

Lesson 1





A Global Environment

Background Information

Many kinds of scientists study the environment. They look at different parts of the world around us. Botanists study plants. Zoologists study animals. So do biologists. Environmental scientists study the natural world as a whole. They work to protect places in nature. They might study a type of plant. They might study a type of animal. Or, they might study a condition that affects living organisms. That could be climate. It could be air quality. It could even be deforestation.

Sometimes scientists study the effects of human beings. They look at how humans treat the things around them. Many think that humans have the largest impact on our planet. Sometimes this effect is good. For example, some humans work to protect animal species. But humans also do things that are harmful to the planet. Those things have a bad effect. They could harm plants. They could harm animals. They could even harm other humans.

Most scientists who study the environment agree on two things. The first is that humans need to treat the planet with respect. The second is that humans need to care for the planet.

Analyzing Science

- Name one type of scientist that studies the environment. Why is that type of scientist important?
- What are some ways that human beings can treat the environment with respect?
- ▲ Do you think that scientists who study different aspects of the environment have similar goals for how humans should treat nature? Why or why not?

Nonfiction Writing Prompt

Become a young scientist who is interested in the environment. Choose a specialty that you want to focus on and study. Then write a descriptive paragraph explaining the different elements of an environment and what you would like to study.

Fiction Writing Prompt

Write a story about a scientist who wants to study the environment. Explain what type of environment the scientist wants to study. Using what you know and have learned, include examples of what may be found in this environment.

Scientific Challenge

What are the biggest challenges facing our environment today? Research this question on the Internet or at the library. Determine four issues that are the most serious, and rank them in order of severity. Create a brochure to detail what you have learned.