

Active Reading

10.2 Section: Biodiversity at Risk

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

Like rain forests, coral reefs occupy a small fraction of the marine environment yet contain the majority of the biodiversity there. Reefs provide millions of people with food, tourism revenue, coastal protection, and sources of new chemicals. One study in 1998 estimated the value of these services to be \$375 billion per year. But reefs are poorly studied and not as well protected by laws as terrestrial areas are. Nearly 60 percent of Earth's coral reefs are threatened by human activities, such as development along waterways, over fishing, and pollution. Similar threats affect coastal ecosystems, such as swamps, marshes, shores, and kelp beds. Coastal areas are travel routes for many migrating species as well as links to ecosystems on land.

IDENTIFYING MAIN IDEAS

One reading skill is the ability to identify the main idea of a passage. The main idea is the main focus or key idea. Frequently, a main idea is accompanied by supporting information that offers detailed facts about main ideas.

Read each question and write the answer in the space provided.

1. How much of the marine environment do coral reefs make up?

2. What percentage of coral reefs are threatened by human activity?

3. How much of the marine environment's biodiversity is contained in Earth's coral reefs?

4. How much money are the coral reefs worth, according to one study?

5. Which are better protected by laws, terrestrial areas or coral reef areas?

6. Name four reasons why coral reefs are beneficial to humans.

7. Name four types of coastal ecosystems.

RECOGNIZING SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

One reading skill is the ability to recognize similarities and differences between two phrases, ideas, or things. This is sometimes known as comparing and contrasting.

Read each question and write the answer in the space provided.

8. What are the similarities between coral reefs and coastal ecosystems?

9. What three human activities are threatening both coral reefs and coastal ecosystems?

RECOGNIZING CAUSE AND EFFECT

One reading skill is the ability to recognize cause and effect.

Read each question and write the answer in the space provided.

10. Why are coral reefs perhaps in more danger than inland areas?

11. What two purposes do coastal areas serve for wildlife?

12. List three reasons why it is beneficial to humans to protect coral reefs.
