

# **Environmental Science**

by Sophia

#### WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, we are going to cover the topic of environmental science. We will discuss the definition of environmental science and explore how interdisciplinary it is. We will also discuss the importance of technology to the discipline of environmental science. Specifically, this lesson will cover the following:

## 1. What is Environmental Science?

**Environmental science** is the study of the relationship between humans and the rest of the natural world. When we say, "the rest of the natural world", we mean both biotic and abiotic environments.

- Biotic, or living, environments include microorganisms, plants, fungi, algae, and animals.
- Abiotic, or nonliving, environments include the temperature, rainfall, air, water, rocks, soil, and humanbuilt elements.

→ EXAMPLE The image of the forest swamp below has both biotic and abiotic elements. Fish that may be swimming in the water or algae growing, trees, and grass are all biotic factors. Water, rocks in the water, sunlight, and humidity are all abiotic elements.



### TERM TO KNOW

**Environmental Science** 

The study of the relationship between humans and the rest of the natural world.

## 2. Interdisciplinary

Environmental science is interdisciplinary in nature. There are hundreds of different fields that intersect with it, such as natural sciences and social sciences.

Natural Sciences	Social Sciences
Ecology	History
Oceanography	Sociology
Geology	Anthropology
Biology	Archaeology
Chemistry	Psychology
Physics	Political Science
Atmospheric Sciences	Economics

These are just a few examples of natural and social sciences. Environmental science intersects with many other types.



An example of an environmental science topic that involves many other disciplines is human population growth.

- It exacerbates global climate change, which is an environmental science and ecology issue.
- It is determined by economics because it can be expensive to have many children.
- It can also be determined by sociology and culture because in certain countries, having many children is encouraged for religious reasons or for support in retirement.
- It is a demographic issue because the rate of growth in certain historical time periods determines the size of each age cohort.

### 3. Technology

Technology plays an important role in environmental science in the world today. Almost every subject within environmental science is dependent on various technologies and instruments for measurement and other uses.

Examples of such technologies include the following:

- Satellites that can measure global temperatures
- GPS mapping of terrain
- Devices for measuring water quality
- Computer models which can project future scenarios of climate change

### 🗇 SUMMARY

In this lesson, we talked about **environmental science**, how **interdisciplinary** it is, and how important **technology** is to environmental science today. The key term is "environmental science", the study of the relationship between humans and the rest of the natural world.

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### TERMS TO KNOW

#### **Environmental Science**

The study of the relationship between humans and the rest of the natural world.