



The Biology of Sponges • Study Guide

A sponge might not look like much, but these simple animals with no brain or ability to move have lived on Earth for hundreds of millions of years. They can hunt prey and spawn, and Jonathan demonstrates how in this fascinating segment about the biology of sponges.

Objectives

1. Introduces viewers to the biology of sponges.
2. Illustrates the diversity and types of sponges, as well as history on the harvesting of sea sponges.

Questions for before watching the program

1. What is a sponge? Is it a plant or an animal?
2. Where do sponges live?
3. What are some characteristics of sponges?
4. Where do dish and car-washing sponges typically come from?

Discussion for after watching the program

1. What kind of animal is a sponge?
2. How and what do sponges eat?
3. Water goes in and out of the sponge through pores. What are they called?
4. How do sponges reproduce when they can't walk or swim?
5. What did the green dye illustrate about sponges?
6. Why do very few animals eat sponges?
7. What is the name of the cells inside a sponge that both pump water and catch food particles?
8. Can sponges live in the arctic? How about the tropics?