



Walker Books Classroom Ideas



Let's Save the Great Barrier Reef: Why we must protect our planet

Author: Catherine Barr
Illustrator: Jean Claude
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*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

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Outline:

The Great Barrier Reef is a wonderland of colour beneath the waves. The largest coral reef in the world, it is home to a quarter of all ocean life. This beautifully illustrated picture book brings to life this extraordinary underwater world for young children, exploring its dazzling coral gardens and rainbow-coloured sea creatures. Diving into this unique habitat, readers will discover fascinating marine life, how the coral reef helps our oceans and therefore why it is so important that we act to protect this special aquatic landscape from the impact of climate change.

Author/Illustrator Information:

After campaigning with Greenpeace for years, Catherine Barr trained as a journalist and became an editor at the Natural History Museum, writing exhibitions. She now writes books for children. Her first book, *The Story of Life*, was shortlisted for The English Association Picture Book Award and long listed for the School Library Association Information Book Awards. She lives in the Welsh Borders.

Jean Claude is a self-taught illustrator from the UK. He lives with his partner and child, and their cat. When he's not drawing he loves making ceramics in a local studio, visiting the botanical gardens and baking bread. He lives in Brooklyn, New York.

How to Use These Notes:

This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

These notes are for:

- Ages 5-9
- Years 1-3

Key Learning Areas:

- English
- Science

Example of:

- Picture Book
- Non-fiction

Themes/Ideas:

- Nature
- Habitats
- Geography
- Science



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Before Reading

View the cover and title of the book. Identify the following:

- The title
- The author
- The illustrator
- The publisher
- The blurb

As a class, brainstorm what you know about the Great Barrier Reef then use this information to create a mind-map. Use subheadings to help organise the information.

Discussion Questions and Activities

Return to the mind-map you created before reading the book. Cross out or edit any incorrect information then add in anything new that you've learnt.

Is *Let's Save the Great Barrier Reef* an imaginative, informative or persuasive book? How can you tell? Who is the audience for this book? Visit your school library and find other books on a similar topic. Can you find informative books, imaginative books and persuasive books?

Has anyone in the class been to the Great Barrier Reef? If so, what was their experience like? If not, would you like to? Why or why not? Write a checklist of things you'd need to bring for a day exploring the reef, and plan out some activities!

Make a list of websites which are useful for learning about the Great Barrier Reef (a great place to start is <https://www.barrierreef.org/>) and other coral reefs. Make sure you consider whether the information each site provides is reliable, who wrote or manages it and how up-to-date it is.

Do some further research on coral reefs and the creatures they provide support and shelter to. What impact have humans had on coral reefs over the past few years? How do you think we can help to reduce these impacts? What do you think would happen if coral reefs disappeared?

Create a multimedia presentation about the importance of protecting coral reefs and present it to the class. Have a wider class discussion about climate change, including the causes, the impacts, and if anything can be done to slow, stop or reverse it.

The text in this book is presented in two styles. Identify the formats. Why do you think the book is designed this way? How do you think this book would be different if there were no pictures? What if there were no words?

Compare *Let's Save the Great Barrier Reef* to a fiction picture book. How is the language different in each? Why have the authors of these texts chosen this language?

Look at the colours the illustrator, Jean Claude, has used in *Let's Save the Great Barrier Reef*. Why do you think she chose to use these colours? Do they accurately represent the reef environment?

Create a multimedia presentation about the features of fish. How can we tell them apart from marine mammals like dolphins, or marine reptiles and invertebrates like sea snakes and octopuses?

Write a book review of *Let's Save the Great Barrier Reef* stating what you liked and disliked about it, who you think would enjoy it the most and whether you think the information provided is credible. Use persuasive language to make the reader understand your opinion.

Design a persuasive 'Be a Responsible Tourist' poster for visitors to the reef, using the extra information and activities at the end of the book as a guide. Use persuasive language and new information you've learnt to raise awareness of how to save these incredible ecosystems.

Write an imaginative story about visiting the reef. Use information and illustrations in *Let's Save the Great Barrier Reef* as inspiration for your story.

See if you can find another book in the *Let's Save* series in your library, or look up more information on the series online. Other titles in the series include *Let's Save Antarctica*, *Let's Save the Amazon* and *Let's Save the Okavango Delta*. Are there any other places in the world you think the series should cover?