

Name: _____

Attack of the Killer Algae

By Sandie Lee

What's green, leafy, lives under water, can grow up to 2.8 meters in height, and is considered a killer? *Caulerpa taxifolia*, or more commonly known as *killer algae*.

What Are Algae?

Algae were one of the first plants to develop in our seas from tiny, simple celled



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What Makes It So Dangerous?

It's hardy enough to grow in any conditions from cold to warm water, on rock, sand, mud, and from depths of 3-100 meters. This fast growing, invasive species of



algae quickly spreads, smothering out all the other species of algae and sea grass. Plus, it's highly toxic to many species of fish and sea life.

How Does It Spread?

One of the ways killer algae spreads is by attaching to ship anchors and being dragged for thousands of kilometers before it's released into a new area. Around 1985 this pretty killer was accidentally introduced into the Mediterranean

Sea. It soon began to spread and become a poisonous problem. It now covers 32,000 acres of the coast of France, Spain, Italy, and Croatia. People here who depend on fishing for their livelihoods are in trouble as this killer algae takes over the sea floors.

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1. Why is killer algae dangerous?
 - a. it smothers other species of algae
 - b. it smothers other species of sea grass
 - c. it is poisonous to fish and sea life
 - d. all of the above



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3. What is one way that killer algae is spread?

4. Reread the following sentence from the article and define the underlined word. Look it up if you need to.

It's hardy enough to grow in any conditions from cold to warm water, on rock, sand, mud, and from depths of 3-100 meters.

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water, on rock, sand, mud, and from depths of 5-100 meters.

Not very affected by hardship and difficult conditions;

Adapted to survive in diverse conditions