



3.1 AQUATIC HOMES & FAMILIES

Aquatic ecosystems are classified according to their abiotic factors, mostly salt content. Underwater reefs are found in marine ecosystems, and have a salt content of 35ppm. Organisms in a marine environment are divided into three main groups. They are: Plankton – free swimming microscopic organisms found in the water column (They may be phytoplankton (plants) or zooplankton (animals)). Nekton – this consists of the bigger fish, sea turtles, dolphins, and whales. They are generally strong swimmers and can migrate over long distances. Benton – are the organisms that attach themselves to the substrate or burrow into the sand, they are the bottom dwellers.

Activity 1: Classification Key

Grade 7: LO2 – AS 2 Comparing the features of different organisms to classify them into a group

Grade 10: LO2 – AS 2 Interpret information using the diagram
- AS 3 Show an understanding of the grouping of reef organisms



What you need:

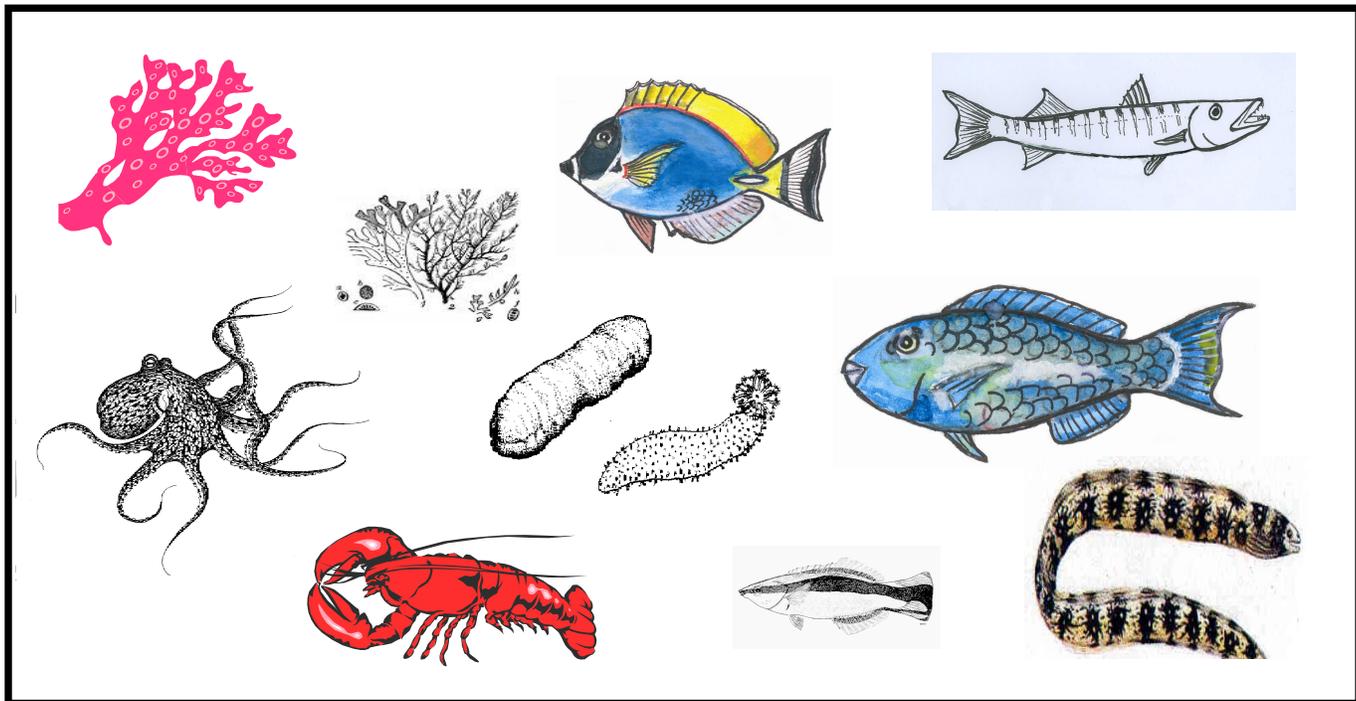
- The diagram of the 10m reef and the classification key
- The fact sheets



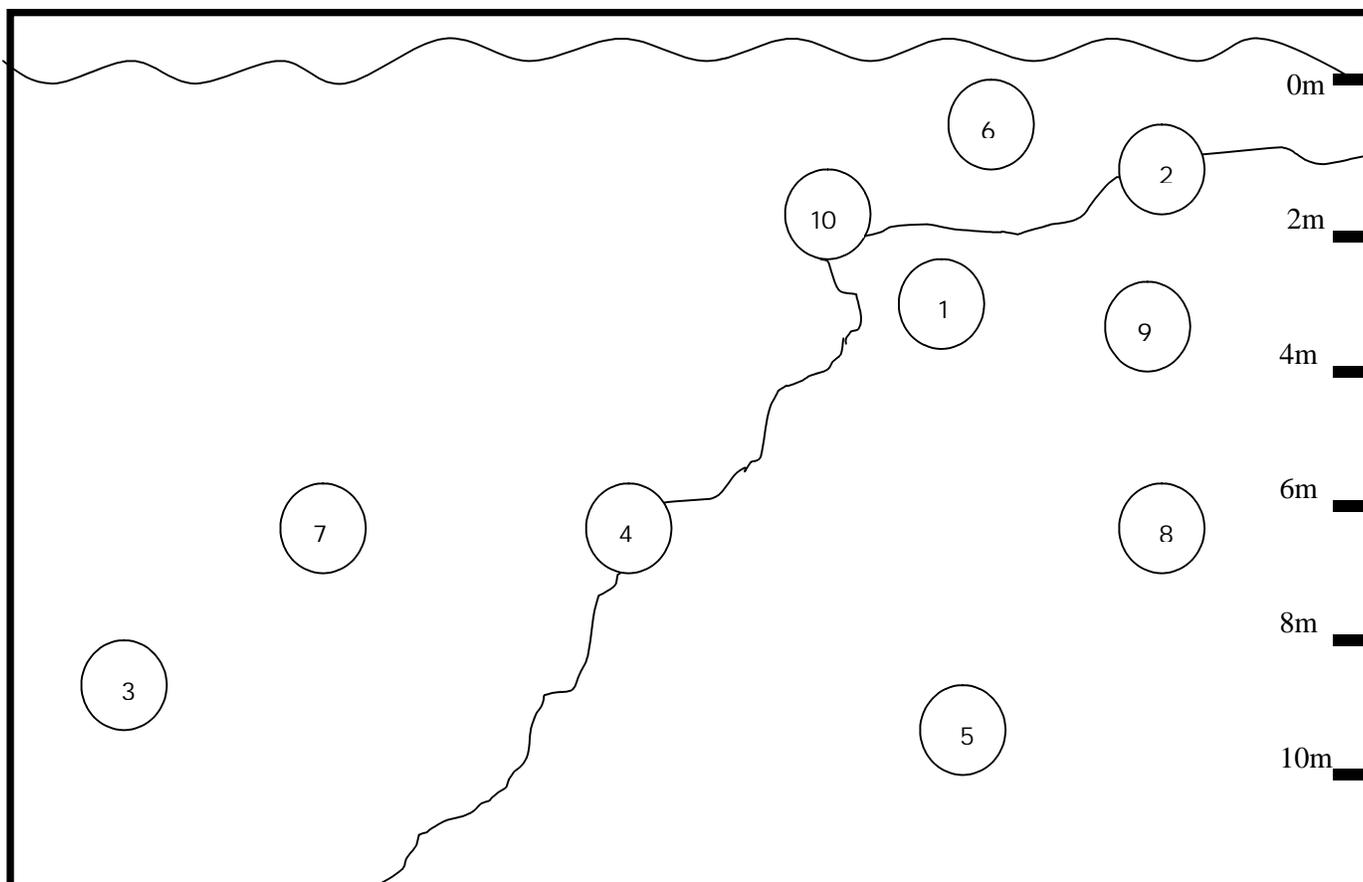
What to do:

- Looking at the diagram of each organism, use the key to try to work out what animal it is and then match it up to its place on the 10m Reef.
- Use the fact sheet information to help you.

The Organisms



10m Reef



Key to organisms

- 1. Organism looks plant-like, greenish 2
 Organism is not a plant 3

- 2. Organism looks like a flower, has plants living inside its bodyCORAL
 Organism is a plant, containing chlorophyll ALGAE

- 3. Animal has a backbone..... 4
 Animal has no backbone 8

- 4. Animal is a fish that lives in the open ocean BARRACUDA
 Fish lives on the reef 5

- 5. Fish is long, slender, snake-like body EEL
 Fish has a typical fish-shaped body 6

- 6. Fish has fused, big teeth for crushing coralPARROT FISH
 No crushing teeth..... 7

- 7. Fish has blade on tail, near tailfin, eats only seaweed..... SURGEON
 Smallest fish on our reef, blue and black, hang around other fish..... CLEANER
 WRASSE

- 8. Animal has skeleton on outside of body LOBSTER
 Animal has soft body..... 9

- 9. Animal has 8 legs and lives in rock caves..... OCTOPUS
 Animal lives on and eats sand (Removing the microscopic plants
 and animals)SEA CUCUMBER