

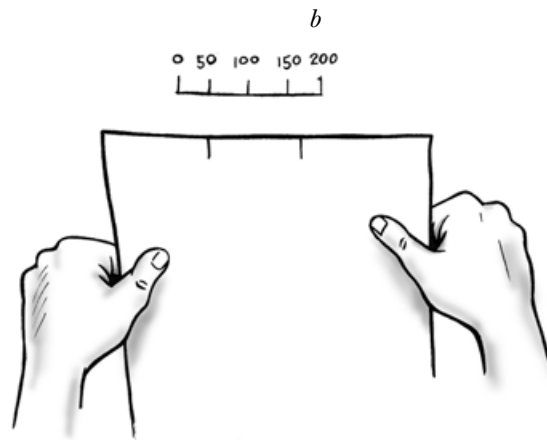
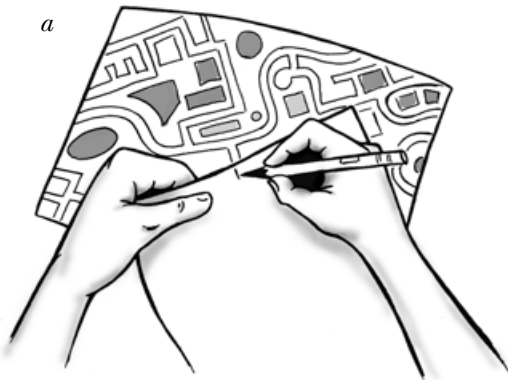


# The Great Barrier Reef

## How long is the Great Barrier Reef?

Use the map and scale on pages 52 and 53 of the *Jacaranda Primary Atlas Second Edition* to measure the length of the Great Barrier Reef. The reef stretches from grid reference D10 to Lady Elliot Island in grid I3. The following instructions will help you measure the length of the Great Barrier Reef.

a Place the edge of a piece of paper along the distance to be measured. Mark in the starting and finishing points on the paper.



b Hold your piece of paper against the linear scale to work out the actual distance between the points.

The length of the Great Barrier Reef is \_\_\_\_\_ kilometres.

## How did the Great Barrier Reef form?

Read the information below and label the diagram with the following words:

- |                   |                    |                   |          |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------|
| fringing reefs    | continental island | outer reefs       | mainland |
| current sea level | inner reefs        | continental shelf |          |

The Great Barrier Reef was formed by coral polyps, small animals that grow in shallow, warm ocean water. Over the past 20 000 years, the sea level has risen slowly by about 120 metres. If the sea level rises slowly enough, corals survive by growing upwards to the light they need to survive. There are different types of reef. Fringing reefs are close to the mainland and around continental islands (mountains cut off from the mainland as the sea level rose). The outer reefs began as fringing reefs growing on the edge of the continental shelf (the edge of a continent) before the sea levels rose. Inner reefs grow on the top of small hills that also once had their own fringing reefs.

