Researcher Learning Activities

Investigate the coral reefs of Belize in more depth

11. What threatens the health of the Belize Coral Reef System (part 1)

Requirements: cress seeds, damp paper towels, 2 shallow dishes, paper
Researcher team: in a team of 3-5 explorers
Curriculum: Science
Time: 20 minutes (minimum)

Corals can be found throughout the world's oceans, in both shallow and deep water. However, the reef-building corals like the ones found on the Belize coastline, that depend upon algae, need shallow water where the sunlight can reach them. Algae is a plant and plants need sunlight to thrive. These types of corals rarely thrive in water deeper than 50 metres. The water also needs to be clear enough to let the sunlight through. Sea levels are rising due to global warming which means that sunlight is further from the corals.

You are going to show that a plant needs sunlight to thrive.

Explorer Learning Activities

Investigate the coral reefs of Belize in more depth

Place the damp paper towels in a shallow dish and sprinkle some cress seeds on top. Place one dish on a windowsill. Place the other dish in a dark cupboard.

Check on the cress each day. Ensure the paper towels stay damp.

Note your findings:

	Cress in sunlight	Cress without sunlight
Day 1		
Day 2		
Day 3		
Day 4		
Day 5		