have scientists said?

Student B questions

- 1) What is UNESCO?
- 2) What are the two main threats to the reef?
- 3) How long is the reef?
- 4) Where is the port?
- 5) What are fertilizer and coal?

Category: Australia / Great Barrier Reef / Coal
Intermediate / Upper Intermediate

Great Barrier Reef Threatened - 15th November 2014

WRITING / SPEAKING

In pairs. On the board write as many words as you can to do with '**Great Barrier Reef**'. *One-two minutes.* Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

WRITING / SPEAKING

In pairs – Write down three points from the article about the Great Barrier Reef. Talk about them.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Add three ideas of your own about the reef. Discuss together.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

WRITING / SPEAKING

In pairs/As a class - On the board – Draw three columns - Write down five reasons why coal is an important export for the State of Queensland in Australia. Then add five things the people of Australia should do to help protect the Great Barrier Reef from any damage the coal exports will do to it. Add five uses of coal. *5 mins.*

DISCUSSION

Student A questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) What attracts people to the Great Barrier Reef?
- 3) How much damage are the coal exports from Queensland doing to the Great Barrier Reef?
- 4) Have you been to the Great Barrier Reef? If yes, talk about your visit.
- 5) Will you visit Australia soon?
- 6) Is it a good idea for the Australian government to allow the dumping of thousands of tonnes of sediment in the sea near the Great Barrier Reef? Explain.
- 7) Should farmers use fertilizers that damage ecosystems?
- 8) Have you learnt anything in today's English lesson?

SPEAKING – ROLEPLAY 1

In groups. One of you is the interviewer. There are up to four guests. You are in the *ABC Sydney* television studio. Today's interview is: *Great Barrier Reef Threatened. 10 mins.*

- 1) A coalminer from Queensland.
- 2) A tourist visiting the Great Barrier Reef.
- 3) A spokesperson from the Australian government.
- 4) A scientist.

The teacher will choose some groups to roleplay their interview in front of the class.

SPEAKING - ROLEPLAY 2

In pairs. Student A is a going on holiday to Australia. You hope to visit the Great Barrier Reef and do some scuba diving there. Student B is a travel agent who can advise you on how to get there, some interesting places to visit and what to do etc... *5-mins.*

SPEAKING – DISCUSSION

Allow 10 minutes – As a class.

Why is so much coal being exported from Australia? Where is the coal being exported to? What is it being used for? How is it exported? How do they dig it up? Etc...

The teacher can moderate the session.

DISCUSSION

Student B questions

- 1) What do you think about what you've read?
- 2) Why is the Great Barrier Reef decaying?
- 3) Why are coal exports important for the Australian economy?
- 4) Should the coal industry pay a special tax to help clean up the damage it is creating in the oceans through the sediments dumped in them?
- 5) Why is the Australian government expanding the number of coal ports along the Queensland coast?
- 6) What would you do to help preserve the Great Barrier Reef?
- 7) Has this been a difficult lesson for you to understand?
- 8) Did you like this discussion?

GAP FILL: READING

Great Barrier Reef Threatened

It is considered to be one of the seven natural wonders of the world today, yet right now the Great Barrier (1)___ that lays off the Queensland coast in Australia is under threat. It is decaying. Its (2)___ is worsening, but why?

There are two main reasons – climate change and coal. The biggest threat to the Great Barrier Reef is climate change. So far, (3)___ nothing is being done to (4)___ this issue.

The other big threat that the Great Barrier Reef faces right now is the continual expansion of coal ports along the Queensland coast. In a (5)___ move earlier this year the Australian government approved a plan to (6)___ a (7)___ at Abbot Point in Queensland. It also allowed the dumping of thousands of tonnes of (8)___ in the sea.

sediment / port / controversial / avert / condition / reef / dredge / virtually

The Great Barrier Reef is home to more than 1,500 different species of fish. There are 400 different species of (1)___ and more than 4,000 (2)___ of (3)___ and hundreds of different bird species. It stretches about 2,500 km (1,553 miles) along the Queensland coast. It covers an area the size of Great Britain, Holland and Switzerland combined. The reef is made up of a network of 3,000 individual reef systems, islets and (4)___.

Scientists have said the reef is under danger from climate change, coastal development, fishing and poor water quality. The (5)___ is being caused by (6)___, chemicals and (7)___ running off farming land into the rivers and (8)___ along the Queensland coast.

As a UNESCO World heritage site surely the Great Barrier Reef should be protected, a.s.a.p.?

sandbars / species / latter / fertilizers / creeks / coral / mollusc / sediments

GAP FILL: GRAMMAR

Great Barrier Reef Threatened

It is considered to be one of the seven natural wonders of the world today, (1)___ right now the Great Barrier Reef that lays off the Queensland coast in Australia is under threat. It is decaying. (2)___ condition is worsening, (3)___ (4)___?

There are two main reasons – climate change (5)___ coal. The biggest threat to the Great Barrier Reef is climate change. (6)___ far, virtually nothing is being done to avert this issue.

(7)___ other big threat that the Great Barrier Reef faces right now is the continual expansion of coal ports along the Queensland coast. In a controversial move earlier this year the Australian government approved a plan to dredge a port at Abbot Point in Queensland. It also allowed the dumping of thousands (8)___ tonnes of sediment in the sea.

and / yet / the / its / why/ but / of / so

The Great Barrier Reef is home to more (1)___ 1,500 different species of fish. There are 400 different species of coral and (2)___ than 4,000 species of mollusc and hundreds of different bird species. (3)___ stretches about 2,500 km (1,553 miles) along the Queensland coast. It covers (4)___ area the size of Great Britain, Holland and Switzerland combined. The reef is made up of a network of 3,000 individual reef systems, islets and sandbars.

Scientists have said the reef is under danger from climate change, coastal development, fishing and poor water quality. The latter is being caused (5)___ fertilizers, chemicals and sediments running off farming land (6)___ the rivers and creeks along the Queensland coast.

(7)___ a UNESCO World heritage site surely the Great Barrier Reef (8)___ be protected, a.s.a.p.?

should / into / more / than / by / it / as / an

GAP FILL: LISTENING

Great Barrier Reef Threatened

It is considered to be one of the seven natural _____ today, yet right now the Great Barrier Reef that lays off the Queensland coast in Australia is under threat. It is decaying. Its _____, but why?

There are two main reasons – climate change and coal. The biggest threat to the Great Barrier Reef is climate change. So far, virtually nothing is being done _____.

The other big threat that the _____ faces right now is the continual expansion of coal ports along the Queensland coast. In a controversial move earlier this year the Australian government approved a plan to dredge a port at Abbot Point in Queensland. It also allowed the dumping of thousands of tonnes of _____.

The Great Barrier Reef is home to more than 1,500 _____ fish. There are 400 different species of coral and more than 4,000 species of _____ of different bird species. It stretches about 2,500 km (1,553 miles) along the Queensland coast. It covers an area the size of Great Britain, Holland and Switzerland combined. The reef is made up of a network of 3,000 individual reef systems, _____.

Scientists have said the reef is under danger from climate change, coastal development, fishing and poor water quality. The latter is being caused by fertilizers, _____ running off farming land into the rivers and creeks along the Queensland coast.

As a _____ site surely the Great Barrier Reef should be protected, a.s.a.p.?

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WRITING/SPEAKING

WRITING / SPEAKING

1) On the board - In pairs, as a class - write down **20 things you might see along the Great Barrier Reef**. Talk about them! 5 mins.

2) Sentence starters - Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- 1) The reef _____
- 2) The coral _____
- 3) The coal ports _____

3) Homework - Write and send a 200 word email to your teacher about: **Great Barrier Reef Threatened**. Your email can be read out in class.

GAP FILL READING

- 1) reef
- 2) condition
- 3) virtually
- 4) avert
- 5) controversial
- 6) dredge
- 7) port
- 8) sediment

SPELLING

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards check your answers.

- 1) controversial
- 2) reef
- 3) threat
- 4) virtually
- 5) species
- 6) coral
- 7) Switzerland
- 8) mollusc
- 9) islets
- 10) sandbars

ANSWERS

- 1) fish
- 2) species
- 3) mollusc
- 4) sandbars
- 5) latter
- 6) fertilizers
- 7) sediments
- 8) creeks

SPELLING

Use the following ratings:

Pass = 12

Good = 15

Very good = 18

Excellent = 20

- 11) scientists
- 12) development
- 13) latter
- 14) fertilizers
- 15) sediments
- 16) creeks
- 17) coast
- 18) heritage
- 19) yet
- 20) Queensland

Great Barrier Reef Threatened - *15th November 2014*